

Proposal: New Arrangement to Resolve Employee Parking Crisis Created by Elimination of Leo Parking Lot

Submitted by: Ira Gerhardt, Associate Professor of Mathematics (via Lawrence Udeigwe, Senator for the School of Science)

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Rationale:

- Prior to June 2018, those faculty and staff working and teaching in the RLC and Leo Buildings (referred to here as South Campus) had two primary options for parking: the respective lots adjacent to RLC and Leo. The complete elimination of the Leo parking lot in June 2018 removed approximately 50% of the employee-use parking on South Campus, creating a nightmare scenario for all affected faculty and staff upon the start of the 2018-19 academic year.
- The original proposal for the new Higgins Building that was made available to all Manhattan College community members at the start of the 10-year plan included a parking facility that would absorb the loss of the Leo lot. However, faculty were notified late academic year 2017-18 that the College's administration had decided unilaterally to abandon the building of this parking structure after it was determined that doing so would allow for a significant cost savings. On June 1<sup>st</sup> the Leo lot was permanently closed.
- Further, since then, the administration has offered no plan to replace the significant number of employee parking spots lost in the Leo lot closure. The sole concession offered to-date by the administration in anticipation of this crisis was to open up the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> floors of the Broadway garage to any person with a parking decal as of August 20<sup>th</sup>; however, those spots continue to be full with vehicles already parked there overnight, thus nullifying any potential benefit.
- Only a couple weeks into the term, South Campus faculty are already finding the parking situation is taking a toll on their ability to do their jobs. A handful of comments from a survey of faculty in eight departments housed in South Campus--Communications, Biology, Computer Science, Mathematics, Chemical Engineering, Civil Engineering, Electrical and Computer Engineering, and Mechanical Engineering--conducted just two weeks into the term already provide evidence of this:
  - From Biology: *"At least twice this semester I have been unable to find parking in either RLC, physical plant or the garage. Once I got lucky and found someone leaving RLC, the second time after searching for nearly 45minutes I parked on the street because I needed to get to class. I have seen many people circling the garage looking for spots on these two occasions."*
  - From Chemical Engineering: *"The consensus so far is that there has to be more parking available in south campus. The most egregious of stories is that two members sometimes have to pay the meter whilst here at work,*

*since they cannot find a spot in RLC, Mahan, or the garage. I have observed this for myself with a member in a different department, so it's not just us."*

- From Civil Engineering: *"Some general comments;*
  1. *The overall feeling from our department is more of a general disruption to our academic lives. For instance, may [sic] of us have off campus meetings for research or professional societies. The convenience of having a parking lot near our offices has been replaced with an additional 10/15 minute walk on both ends of the trip making it difficult to fit these trips in to our day.*
  2. *There is no easy way to access the garage from south campus after 5pm when the vehicle gates are shut."*
- From Mathematics: *"I teach at 11am this term. Because of my family situation (and where I live) I cannot take any kind of transit and must drive in every day. Since I am the person responsible for getting my kids to school the earliest I can leave my home area will be 9:15. My kids are not yet back at school (they begin the end of next week), so today I was able to leave early enough that I got to campus at 9:06. I attempted to find a spot in RLC, then in the physical plant lot, then in the lot under the tracks at 240th (all to no avail) and finally I went up to the Broadway garage and after driving for a bit did secure a spot there. I walked out the Broadway entrance and arrived at the department at 9:37, 31 minutes after first getting to campus. If this delay becomes a regular part of my morning, then once my children start school next week (and I can't leave my home area until later in the morning) I am concerned that not only will I have no opportunity to prepare for my classes each morning, but I may start unavoidably being late (possibly on a regular basis) for my 11am class."*
- From Mechanical Engineering: *"I get in ridiculously early (around 7:30 AM), mostly to insure that I do get an RLC spot. Even at that time there are at least 15-20 cars in the lot. Maybe the fact that I leave home so early, mainly so that I may get one of these spots, is something worth mentioning."*
- Clearly the Broadway garage has not become the catch-all that the administration had hoped for as several faculty mentioned being unable to find spots even there. Further, the Broadway garage is significantly inconvenient for South Campus employees, most of whom spend their entire day in the South Campus area (unlike students who typically migrate between both North and South Campus classes and activities). Finally, the "10/15 minute walk" from (and then back to) Broadway garage will only become more difficult and dangerous as winter sets in, with snow and ice and sunsets close to 4pm.
- Further, the Leo parking lot had been designated for faculty and staff use prior to its demolition. This allowed faculty unable to arrive on campus very early in the day (for whatever reason) to still find parking in South Campus upon

their arrival. This ensured faculty were always permitted to be best prepared to serve their primary purpose at the College: to educate their students.

- Since the administration has made it clear that it will not invest in creating a new parking lot for South Campus employees to compensate us for the loss of the Leo lot, the only solution appears to be the reallocation of existing College parking lots such that a lot near South Campus that is either general or student use be established going forward as ‘employee use only.’

#### Solution:

- Last spring, with the closure of the Leo parking lot looming, the Council for Faculty Affairs (CFA) sent a proposal to Provost Clyde requesting that the parking lot under the MTA tracks at the northwest corner of 240th Street and Broadway be reassigned for faculty and staff use only. At that time the Provost dismissed the resolution out of hand, stating that the parking needs of all faculty were already being met; however it took only two weeks into the new academic year to see that South Campus faculty are already regularly failing to find any available parking on campus.
- The 240<sup>th</sup> Street lot is current designed for student use only; admittedly this solution will cause disruption in their lives, which is always to be avoided *unless absolutely necessary*. Unfortunately, we have already reached that point. South Campus faculty are already finding difficulty getting to their classes on-time specifically because of a lack of parking. The needs of the students must always be put first, but in this case the paramount need here is for the students to have their faculty available and ready to educate and mentor them. Should an alternative solution exist that would provide South Campus employees dedicated parking convenient to our workspace that would not disrupt the status quo of student parking then this of course would be **strongly preferred**; however, no such alternative appears to be available at this time.

#### Proposed Resolution:

- Whereas the College is focused primarily on providing the best possible education to its students, and thus will do whatever is necessary to ensure that all faculty, regardless of the circumstances that dictate what time each day they are able to arrive on campus, have the necessary opportunity to fulfill that purpose,
- The Manhattan College Senate resolves that effective October 1<sup>st</sup>, the parking lot at the northwest corner of 240<sup>th</sup> Street and Broadway will be repurposed for faculty and staff use only.