

STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY SENATE

University Environment Committee

Meeting of April 16, 2025, 12:30-2:00 pm

Virtual meeting on Zoom.

In attendance: Barbara Boyle, Sofia Camulaire, Jennifer Gilday, Timothy Gonzalez, Joanna Kaczorowska, Gary Kaczmarczyk, Clifford Knee, Christopher Percival, Sian Piret, Mona Ramonetti (co-chair), Christopher Sellers (co-chair), John True, Frederick Walter, and Tom Wilson.

1. Ramonetti called the meeting to order at 12:33 pm. Ramonetti welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited participants to introduce themselves.
2. Minutes from the meetings of February 19, 2025 and March 12, 2025 were considered. Sellers moved and True seconded to accept the minutes from February 19. True moved and Sellers seconded to accept the minutes from March 12. Both sets of minutes were approved without objection.
3. Ramonetti regretfully has to step down from leadership and membership on the committee next year. Sellers is willing to remain co-chair. John True volunteered to serve as the other co-chair.
4. Sellers led a discussion of plans for Earthstock 2025.
 - a. Committee has one table reserved for the Friday main event.
 - b. True presented a petition to preserve forested areas on campus (appended) that would be available for signing at the Friday event. After discussion and minor revisions, Gonzalez moved and Gilday seconded to accept the petition. Without objection the motion passed.
 - c. True presented a draft video concerning the plans to remove the forest for the new engineering building and proposed showing it on a laptop at the Earthstock table. Videographer Sofia Camulaire joined the discussion.
 - d. Wilson recommended also putting the video on YouTube for future use and putting a QR code next to the laptop that links to an online version of the petition. Online link to the petition is at: [University Environment Committee - Forest Petition 2025](#).
 - e. Discussion ensued with recommendations for minor updates to the video. True and Camulaire will update the video and post it.
Online link to the updated video is at: [Preserve Our Forests \(short\)](#).
 - f. The table will be staffed from 11:00am to 2:00pm and perhaps longer. Gonzalez, Friedman, Ramonetti, Sellers, and Percival volunteered to help. True will organize and be responsible for the laptop. Wilson recommended that power be requested for the table.
5. Plastic use on campus deferred until a future meeting.
6. Ramonetti and Sellers discussed a communication received from Ashley Dawson of CUNY regarding potential town hall for public power at Stony Brook. Similar town halls have already been held at ten SUNY campuses. After discussion, the consensus was to have Ms. Dawson share materials and perhaps make a presentation to the committee in the fall to determine if our involvement is appropriate.
7. Ramonetti asked if there had been additional tree cutting. True responded he had heard no news, but if anyone sees cutting please email him and he and videographers will try to document it.
8. Wilson gave an update on protection of the Ashley Schiff Preserve.Updates

- a. Senate President Brenda Anderson received a response from Interim President McCormick regarding the question as to why the SUNY Trustees did not echo SB Council resolution and just named the preserve rather than giving explicit protection, explaining that it was hard to preserve land. Walters further explained that SUNY could not preserve land, that had to be done by the legislature and perhaps that would be the next thing to do.
- b. It may be that someone at Stony Brook wants to keep their options open. At this point all that might be needed to undo protection is for the SB Council to rescind the current resolution, although an argument could be made that such a reversal of explicitly permanent protection would be out of order.
- c. Wilson's action plan is to finish the long delayed "Case for Ashley Schiff" bringing things up to date, send it out to the committee for comment, and vote on it at the next meeting. That gives supporters a baseline to move forward, will be useful to present for the incoming President and others new to the issue, and could be used for efforts to promote preservation legislation.
- d. At the last meeting, Bill Hermann talked about having a list of buildable land at SBU. As that is developed this committee should work to insure that ASP is NOT on the list and that permanent protection is explicitly in that and future Master Plans.
- e. Ramonetti authorized Wilson to share the draft with the whole committee as soon as it is ready.

9. Discussion of SBU socially responsible investment initiative and composting projects deferred to a future meeting.

10. The bike path reports have been shared with Bill Hermann and Ana Topolovec. Walter reported no response or comment to date.

11. Other old or new business.

- a. Wilson reported that the Friends of Ashley Schiff have organized several activities in the Preserve for Earthstock so that appears to be well covered.
- b. Wilson thanked Ramonetti for her service as co-chair. Ramonetti said it has been a pleasure and plans to continue involvement as a guest/volunteer.

12. The next and final meeting of the academic year will be Wednesday May 14, from 12:30 pm -2:00 pm.

13. True moved and Gilday seconded that the meeting be adjourned. Without opposition the motion passed and the meeting was adjourned at 1:25 pm.

University Environment Committee - Forest Petition 2025
Approved by UEC Committee, 4/16/2025

We, the undersigned members of the Stony Brook University community, urge the SBU Administration, in its campus planning, to prioritize sustainability by preserving all existing forested areas on campus. Rather than clearing green spaces for new construction, we advocate for building upward on existing footprints to minimize environmental impact and preserve the beauty of our wooded campus. Additionally, we call on the Administration to ensure transparency in campus planning efforts, allowing faculty, staff, and students to have meaningful input in the decision-making process via the shared governance functions of the University Senate. Protecting our natural environment is essential for the well-being of our community and future generations and for the mission of the University.

Respectfully submitted,
Thomas Wilson