

Breezeway bicycle hassle nearing solution

By E.G. WHITE-SWIFT
Of the Emerald

The terror of the EMU tunnels may soon be over.

Pedestrians attempting to negotiate the EMU breezeway from the basement print shop to Baskin-Robbins should have some relief from cruising bicycles in the near future. The Campus Planning Committee (CPC) is nearing completion of plans to slow bicycles, which should give pedestrians at least an even chance when crossing bicycle alley.

The CPC has been looking for an immediate safety fix for the hazardous area at the request of the EMU Board. Pedestrians have complained the area in and around the tunnels is unsafe at any speed.

"In reality, the breezeway or walkway beneath the EMU is a defacto bike route," explained Frank Anderson, head of a Transportation Subcommittee of the CPC and a University mathematics professor. "It is the only real link for east-west bicycle traffic around the EMU."

At a Tuesday joint-meeting of CPC Transportation and Design-Review Subcommittees, Ander-

son said the non-stop bicycle traffic builds up speed on the brick slopes that lead into the tunnels. Peak speed is reached in the narrows, where the unwary pedestrian is likely to be surprised by the unstoppable two-wheelers.

Anderson's subcommittee has been investigating methods to reduce critical bicycle-pedestrian conflicts since the University released about \$1,000 to correct the worst areas identified in a transportation study last year. After a few meetings, the yield barrels were put in place on Agate Street where the 14th Avenue bicycle path crosses without warning signs. As a result, no additional car-bicycle accidents have been reported.

"Bicyclists were alerted of the dangerous Agate intersection before they reached the crossing," Anderson stated, "helping to reduce speeds in the area. We would like to slow down bicyclists in the tunnels of EMU, too."

At Tuesday's meeting, the subcommittees discussed three possible solutions to the tunnel nightmare. A proposal that would have imposed barriers to force bicyclists to walk their bikes was ruled impossible, as the area is well established as a bike route. The CPC has no funds for enforcement, which is the only way the plan would work.

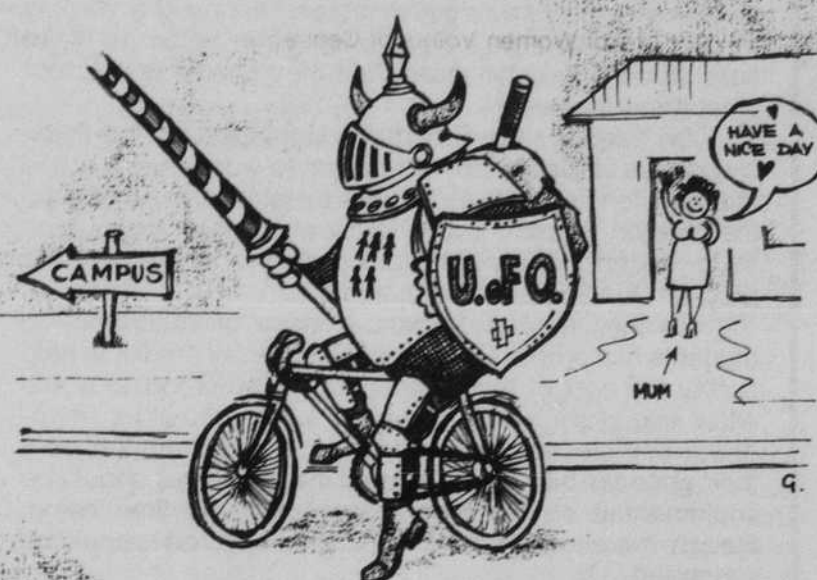
The Transportation Subcommittee's plan is to segregate bicycles and pedestrians, allowing each group its own well-marked tunnel. Robert Harris, CPC chairman and dean of the architecture school, summarized committee members' concern that channelization might create problems of its own.

"There may be some associated safety problems," he said, "as individual lanes may not allow enough access for bicycles to pass. In addition, exclusive lanes may even increase bicycle speeds through the bicycle-only side of the breezeway."

Harris cautioned against "designing in twenty problems just to design out one problem. With the limited funds we have to use to create solutions, we need to find answers that won't create additional problems or costs down the road."

A new proposal presented at Tuesday's meeting would see the installation of wooden ballards or posts leading into the breezeway areas. The ballards would blend in with the bricks better than white-striped lines. They would include cautions to slow down bicyclists late for a class across campus.

The subcommittees plan to hold another joint meeting to finalize a joint proposal. The final proposal would still have to be presented to



Drawing by Gilbert Oneta

the complete Campus Planning Committee, meet the general approval of the EMU Board, and receive a funding allocation from University Pres. William Boyd.

Until the planners work out all the kinks, bicyclists should try to relieve some of the tunnel terror by slowing down in the breezeway area.

Union challenges meal price hike

The University may be forced to reimburse student food service workers for a price hike in student employe meals implemented last May.

Herrick also recommended that the University be ordered to bargain with the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) on this issue. AFSCME local 1893 is the representative union for student part-time food service workers.

Christine Herrick, attorney examiner for the Employment Relations Board (ERB), has recommended that student food service workers be reimbursed for the 25 cent price hike, with six per cent interest, for meals purchased since the day the price hike went

into effect.

The University has filed objections to Herrick's recommendations. The ERB will make a final decision after holding a hearing in February.

Jack Condliffe, AFSCME local 1893 president, said the price hike was "an illegal, unilateral change of working conditions." According to law, a change of work conditions must be discussed and agreed upon with the representative union, explained Condliffe.

Condliffe added that federal precedent states that discount on the retail price of a product for employees is a mandatory bargaining item. He also pointed out Oregon State law states that direct or indirect monetary benefits are bargaining items.

Asst. Atty. Gen. William Hoelscher, representing the University in this case, says the specific price of the meals is not a working condition. Historical precedent, he says, has been a 40 per cent discount of retail price. With rising costs, Hoelscher says the new price of 75 cents per meal is a 40 per cent discount.

Hoelscher also said the union (AFSCME) never asked to bargain on this issue during last spring's contract negotiations before filing an unfair labor practice. He called this "bad-faith bargaining."

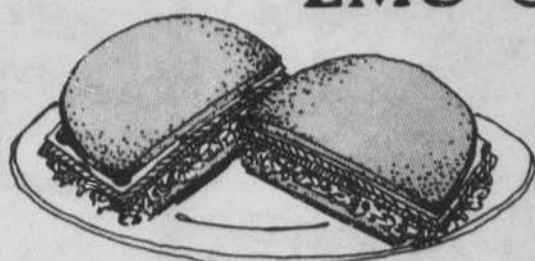
Condliffe explained with ERB agent Herrick concurring, that all contract proposals had to be on the bargaining table before negotiations began. After consulting the ERB mediator, Condliffe concluded he could not present the meal ticket issue as a bargaining proposal.

Condliffe said his only alternative was to file an unfair labor practice. Condliffe believes this particular issue "reflects the University's general failure to deal with the union."

General Faculty to meet

The University General Faculty meets today in 150 Geology. Items on the agenda include a notice of motion to be introduced by marketing professor John Wish calling for establishment of the early semester system throughout the University. Currently only the School of Law operates under such a system, with its first semester beginning in August and concluding in December and its second semester beginning in January and concluding in May.

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