TRANSPORTATION and PARKING COMMITTEE  
December 18, 1997

Present:  Pat Ballard, H.P. Caldwell, Jen Gibson, Curtis Lynch, Deborah Mayo, Steve Mouras, Bruce Obenhaus, Wyatt Sasser, Cliff Shaffer, J.B. Sutphin

The December meeting of the Transportation and Parking Committee was called to order by the chair, Cliff Shaffer.

Approval of November 13, 1997 minutes: On motion by Steve Mouras, seconded by J.B. Sutphin, and by unanimous approval by those present, the November 1997 minutes were approved.

AGENDA ITEMS:

Smithfield Plantation Farm Vehicle Road: After considerable discussion, the committee unanimously approved forwarding the recommendation appearing at the end of these minutes regarding Smithfield Road.

Student transportation survey: Jen Gibson presented the results of a SGA-conducted survey of approximately 4000 undergraduates. There did not seem to be overwhelming preference for any of the stated proposals for improving parking conditions. A parking garage appeared to have the highest preference. Continuing with the HOV lot experiment had less support. Satellite parking appeared to have the least support. In some sense, the students perceive that Satellite parking already exists with the overflow and Litton Reeves lots.

Focus group sessions: The committee had considerable discussion regarding campus community focus groups and survey efforts, to develop an understanding of campus-wide perceptions and preferences regarding transportation and parking issues. The committee plans to devote the bulk of its time during Spring Semester to developing workshop format and survey instruments. Focus group workshops could be held in late April. Deborah Mayo agreed to work with Steve Mouras and Curtis Lynch on developing a draft survey to be discussed at the next meeting.

Proposals for FY99: Steve Mouras presented a list of proposals that his department will pursue for FY99. These include: 1. Renovate and build onto the Visitors Center. 2. Conduct parking garage study. 3. Renovate the overflow lot. 4. Conduct a parking gate demonstration at two sites next Fall. 5. Pave the gravel lot at Wallace Annex. Resurface lots at Southgate, Food Science, Detrick, and part of I lot.

Minutes prepared and submitted by Cliff Shaffer

To Do List

1. Cliff Shaffer to forward Smithfield Road recommendation. 2. Deborah Mayo, Steve Mouras, and Curtis Lynch to draft survey.

Transportation and Parking Committee Recommendation Regarding the use of Smithfield Road

Smithfield Road from Plantation Road to the Aquatic Ecology Laboratory
is an unpaved road whose primary official purpose is to provide farm vehicle access. It is frequently used by pedestrian and bicycle traffic, both directly, as well as indirectly via an adjoining bicycle path along part of its route. Until recently, the level of automobile traffic has been quite low, and no problems have resulted from the shared use by pedestrians, bicycles, and cars. However, automobile traffic has been increasing in recent months. This increase is leading to unsafe conditions involving the close proximity of pedestrian and bicycle traffic on the one hand and automobile traffic on the other. This situation is aggravated by the fact that the road is unpaved. As a result, the dust produced by automobile traffic causes a direct nuisance to the other users of the road. Incidents of unsafe driving have also been reported.

The Transportation and Parking Committee recognizes that the current situation is unstable, and that the University should take action. We recommend that if the road is intended for automobile traffic, then it should be paved and marked as such. Further, it is recommended that a separate bike trail be constructed from the Aquatic Ecology Laboratory to Duck Pond Road.