



Hodgins Retreat, originally expected to open in August to house students for the fall, will not begin construction until the end of 2008 at the earliest.

Hodgins Retreat delays opening

By Landry Haarmann
STAFF WRITER

The controversial Hodgins Retreat development, scheduled to be move-in ready this past August, is still not complete. However, construction will get underway at the end of 2008 and beginning of 2009.

Set to open in August 2008, Hodgins Retreat planned to ease Guilford's housing congestion.

However, the grand August 2008 opening has yet to happen.

Last year students signed up to live in the affordable and campus accessible housing unit; however, residents of the George White Road neighborhood were displeased with the city's choice to move forward with building the complex.

Without all the necessary approval from the Greensboro Zoning Commission to proceed with construction, the apartment building remains incomplete.

"If everything wasn't approved by April 1, I did not want to take the chance, due to ... approval, for it to not be ready for school," said Hodgins Retreat contractor Randy Dixon.

"It's like 'welcome to Guilford College, here's your hotel,'" said Dixon. "There's no reason to have that hassle for the students, parents, and everyone involved."

Jonathan Varnell, associate vice president of operations and facilities, said the college planned around the possibility of the complex not being ready for the start of school.

"Their delay didn't have a big impact on the college," said Varnell.

The college's preparation meant there were few housing problems. Dean of Students Aaron Fetrow

said that the college was able to find housing for students who signed up to live in apartment complex.

"We helped move many people to Legacy, Westborough (formerly known as Friendly Hills), and back to campus. It wasn't a big problem," said Fetrow.

Presently, Dixon is preparing the site for construction. He brought in dirt to even the land's topography and placed orange nets to mark where to cut trees.

"Our plan is to start construction site work at the end of this year, either late November or early December, and construction on the building in February," said Dixon. "To make sure they're ready prior to school."

Hodgins will consist of 36 units. Each apartment will include fully furnished rooms, new appliances, cable with HBO, and high-speed Internet.

"We tried to plan this for students," said Dixon. "Everyone has a bathroom, a walk-in closet, big kitchen and living area."

Guilford offered land to connect the apartments to campus.

"We want to be good neighbors and certainly don't oppose having a housing complex for students next door," said John Varnell. "The college is coordinating sewer lines, storm water run-off, the pathway connection to campus and the George White road connection."

Dixon also thinks the new apartment complex has many perks.

"Students will be able to walk across the parking lot, get on a concrete pathway that goes around the football field and to campus," said Dixon.

"We think it'll be a benefit for students to be this close to campus but still with the benefits of being off campus," Dixon said.

Capital budget reduced

By Maxwell Reitman
STAFF WRITER

Ever wonder how academic departments go about getting those snazzy pieces of equipment – the pianos, the labs, the scales, the lighting rigs?

They all go under the category of capital budget requests, which individual departments have to submit proposals for. This year the overall budget shortfall is causing a bit of a snag in that process.

"The budget this year was made on certain expectations – and all those expectations came in under," said Jack Zerbe, professor of theatre studies.

Low enrollment, over-awarding of scholarships, students graduating on time, and the school's recent financial history added up to a million dollar shortfall, according to Zerbe.

As a result, the school might not be seeing as many of those larger items for the institution as in previous years. Departments are being asked to cut down on asking for big items this year. Tim Lindeman, professor of music, said that the requests to cut down "came right from the top office."

The music department withdrew its proposal for this year. Similarly, other departments have withdrawn or delayed proposals or asked for relatively little.

"The music department has a list a mile long (of things they'd like to do, but) college-wide needs supersede departmental needs in a situation like this," said Lindeman.

Academic departments have to compete with requests from IT&S as well as the physical plant, these two being the largest annual consumers of capital request funds. This means that when things get a little tighter, the choice can be between new computers or complicated upkeep costs, and lighting systems or lab equipment.

Geology Department Chair Angie Moore has been buying second-hand scientific equipment for a couple of years now, but that is not to say the reduced budget

will be any easier on them than anyone else.

"(We) may need to pay for things that we weren't expecting to pay for," said Moore. "We really are trying to stretch the money as far as it can go," she said as she set up a surveying tool, which they purchased from eBay with a capital request a few years ago.

Rob Whitnell, chemistry department chair, reported that instead of buying a new flourimeter, they are trying to get the current one updated to modern technology.

The general faculty seems to be coping with the situation remarkably well. "I'm much more worried about the national financial situation," said Adele Wayman, Hege professor of art, despite the fact that her department is one of those going without a proposal this year.

Even though this means that some of the larger propositions will have to be put on hold, it does not mean that there will not be any projects approved in the meantime. Because of the unexpected changes in budget the deadline to turn in proposals this year has been pushed back until November, after the final attendance figures for the fall come in during October.

Some departments have not been noticeably inconvenienced. The philosophy department, for example, rarely asks for anything. When asked about the subject, Nancy Daukas, department chair, said that as opposed to big purchases "what we need is time."

Sarah Malino, history department chair, noted that she was more concerned about the department's course-load than capital budget requests.

A few faculty voices noted that it is good to remember that the administration is not trying to make people's lives hard. "There is a tendency in students and faculty to sense some devilish conspiracy in the works," said Zerbe. "(But) we're going to invest where we hope we can make the biggest difference (for the college)."

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