

## **Social Concerns Committee**

*Report for Fall 2006*

### **- Counter-resolution for the proposed Smoking Ban**

In response to the proposed total smoking ban, the counter-resolution written by the committee enabled the GSO to undermine the University Senate's efforts.

### **- Fundraising for Chapin J building residents affected by August 23 Fire**

Alton set up a table at a Chapin event to collect money; he only collect \$179. The committee assessed favorably the efforts of Campus Residences in its handling of the affected students. As a token of good will, \$50 was proposed to each student; later it turned to \$100.

### **- Bus Concerns: One issue resolved, others Pending**

Complaints from residents regarding numerous phenomenon with buses, including noise while passing Schomburg and the apparently useless route to P Lot for the Chapin/Hospital bus. This resulted in a meeting between Alton and Jim O'Connor, Director of Transportation, and then Alton's attendance at a Bus Advisory meeting. The Schomburg noisy buses (old models) were replaced, since this was anyway part of the process. At the time of this writing the P Lot Chapin line is still being debated. Also, Alton recently contacted O'Connor with concerns over the lack of baby seats for the rare occasion that a baby is on the bus.

Jin Pak, a graduate art student, has offered to film on her bicycle the bike route in order to reveal its problems visually. This is pending.

### **- Parking issues: Clarification**

Lacking information as to the status of parking for graduate students and the reinforcement of illegal parking by non-grads in graduate spaces, Alton and Sarah Knapp met with Douglas Little, Assistant Chief of Police. Alton also wished to discuss traffic safety. The meeting was fruitful and parking/ticketing concerns assuaged. From Alton's safety concerns came Little's idea of a safety forum (see Campus Climate Report below).

### **- Lindy's taxi: Clarification**

This remnant from the previous Vice-President regarded a boycott on the taxi service due to alleged frequent sexual harassment of female passengers. Douglas Little, of the police, explained that it was a case of a media exaggeration and that Lindy's Taxi had responded appropriately and professionally. Only one woman was harassed; the taxi driver was fired and background checks are now part of Lindy's Taxi's policy. This was hence a misguided decision on the part of the previous Vice-President; he should have researched his information.

### **- Bicycle Routes: One completed, one Pending**

Alton spoke about a possible bicycle route alternative from Chapin to South Entrance utilizing G building's vicinity to the road to the Long Island Veteran's home. Thanks to previous efforts with Barbara Chernow by the Environmental Committee (Ramona Walls) and some distraught emails from two bicyclists, the better route that Alton proposed is underway. Alton has proposed alternatives for the opposite direction recently to Harrigan regarding the hospital underpass.

Also in development is a service for graduate students to enable them to buy safety equipment for bicycles - helmet, front and rear lights - via the FreeWheel collective.

**- Safety Concerns: Pending**

Alton and Sarah had discussed traffic safety with Chief Little. Since then there has been extensive additions for traffic safety on campus, although not as a result of the meeting. Alton mentioned to Harrigan the dangerous crossing for Chapin residents (and also wrote an article about it - see below). This is still pending.

**- Campus Climate Report: Blog/Forum Pending**

Alton met with Dr. Jenny Hwang of the Men's/Woman's Center, Dean Stein and Chief Little regarding safety. From this meeting came about the idea of an open blog for students and administrators to post. This will be an excellent implementation of the ideals in the Campus Climate Report. The proposal is receiving support from the administration (and was well-received at the GSO meeting). Alton will be meeting shortly with George Meyers to discuss proposal.

**- Quality of Life Survey: Pending**

All members of the committee worked very long and hard in coming up with a new quality of life survey. This is now near completion and has been modified to include other campuses so as to be more effective.

**- Media Outlets: Ongoing**

The committee will be encouraging the use of media outlets to highlight issues for the general campus community. It will also hopefully make the committee's efforts more effective. At the time of this writing, Alton has written three articles (SBGradMag), with a fourth pending. Two were about his meetings with Chief Little and Jim O'Connor, while the third was a safety warning for Chapin residents regarding the dangerous night crossing by the Hospital road exit.

**- Environmentalism: Ongoing**

Whenever possible, the committee proposes a Green campus. One result will be that the GSO will have its paper usage reduced at the general meetings. This is pending.

Sincerely,

Alton Frabetti  
Chair, Social Concerns Committee