

**Neighborhoods Advisory Group**  
May 25, 2005 Meeting Minutes

Ida Lee Wootten, Director of Community Relations, called the meeting to order and introduced Mark Fletcher, Associate Director of Athletics, and Rich Kovatch, Associate Vice President for Business Operations.

**Reports**

**Dick Laurance**

**North Grounds Connector**

In March, drains were cleared and installed and, with permits for storm water management in place, construction began. Construction is moving forward; Massie Road was closed on May 23, 2005, and blasting at the construction site will begin on May 26. Current plans call for an overlay of Massie and Copeley with a synchronized traffic light and a new intersection, raised 15 feet. Normally the connector will run one-lane-in/one-lane-out, but for special events it can be coned to allow two-lanes-in/one-lane-out and vice versa to improve traffic flow.

**John Paul Jones Arena**

The roof is nearing completion. The utility plant will be running by October.

**Rich Kovatch**

**Observatory Hill Dining Hall**

U.Va.'s Dining Services has moved into the new Observatory Hill Dining Hall and will be training there over the summer. Starting late June, demolition crews will tear down the old O'Hill Dining Hall Building and the Tree House Snack Bar. Demolition, though, will not involve explosions and should not generate significant noise or dust. The drainage pond outside the old O'Hill Dining Hall is gone, and the area will be graded and landscaped following demolition.

**Arena/Special Events**

The University has established a partnership with SMG, a firm with 28 years experience in managing sports and entertainment facilities, to manage and operate the John Paul Jones Arena. SMG has managed over 150 facilities and 68 arenas. Over the years, it has built relationships with numerous tour and show promoters, which will give U.Va. access to acts, such as the Rolling Stones, that it might not otherwise have. U.Va. hopes that the John Paul Jones Arena will become the premiere sports and entertainment venue in central Virginia.

The primary events held at the arena will be men's and women's basketball, with at least 30 games annually at the site. However, SMG will work with the University to bring in a wide variety of entertainment, such as Disney on Ice, Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey Circus, Sesame Street Live, Nickelodeon, and sports-related activities, including the Harlem Globe Trotters, WNBA exhibition games, professional tennis, indoor professional lacrosse, professional wrestling, and motor sports. As for concerts, artists booked at other SMG venues have included U2, Dixie Chicks, Tim McGraw, Pearl Jam, and Elton John. Other types of events to be held at the arena would likely include conferences and theater performances. SMG will not always seek events to fill the arena's 15,000 seats, but will seek activities for half or quarter of the facility's capacity.

Although SMG will bring some of its own personnel, the majority of its hiring will be done locally, with work opportunities ranging from entry-level positions to management opportunities. Likely positions will include director and assistant director of operations, box office manager, accounting professionals, and staff to operate lighting and video boards.

### **Dick Minturn**

#### **Southern Lawn Projects**

Construction fences will be erected throughout the summer in front of Cocke Hall and Rouss Hall. They will remain in front of Cocke through the 2006 graduation and in front of Rouss for the next two years. Because the construction in Cocke Hall is largely internal, it will have little impact on surrounding areas.

Varsity Hall has been moved; construction on its foundation will begin during the summer, followed by renovation of the building. Construction of the foundation and the renovations should last approximately 18 – 20 months. Varsity Hall will not be occupied until Rouss is complete.

With excavation continuing on the east side of Rouss, Hospital Drive has been closed to vehicular traffic. The University will continue to monitor traffic flow at the intersection of Hospital Drive and University Avenue, although there have been no problems so far with the new intersection.

### **Arts Grounds**

Construction at Fayerweather Hall should have little impact on residents because the majority of work is internal. The building is slated for completion and occupancy in early 2006.

In early 2006, construction will begin on the School of Architecture addition and a parking garage near the theater. Located near the railroad tracks, the parking garage should be completed by early fall 2007.

The chilled water plant renewal in Campbell Hall is on track; the new chillers will come on-line in the fall.

### **Mark Fletcher**

#### **Artificial Turf Field**

Mark Fletcher described construction and use of Carr's Hill Field, located at the corner of University Avenue and Emmet Street. Drainage of the field has been a problem in the past because the soil has been so heavily compacted from use that water can't penetrate the soil. Work on the new artificial turf field includes an intricate drainage system. Two major city storm lines beneath the field have been cleaned to increase efficiency, and two city sanitary lines beneath the field have been relined. Such improvements should have a positive impact on the neighborhood.

The marching band will practice on the field, and soccer, lacrosse, frisbee, and field hockey are among the club sports expected to use the field. The field's primary lights will go off at 11:00

p.m., but a set of night lights will illuminate the field for security purposes. A web cam and a 6-foot black vinyl fence also will be added for security. A small building alongside the field is planned for a later date; it will house restrooms and provide equipment storage. Temporary bleachers are likely to be brought to the field to provide seating for those wishing to watch activities.

The field is expected to be finished by July 1; the finished product will cost about \$1 million. During August, the marching band will practice on the field in mid-morning and early evening.

### **David Neuman**

#### **Upcoming Projects**

At the June Board of Visitors meeting, David will present plans for a parking garage, to be located between the train tracks and Culbreth Road. The garage will provide much-needed parking for the Arts Precinct, both for theater events and everyday academic needs. It will replace surface parking lost due to construction of Ruffin Hall and the future Arts Common, and will house approximately 450 cars. Culbreth Road will become a two-way street following completion of the garage. Construction is expected to begin in November of 2006 and be completed by March of 2008

The University is beginning a study of Rugby Apartments. The building could be refurbished as housing units or it could be converted to office space. The first floor in the 100-year-old structure is the only one currently occupied. The six-month study is expected to provide ideas on how the building could be reused and what the costs will be.

After the Center for Arts is built at the Ivy/Emmet intersection, the building housing the former AAA building and the current gas station will be removed to provide an attractive entrance to the University. The University has undertaken a traffic study of the area and will examine options that would make the intersection more bicycle- and pedestrian-friendly.

#### **Education School Expansion**

An 80,000 sq. ft addition to Ruffner Hall will be constructed in the current parking lot adjacent to the building, off of Emmet Street, just south of the pedestrian bridge. The addition will have four or five floors.

#### **Residence Halls**

Two new residence halls are planned. One will be a sixth building at the Hereford College site; the other will be a building behind Balz dormitory. Both buildings, designed to accommodate about 140 students, will be constructed specifically for first-year students.

#### **Medical Education Building**

An expansion to the MR5 Building, on the corner of Lane Street and 15<sup>th</sup> Street, is being planned. The building, roughly 65,000 sq. ft. in size, will cost about \$32 million. It will house teaching facilities with a high-tech simulation center and student affairs space.