

TRADER JOE'S

Possible Trader Joe's in Greensboro ... not in my back yard?

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nearest one is in Chapel Hill — others are less than thrilled with the possibility of more development of that area in Greensboro.

"I am not in favor of rezoning residential to commercial," said Susan Wilson, a member of the board of Hamilton Lakes and Parks Inc., to the News & Record. "There is plenty of commercial property in this town"

"The issue of zoning and where any retail place should be located is different than whether someone supports the particular store" said Wright. "In considering rezoning you have to consider any business that fits within the particular zoning classification. It doesn't matter if it's a Trader Joe's, CVS or Big Lots."

Some are excited about the economic boost that Trader Joe's could bring to the area. Many have longed for a Trader Joe's to come to the area for many years.

"We definitely think we should have Trader Joe's in Greensboro," said Mayor Robbie Perkins to The Guilfordian. "We have found it to be a great opportunity, great products at reasonable prices."

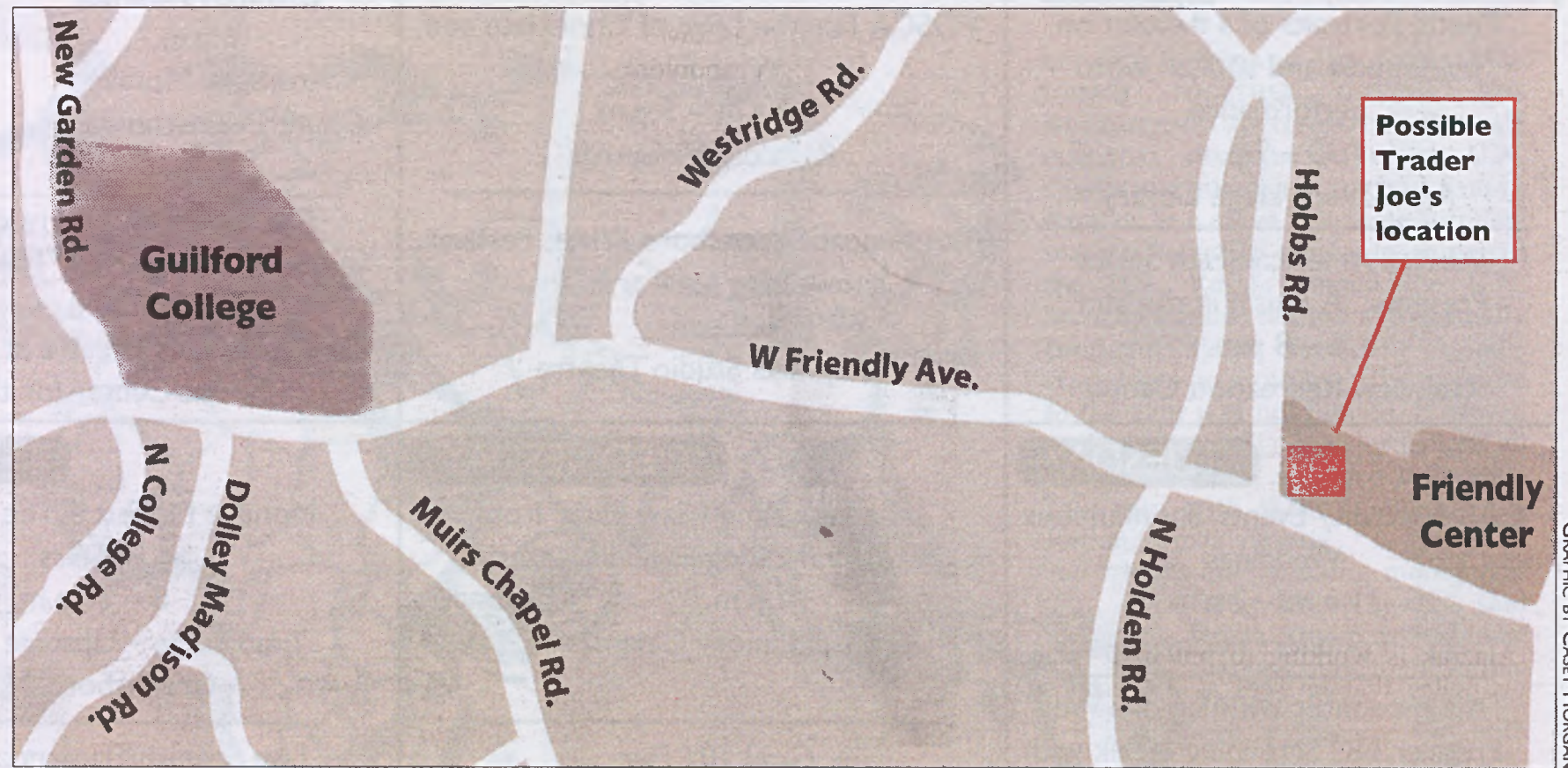
In contrast, residents near the proposed location are strongly opposed to Trader Joe's encroaching upon a residential area.

