

ACT reviews transportation

BY RACHEL BROCK

STAFF WRITER

Several ongoing construction projects slated to improve campus transportation are posing problems for both drivers and pedestrians.

The Advisory Committee on Transportation met Wednesday to discuss the challenges that students and faculty face in navigating around construction areas.

Derek Poarch, University police chief and chairman of the committee, said the biggest transportation issue during the next two years will be on-campus parking.

"Hopefully we'll turn the corner and see some improvement once we start completing (parking) decks that are under construction," Poarch said.

This month's meeting began by highlighting the many current and upcoming campus construction projects, including the Ramshead Center on South Campus, a steam tunnel on Manning Drive and pedestrian bridges atop South Road.

Members also noted off-campus projects, including the Chatham County Park and Ride Lot located off of 15-501 South, that will affect campus parking and transit. The lot is slated for completion in August of 2005.

The committee addressed student concerns, brought up by Jennifer Carter, a representative of the Graduate-Professional Student Federation, that the buses are too full at crucial times.

After the meeting, Carter also expressed worry about how 75 percent of new parking spaces will be allocated to faculty members. She said this leaves too few spaces for both undergraduate and graduate

students.

Committee members are looking for ways to make the Zipcar service, an on-campus car rental program, available for students under 21.

Officials stressed the need to get the word out about the Zipcar program, which has become increasingly popular, as academic departments now have access to the service.

"We are going to work with Zipcar and the University to do everything we can to get this service for interested students," Poarch said.

Kurt Neufang, assistant director of Chapel Hill Transit, said during the meeting that the group will listen to student concerns and will try to mitigate any problems.

Neufang explained four changes to bus routes that have been implemented this semester. The "S," "JFX," "V" and "FG" underwent changes in August.

He also passed out a "Mobility Report Card," evaluating UNC's transportation developments.

Bicycle activity was the only area of transportation that saw a decrease in popularity since 2001, and committee members said this could be attributed to increased construction and the free bus transportation system.

The group also noted the success of a deal with Triangle Transit Authority that allows students and faculty to purchase monthly passes at the discounted rate of \$10.

Committee members will meet again Nov. 17 and continue to discuss problems and potential solutions to transportation on campus.

Contact the University Editor at udeck@unc.edu.

Opening brings new start for APS

Shelter will complement county facility

BY SARA LEWKOWICZ

STAFF WRITER

designed to produce desirable, adoptable animals.

"(The adoption center) is just like a home environment. We put the animals in rooms instead of cages, so they're less stressed out and happier," Flaminio said.

She said the center handicaps animals that have temperaments suitable for adoption. All animals will be spayed or neutered before adoption takes place.

"We'll be working to match the animals we have with the people who are coming in looking for pets," she said.

Flaminio also said the center will be working with the county animal shelter by taking a number of animals and preparing them for adoption.

"I feel like the Orange County Animal Shelter and the APS have a partnership that will only grow," Flaminio said. "We are all excited

about the adoption center opening so that we can save more animals."

Joe Pulcinella, director of the county animal shelter, said the shelter is focusing on moving out of the stormy waters it has endured for the past two years.

"We're kind of getting past the rocky transitional period and getting into the point now where we can start working on the projects that are more forward-looking."

Pulcinella noted that there have been drop-offs in both the number of adoptions and the number of animals being brought to the shelter. He attributed the changes to confusion caused by the facility's recent troubles.

"My staff and I have had people ask when we're moving," he said.

"... A lot of the public is still very confused about what's going on with the county shelter. We're trying to get the word out that we're still open, and we're not going anywhere."

The Orange County Board of Commissioners is taking transi-

tional steps toward placing animal services under one county-controlled department or bureau.

In April, the commissioners decided to remove APS from the position of shelter managers.

The commissioners made the decision after receiving recommendations from a special task force created to assess shelter problems, citing a lack of accountability and past problems as reasons for their decision not to recontract with APS.

The storm surrounding APS began more than two years ago, when critics Elliot Cramer and Judith Reitman filed a lawsuit accusing the group of withholding financial records and changing by-laws illegally. APS filed a counter-suit charging Cramer and Reitman of libel, slander and defamation.

The legal battle concluded in July when APS officials withdrew their lawsuit.

Contact the City Editor at citydesk@unc.edu.

GOP accuses opponents of blocking spots

BY SHERRI ENGEL

STAFF WRITER

State Republicans have publicly accused the N.C. State Board of Elections of catering to party politics and preventing ads against the Democratic incumbent governor from reaching the airwaves.

Members of Patrick Ballantine's campaign and the N.C. Republican Party say a partisan BOE is the reason the gubernatorial candidate's campaign has not been allowed to air ads against Gov. Mike Easley.

"The governor appoints the majority of the board, and the Democrats now control the board," said Bill Peaslee, chief of staff, political director and special legal counsel for the N.C. Republican Party.

When the Republican Governors Association tried to put out ads

promoting Ballantine, the BOE stopped the corporately funded ads. The board claimed the association did not register as a political action committee, and non-PAC organizations can't use corporate funding for advertisements.

But Republican Party members cried foul, citing the State Capitol Media Project, a Washington, D.C.-based organization founded by former Democratic governors that was allowed to air ads in favor of Easley.

"The same standard should be applied, and there should be a level playing field," Peaslee said.

But Kim Strach, deputy director of campaign finance at the BOE, said the State Capitol Media Project does not have a political purpose, so it can air the ads.

"Their goal is to discuss issues and policies of Democratic candidates," she said.

"Their sole goal is to play a version of Dean Smith's old four corners and keep voices critical of Gov. Easley off the air."

EDWARD TOBIN, RGA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Schorr Johnson, communications director of the N.C. Democratic Party, said both Democrats and Republicans on the board voted unanimously that the RGA's ad was illegal.

But he also said other BOE rulings about political ads have been in favor of the Democrats.

"Of course (the BOE) is partisan, but it doesn't mean the ruling is wrong," said Ferrel Guillory, director of UNC's Program on Southern Politics, Media and Public Life.

Despite this innate partisanship, Guillory said the BOE has been able to work through party differences when making decisions.

In a statement, RGA Executive Director Edward Tobin still claimed the BOE's decision was partisan, and the association

will try to overturn it in federal court.

"Their sole goal is to play a version of Dean Smith's old four corners and keep voices critical of Gov. Easley off the air through Nov. 2."

Guillory said the organization can go to court and challenge the ruling, but the BOE is abiding by the letter of the law. The RGA just hadn't filled out the right paperwork.

"Republican Governors Association has a spotty track record coming in and circumventing law," Johnson said.

"Patrick Ballantine should call on the Republican Governors Association to stay out of North Carolina and abide by the law."

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CORRECTION

■ Due to an editing error, the Oct. 20 story "Board considers Legion property for school site" states that the American Legion was circulating petitions. It was not.

To report corrections, contact Managing Editor Chris Coletta at coletta@email.unc.edu.

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