

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AT AMHERST  
OFFICE OF THE FACULTY SENATE

From the 653<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Faculty Senate held on April 27, 2006.

ADDRESS BY ROBERT FRANCIS, ASSOCIATE VICE CHANCELLOR FOR FACILITIES AND  
CAMPUS PLANNING, AND JAMES CAHILL, DIRECTOR OF FACILITIES AND CAMPUS PLANNING  
“CAPITAL PLAN UPDATE”

*Robert Francis, Associate Vice Chancellor for Facilities and Campus Planning*, stated that the Capital Plan had goals that were aligned with the institution’s goals of supporting instruction and research, improving the quality of life for students, faculty, and staff and enhancing their public image. The plan was unfolding everywhere on the campus and this was a complex set of logistical operations that were in process and will not conclude for three years when this campus will be significantly changed. This was not a presentation of the plan, but a presentation of a communication strategy which they hoped would make certain that their plan was not frustrated. What James Cahill was going to do was describe the impact of all of these projects on the daily features of campus life that affect comings and goings. They hoped that by communicating this information, they would be able to put this plan into effect without having any disruption to life on campus.

*James Cahill, Director of Facilities and Campus Planning*, stated that they had the campus dug up. They had been threatening to do it for a very long time. There were streets that they were cutting through to put tunnels under. He said that this would be a quick briefing on all of the things that were currently happening or about to happen on the campus to achieve the very aggressive Capital Plan. He started with a few words about parking, saying that it was something very near and dear to everybody’s heart. Director Cahill motioned to his presentation slide and pointed out where the major campus landmarks were on the presentation map. The campus has a policy to replace parking spaces one-to-one when they were taken away. Parking lots and buildings want to be in the same place, and buildings always win. They were rapidly running out of real estate to put parking lots and parking spaces on the ground. Until they had sufficient funding to build vertical parking, they were still stuck with horizontal parking. They were going to be taking parking Lot 63 out of service forever. It was next to the Skinner Building. They were going to be temporarily removing some of the parallel parking along Thatcher way, because they were going to widen it for a haul road to the construction sites for the ISB and the Skinner project. They were going to temporarily take away some of the spaces in Lot 63 when they run a steam line up to the new housing complex so that they can get heat to the new apartments. They were going to be losing a few various spaces in other locations. To replace the parking, at least in the short term, they were going to remove some of the islands in parking Lot 62 and they were going to increase the capacity of that lot by about 50 spaces. They were going to build a small, temporary parking lot in front of Fernald Hall that would give them another 50 spaces. They were going to build a parking lot which would give them about 64 spaces, to the east of Thatcher Way. That will be permanent. They were going to intermittently lose a few spaces in the Morrill Complex as they do some work over there as well. During the period of construction, they had pretty much met the one-to-one replacement so everyone will have a place to park in close proximity to where they were now. They were still working on what will happen at the end of the construction period, in terms of permanent parking. They were a few spaces short from achieving the one-to-one replacement, but they will make it.

The big picture . . . Director Cahill motioned to a map on the slide. Currently, they have the area by the Campus Center dug up for the first leg of a steam line that was ultimately going to go all the way from the new Central Heating Plant to the east side of campus and up to the new apartments. Both steam and electric were running through here (pointing to the slide) so that they could power up the east side of campus and get the needed steam to the dormitories. It was a fairly aggressive utility project, but it was needed. The east side of campus has some of the oldest utility lines on the campus. It was one of the earliest areas of the campus developed so they needed to bring in more utility. This piece will be done June 15<sup>th</sup>. The Library deck schedule has been a problem due to the weather. They had the deck done and the waterproofing was completed. They were working on some of the landscape improvements and that will be done in June.

Orchard Hill parking lot . . . They were building a parking lot on the south side of Eastman Lane to serve the student complex, Sylvan, and the new apartments. It was all part of the parking replacement and the

additional parking needed for the new housing. The North Residential area, with the apartments, was under construction now. It was their intent to have all four buildings and all 864 beds completed by August. There was a fourth building that does not have a roof on it yet. The contractor continues to make the commitment that they will have that done by the end of August. They were going to go into some night work to make sure that it happens. It will be a photo finish, but the campus has rented all of the beds, so they have to get it done.

The Goodell fire alarm was currently underway and they were scheduled to complete that by August. Berkshire Dining Commons was undergoing a major renovation. They were pressing to finish the project by the 18<sup>th</sup> of August. They were renovating the entire 11<sup>th</sup> floor of the Campus Center for the HTM program and also a 200-seat restaurant that will be available for scheduling of campus events for various purposes. That project will be done by September 1. Lederle façade repair . . . They were going to replace the joints and all of the concrete panels on all of the GRC towers as well as do some structural repairs to those panels. The GRC towers were one of the projects that was built in the late 60s and early 70s that has some problems. They were correcting those problems before they become bigger problems. The project will be done in 2007. There might be surprises when they get into the project, so the date may change. The Central Heating Plant was under construction. They will complete that project in the fall of 2007, but, by the time they commission it and get all of the systems working in the facility, it will be fully operational by March of 2008. The Herter ventilation has been a problem for some time. The project includes replacing windows and they were upgrading the air systems in Herter. The project schedule was calling for completion on September 1, before school starts.