"There is a neighborhood group opposed to the rezoning," said Ed Cone, local blogger and editor of Ziff Davis Enterprise, via email. "It drew a lot of people to its first meeting. There's discussion, pro and con, on local blogs."

"A lot of people would want it, but someplace else," said Clyde Marr, a member of the board of the Hamilton Lakes and Parks Inc., to the News and Record. "Unfortunately, it is one of those things (where people say), 'Not in my neighborhood.'"

One possible solution is to allow Trader Joe's to use one of the many existing and vacant buildings somewhere else.

"I'd be happy to see a Trader Joe's in Greensboro, but I'd



GRAPHIC BY CASEY HORGAN

prefer that we not pave over more green space and extend commercial development further down Friendly Avenue to get it," said Cone. "There is a lot of vacant commercial space in this town. We should stop treating buildings and land as disposable assets."

"Something that concerns me is that we have a lot of vacant retail space," said Wright. "Could some of that be utilized?"

"My personal preference would be to put the store at Golden Gate shopping center," said Cone. "I understand that location may not meet some site-location criteria and that another grocery store tenant would have to be appeased,

but maybe those obstacles could be negotiated."

At this point, a Trader Joe's coming to Greensboro is still a rumor, though many seem to think it likely that the grocery store chain will be seeking a location in the city.

"There are a number of steps a person has to go through to get a piece of property rezoned," said Wright. "It is ultimately up to the (City) Council to decide whether a piece of property should be designated for another use."

"Trader Joe's has yet to officially file a zoning application," said Perkins. "We won't know more until the application has been filed, March 12. It's a long process and we are right at the very beginning of it now."

Amnesty International's documentary "Education Under Fire" and Baha'i campaign spread to Guilford campus**FILM FOCUSES ON OPPRESSION OF EDUCATORS AND STUDENTS IN IRAN**

By Kate Gibson
STAFF WRITER

"A lot of times, you have no idea what's happened to your loved ones — where they've been taken, for how long (or) what they're accused of," said senior Sarah Barnett, a Baha'i student at Guilford.

For Baha'is in Iran who have been charged with the crime of education, the scene Barnett describes is the current reality.

Since the political revolution of 1979, the Iranian government — a theocracy in which the Shia Islamic clergy rule — has been systematically oppressing Baha'is by imprisoning, torturing and even executing any who seek a higher education.

These actions directly violate Article 26 of the U.N. Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and Amnesty International believes that international pressure can help bring an end to these injustices.

To raise awareness of this issue, Barnett and first-year and fellow Baha'i Heather Nelson organized a screening of Amnesty International's documentary "Education Under Fire" on Feb. 2.

The documentary focuses on the history of the Baha'i Institute for Higher Education, founded in 1987 in response to the government oppression of Baha'is. At its inception, the institute served fewer than 100 students, who would secretly gather in professors' apartments where makeshift classrooms awaited them.

Eventually, students and faculty acquired a building in Tehran in which to conduct their education. Despite efforts

Some received sentences as high as 20 years under the charge of education. Some were executed, including a 16-year-old girl.

"We should respect other religions and everybody must be allowed to express themselves however they want to as long as it doesn't affect or harm anyone," said first-year Lesley Manuh after the film.

A conversation panel followed the film, featuring Roya Tooloian, a Baha'i who

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to avoid unwanted attention, the BIHE endured government raids in 1998 and again in May 2011.

"(The government) confiscated books, materials and computers," said a man in the documentary. "(They) arrested the person who was in charge and put a lock on the building so no one could go back."

Government officials raided the homes of professors and students, imprisoning those with a connection to the institution.

grew up in Iran and sought educational freedom in the United States; Jeremy Rinker, visiting assistant professor of peace and conflict studies; and John Michael Justice, a Baha'i member of the Greensboro community.

Tooloian spoke of escaping Iran to attend college in America, where she worked hard to afford the tuition of an international student, which can be triple or quadruple the amount that a country

resident pays.

Rinker explained how the Baha'i faith, once considered to be a splinter group of Islam but now formally considered its own world religion, may have become a target for government oppression.

"This kind of sectarianism is seen as dissent from the official state religion," said Rinker. "The mere fact of practicing this faith becomes seen by the Iranian officials as dissent against the state."

Justice invited event attendees to join the "Drive to 25," a petition of sorts which can be accessed on the official campaign website, educationunderfire.com.

"You can send an automated letter to seven officials within the Iranian government ... calling on them to desist from the active and systematic persecution of the Baha'i community," said Justice.

The Drive to 25 campaign hopes to garner 25,000 signatures. The only information required to sign is an email address — adding a name is optional.

Nelson also hopes "that Guilford will open their doors to BIHE credit, that (Baha'i) students can transfer and have the option of going to this school as well."

"(BIHE students) really love to learn," said Tooloian. "They really, really want to do something for mankind, not to become successful. ... They just want to become better human beings and be knowledgeable and help someone."