

**Stony Brook University Senate**  
**University Environment Committee**  
Meeting Minutes: March 20, 2024, 1-2:30pm  
Version 2: 4/10/2024

Attendees:

Thomas Wilson (Chair), Frederick Walter, Christopher Sellers, Sara Poon, Christopher Percival, John True, Tiffany Friedman, Cliff Knee, Mona Ramonetti, Maggie Li, and Sian Piret.

Agenda Items:

Introduction and Announcements:

- Thomas Wilson announced his upcoming retirement from Stony Brook University, discussed future chairmanship and coming back as a participant in future meetings.

Consideration of Minutes:

- Minutes from December 5, 2023, and February 14, 2024, meetings were reviewed and accepted with no objections.

Ashley Schiff Preservation Update:

- Thomas Wilson discussed ongoing efforts and challenges in preserving Ashley Schiff Preserve and not hearing plans from the university administration to create a policy since the vote in the university senate.
- Potential preservation mechanisms were discussed, including the transfer of the preserve to the State Parks Department.

Energy Working Group Update:

- Christopher Sellers spoke about the lack of response from the administration regarding the energy working group's report after the university senate presentation. He has reached out multiple times.
- Suggestions for promoting the issue, such as speaking at Earth Day, were discussed.

Composting Program Update:

- Sara Poon and Maggie discussed their progress on the composting program including focusing on freshman housing and sustainability education.

- Future plans for expanding composting to other housing areas and getting student feedback through surveys were shared.

#### Bike Path and Transportation Safety Update:

- Christopher Percival shared updates on efforts to improve biking and walking safety around the Health Sciences Drive and campus.
- Future plans include finalizing a report, obtaining student feedback, and addressing additional safety concerns.

#### Sustainability

- Tiffany Friedman gave update from Heather Lynch who emailed Tiffany and Thomas about an event on April 12th for offshore wind.
- Christopher Percival shared a [website](#) and info about C4e.

#### TIAA-CREF Discussion:

- The committee discussed the university's investment in fossil fuels through TIAA-CREF and a movement underway to divest from fossil fuel through retirement plans.
- Concerns were raised about the lack of alignment with sustainability goals and potential strategies for addressing this issue, including publicizing the university's investment practices and engaging in dialogues with TIAA-CREF.

#### Action Items and Next Steps:

##### Ashley Schiff Preservation:

- Continue advocating and pushing for a formal protection commitment.
- Possible strategies include petitions, articles, and bringing up the issue during Earth Day events.

##### Energy Working Group:

- Explore ways to raise awareness about the report and Stony Brook's energy practices.

##### Composting Program:

- Expand the program to more housing areas and increase student participation and awareness.
- Consider drafting a report for presentation at a Senate meeting.

##### Bike Path and Transportation Safety:

- Continue gathering student feedback and finalizing the report.
- Explore expanding the focus to include electric scooters and address safety concerns on Stony Brook Road.

TIAA-CREF Investments:

- Develop strategies to raise awareness and create pressure on the university to align its investments with sustainability goals.
- Consider engaging with TIAA-CREF to discuss fossil fuel divestment and sustainable investment options.
- Go to [tiaa-divest.org](http://tiaa-divest.org) to learn more about what has already been done.

Meeting adjourned at 2:25pm

Minutes prepared by Tiffany Freidman, edited by Tom Wilson.