They have selected a contractor for the Studio Arts Building. They have some early packages going out in June. On June 1, they will begin some early work over there. The Van Meter water line will be completed by the Physical Plant. The Butterfield steam line crosses Clark Hill Road so they were going to have to close Clark Hill Road for three to four weeks. June 26<sup>th</sup> will be the date that the contractor wants to put the fence up around the Integrated Science Building site.

They were removing the tennis courts from the center of campus and relocating them down to the tennis courts that were currently to the west of the Mullins Center. They will be consolidating all of the tennis courts in that location. Where the tennis courts were now was a prime site for some temporary facilities that they need to bring in for classrooms and office space because they were going to be renovating Bartlett Hall. There will be better tennis courts in the new area near the Mullins Center. They were preparing for them with some foundation work so that they can cover them with a bubble in the future and have indoor tennis at UMass for the first time. The Orchard Hill fire alarm project was going from June to September. They have to be done before the students come back. The Berkshire Dining Commons need a new gas line and it will be done in July. At Skinner Hall, the contractor will be ready to set the fence on July 15<sup>th</sup>. The bids just went out, and, on May 31, the bids come in, and, by July, they will have the site encumbered. On July 17, the Student Union parapet will be started, repairing it around the roof of the Student Union. The structural problems will be fixed for good.

With this slide, Director Cahill focused on the east area of the campus. The steam line started way back at the Parking Garage and there was the new steam line that was going up to the housing. They had just started that project and it will be completed by October 15, so that there was steam in the new apartments by heating season. There was a tunnel being put under North Pleasant Street and it will be done in June and the road will be back open for through traffic. The east campus parking area will be done June 26 prior to taking Lot 63 out of service. The parking lot in front of Fernald will be done by June 15. The reconfiguration of Lot 62 will be executed from the middle of June into July. They will have the additional spaces in that parking lot. There will be a steam line crossing Eastman Lane, and for three weeks in June, they will be crossing that road. They were going to widen Thatcher Way in June. Right now, it was too narrow to use as a haul road for the construction and also to have parallel parking. They were relocating a steam line at Infirmary Way so that they could build the Arts Building starting at the end of June. That should be finished in early August. There was a water line relocation that will be done between July 1st and early August. The east side of the campus has some of the oldest utility lines on the campus, so they need to upgrade and bring additional capacity to the area. They were going to bring a new water line from a manhole down to feed the Integrated Science Building in the newly renovated Skinner Project. The Studio Arts Building steam line across Lot 62 will be completed in August, prior to going full speed ahead with the building itself.

The Commonwealth Avenue area was undergoing a major project. The design process was very time consuming in order to best figure out how to get the major steam line from the new Plant. They were going right through Mullins. It will go above the ceiling in the subterranean part of the Mullins Center under the open deck between the two structures. They were using the only real route to get through Commonwealth without major utility interferences. They had to go kitty-corner across that intersection. They closed Campus Center Way and it will remain closed until December 31.

The electric line coming from the new Plant will bring all 11 megawatts of power to the center of the campus. They will be closing off Campus Center Way to get those lines in. Both the steam and electric lines will come into a small building that had been built to tap into the campus distribution system from there. The steam and electric lines hit the new utility trench that they were putting through the center of campus.

The rerouting of traffic was quite a task. Since you cannot get to the Campus Center from Commonwealth Avenue, they were routing traffic up Holdsworth Way. They had gone through several iterations of signage to direct traffic. He thought that it was working pretty well. This was primarily for the automobile traffic. The small trucks and cars that need to get to the loading dock for deliveries go the way everyone else goes, down Holdsworth Way. The larger trucks go through the Physical Plant compound so that they can get a straight shot into the Campus Center loading dock and back out again. The first day they closed off Campus Center Way, they had cars going through here at about 40-50 miles an hour. They had to send some people out there to train the vehicle operators.

What were they doing to communicate all of this? They have had several meetings with different groups. They were meeting almost constantly with the Commencement Planning Committee because they were really messing things up for Commencement this year, in terms of traffic flow. They were having orientation meetings and bringing a lot of groups together where they will be giving this presentation. They were learning about event planning so that they can help people prepare themselves for the disruptions that were on campus and still hold the events. They were doing broadcast emails, radio ads, posters, press releases. They were doing a little bit of everything. They were trying to put a positive image on this whole thing because, as much dirt as there was around, as well as blowing dust and disruptions to traffic, this was a good thing that was happening. When it was all done, UMass was going to be a better place. There will be state-of-the-art facilities that they have not had in the past. It was worth the effort. Table tents and posters were an important part of that so people can imagine when this was all done. One of the things he wanted to really stress was that this information was on their website. On the home page, there was a direct link to the construction news. If you hit the link, it goes right to the page that tells people what will be disrupted and what dates things will be starting. They were not getting a lot of hits on the webpage so they wanted to get the message out. It was getting updated daily.