

RAG & BONE

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Pangle To Resign

Rash to Become President

by Robert Koenig

Student Government President Brett Pangle announced that he will submit his resignation as SG president on December 18th, the final day of the fall semester. The announcement came on December 9th at a special meeting of the student senate called by Senator Jay Fine. The resignation will elevate the present vice-president, Jim Rash, to the presidency for the spring semester.

Prior to his announcement, Pangle heard complaints from several members of the senate regarding his lack of participation in SG affairs, the failure of the administration to work effectively with the cabinet and the misappropriation of funds. The meeting was called by Fine to bring out a discussion of these complaints. Pangle listened to the various complaints and told the full senate, "I admit I haven't

given 100 percent, but how many of you can sit there and say that you have?" Rumors of the impending resignation have been circulating for several weeks. Until the special meeting on Tuesday, Pangle had consistently denied the rumors.

The SG president's resignation is the latest in a series of resignations that have marked the present administration since it took office. Earlier in the term, resignations were submitted by cabinet members Karen Sheldon, Steve Tuttle, Maria Domingo and Rickie Bell. Many of these earlier resignations cited failure to work with the president. Finance Commissioner Rickie Bell's resignation was rejected by the senate. Before making his announcement, Pangle told the senate that he had planned to fire both Bell and Attorney General David Bradley.

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SG Vice President Jim Rash

TO MALL OR NOT TO MALL

by Susan Marschalk

James Daniels of the 11-member Asheville Revitalization Commission endorses no project yet that will determine the fate of the 11-block area known as Lexington Park and recently declared "blighted" by Asheville City Planning Department.

Former Asheville Mayor Gene Ochsenreiter Jr. is chairman of the Committee of 44, also known as the Citizens Committee, made up of civic leaders and businessmen from all over Buncombe County who support the urban center proposed by Strouse-Greenberg Co. of Philadelphia as the answer to Asheville's downtown revitalization problem.

The two have one thing in common. They see Asheville as the hub of Western North Carolina and the downtown area as the hub of Asheville. And something needs to be done.

"Downtown Asheville is not dead, but it's pretty sick," said Daniels.

Downtown business and tax revenues took a nosedive with the opening of the Asheville Mall on Highway 70 in 1972, he said. A larger mall planned by a national developer will soon locate at the western end of the city.

"The effect (on downtown) will be monumental," he said.

According to Daniels, the urban center project outlined by Strouse-Greenberg would cost an estimated \$135 million. The developer has asked the city to acquire the land, demolish the buildings and construct parking facilities--all at a projected cost of \$35 million--and then lease the whole package to Strouse-Greenberg, which would invest an estimated \$100 million.

Where would the \$35 million city investment come from?

A city bond issue or federal grant or a combination of both would pay the city's obligations, Daniels said. The advantages of issuing revenue bonds, which are bonds issued by local government and not private investors, are that they attract investors by being tax-free and offering high interest rates and that only the buyers of the bonds would lose if the project failed, he said.

"No area for chance" would exist, however, Daniels said. "The city would require guarantees" from Strouse-Greenberg that the investment would be a sound one.

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by John Edwards

Building a mall downtown is "radical surgery," and though it may add some convenience to the life of Ashevilleians, there are those who feel the John Lantzius plan for the revitalization of 11 blocks is "a face-lifting as opposed to complete redevelopment."

Lantzius, who resides in Vancouver, B.C., was born and raised in North Carolina. His plan includes renovation of most buildings that will be levelled if the Strouse-Greenberg mall proposal is approved. John Reid, landscape architect for Lantzius, calls the destruction of buildings to make room for a mall "radical surgery."

"The plan will include selective removal," he said, "but will be adaptive and based on the reuse of existing structures." Lantzius's plan is to create a setting much like Lexington Park throughout the 11 block area. "It would be of higher and better use to the community and would offer more variety with a richer, more exciting atmosphere."

"A mall is a carefully controlled machine to induce buying. The Lantzius plan offers a far richer environment," said Reid.

"So downtown is dying. What are we going to do, destroy it?" asked Wayne Caldwell, chairman of Save Downtown, Inc. Caldwell is also a downtown merchant, and thinks the Lantzius plan is "the best thing we've got going at this point" in regards to Asheville's revitalization. He said the plan "dovetails the original plan of the Asheville Revitalization Commission."

Save Downtown worked closely with the commission on a downtown improvement plan until October 1979. "On March 12, 1980 the public found out about the mall proposal," said Caldwell.

"The original plan was a face-lifting as opposed to complete redevelopment. Of course Asheville is inconvenient--it was built around people, horses and streetcars. The original plan was to preserve Asheville's uniqueness and revitalize the downtown businesses," Caldwell said.

Some downtown businessmen will profit from the mall complex. For instance, a businessman who can afford to buy property behind a shopping center to relocate will also be eligible for relocation compensation. Others will have to relocate in less profitable areas. This will also add to the strain on profits from the mall competition. "Some stores downtown aren't established enough to survive in a mall. What you have in the malls are national chains competing with local business," Caldwell said.

The city of Asheville will foot the bill for a \$35 million parking facility on which the Strouse-Greenberg complex will be built, if approved. "How can a parking facility built from taxpayers' money be built to serve a mall complex?" Caldwell asks. "You hear that the taxpayer will not be affected. Where is the \$35 million coming from then?"

The construction of a downtown mall would, as exemplified by the construction of the Akzona building, to a lesser degree, turn downtown Asheville into an annoying place to shop for about four years. The Lantzius plan would take about ten years to complete.