

March 14, 2013

NOTES: FHIA Officers met with Cornell representatives on 2/19 /13 and 3/13/13 to discuss current issues/interactions. What follows is a brief summary of those discussions.

Participants:

Cornell:

Gary Stewart, Gov't Relations: (2/19; 3/13)

Joe Lalley, Facilities/Transportation: (2/19; 3/13)

Mina Amundsen, Facilities/Planning: (2/19; 3/13)

(NOTE: Don Rakow attended the first meeting and we discussed the Small Park, Botanical Garden fencing, and the deer program.)

FHIA:

David Gross ((2/19; 3/13))

Bill Arms (2/19)

Montana Petersen (2/19)

Jon Miller (2/19)

Claudia Fuchs (3/13)

DISCUSSION:

Transportation and Traffic Issues

David introduced the topic as a critical neighborhood safety issue confounded by our narrow streets, steep terrain, having no sidewalks, limited walkways, and heavy traffic. Yet the hamlet is heavily used by walkers, runners, commuters, cyclists, tour groups, and other Cornell visitors.

Immediate Concerns:

1) TCAT

FHIA has sent a letter to TCAT asking them to re-route some or all of their 62 regularly scheduled buses away from Forest Home. In keeping with recent County and Cornell planning documents, we suggest that the re-route should be down Credit Farm Road utilizing the long proposed core campus entrance off of Pleasant Grove Road.

Joe indicated that Cornell also has difficulties with too much bus traffic and has come to view the campus as one large "bus station." They are currently considering if a campus loop system might improve the situation. He cannot now take a position on the FH situation but did indicate that as they assess changes needed on campus bus routing, they will try to accommodate some of our concerns as well. He indicated that Cornell has three representatives on the TCAT Board (Kayujung Whang, VP Facilities, David Howe, and Kellie Page). He suggested that FHIA may want to have a volunteer representative on their advisory board.

2) Trucks/Charter Buses

David and Claudia introduced the situation in Forest Home with regard to large trucks (including the occasional tractor/trailer). Both of them referenced recent experiences involving complete disruption as tractor/trailer trucks attempt to turn around at one of the bridges (incidents often requiring police assistance, etc.). In addition, many other large trucks pass through FH daily. David also referenced concerns about frequency of charter buses likely coming from Triphammer hotels and making their way to Cornell venues. He also raised the issue of GPS directions (including via Cornell's visitor website) that likely causes much of the travel through FH. David mentioned that he had checked his own Garmin GPS from Triphammer and noted that typing in Day Hall resulted in navigating on Cradit Farm Road. Typing in Roberts Hall directed the user through Forest Home.

With regard to the GPS concern, Mina suggested contacting the County GIS office that handles these kinds of issues. Joe indicated that he is seeking to improve the information that event coordinators use in their advance transportation information. He also welcomes learning about which bus companies we are seeing. David mentioned that he raised this issue with Ithaca's Swarthout Coaches Inc. many years ago and they have done a good job of bypassing FH since. With regard to directing trucks to construction sites, Joe is looking into improving the situation with the Cornell projects but most of those routing decisions are incorporated into the permitting system at Tomkins County and we should talk with them. The topic of working with the Town/County to post signs on Pleasant Grove Road (and other FH roads) to prevent trucks (of a certain weight) was also explored.

3. Cornell Vehicles.

David shared that a lot of Cornell vehicles are clearly navigating to North Campus via Forest Home. They are typically signed Grounds, Student/Acad Services, CIT, among others. We all acknowledged that a certain amount of this is understandable particularly for Plantations and the Statler Van to the airport. In addition, they are typically smaller vehicles. Gary indicated that he has made requests to organizational units in the past and will do so again.

4. Cornell Construction Impacts.

Cornell has a number of construction projects the next few years. The most immediate is the addition to Goldwin-Smith (Clarmin Hall sp.) which gets underway next fall and continues through Nov. 2014. East Ave. could possibly become one way or a stop and start system. They are trying to plan for construction vehicles to navigate to the site via 366. A year or so later, they will do a major infrastructure project on East Ave. (Tower Road to Campus Road). Continued changes at Stocking Hall are also planned. The bridge over the jug handle on Judd Falls Rd has been tested and the tests revealed that they can leave the structure of the bridge as is for the next ten years. They are planning on resurfacing the surface above it on Judd Falls Rd this summer, but that's it. Finally, plans are in development for improving the Pine Tree/Maple Ave. area particularly for pedestrian use.