

The Daily Tar Heel

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JON HARRIS — EDITORIAL NOTEBOOK

Futile Actions

Some Chapel Hill residents needlessly insist on opposing University growth, even with looming opposition from the General Assembly.

Residents of Chapel Hill are finally beginning to realize that the University can grow whenever and wherever it wants to.

With all the concerns over rezoning, bond projects and other implications of the Master Plan, Chapel Hill is witnessing a transformation of UNC into the WWF's superstar wrestler, the Rock.

In addition to laying the smack-down on the Town, the University has also picked up one of the Rock's best catch phrases: "know your role Chapel Hill — know your role and shut your mouth."

Like the Rock, the University will have the right-of-way it deserves, regardless of the unnecessary limitations placed upon it.

Thus far, the Town has relied on the authority granted to it by the General Assembly to regulate University construction. Without this authority, the Town is left with a meager set of tools to stop growth.

Lately, this authority has been threatened recently by the General Assembly.

The budget "rider" incident should have finally made it clear to residents that opposition has absolutely no bearing on what the University wants to do.

Senate Majority Leader Tony Rand proposed the rider to the state budget, which would have allowed the University to override any decision made by the Town Council to limit UNC's growth.

Even after the rider's removal after 11th hour talks between Chancellor James Moeser and Mayor Rosemary Waldorf, Rand told Orange County Senator Howard Lee that if a growth conflict between Chapel Hill and the University ever arose in the future, he would

make sure that such an event would never happen again.

The residents now know that any attempt to interfere with University growth will not be tolerated by the General Assembly.

It seems like some residents have not gotten the message and are involved in some frivolous crusade to halt development on Mason Farm Road.

It is high time that protesting residents realize that although this institution resides in Chapel Hill, the institution still remains the University of North Carolina. Therefore, the considerations of the entire state will always take precedence over a few property owners in Chapel Hill.

This University is what makes Chapel Hill what it is. Not only because of the fact that the University owns some 12 percent of its land, but from the huge economic benefits and notoriety Chapel Hill receives from UNC's presence.

The University is not stealing land away from the town. UNC rightfully owns all of the land involved in the disputes.

Therefore, the Town of Chapel Hill cannot possibly make the decision to limit any growth or rezoning plan introduced by University representatives. From now on, it does not matter how many Town Council members line up their votes with residents.

It does not matter how many petitions reach the Town Council from property owners.

All that matters now is the fact that UNC can throw around more weight than the Town of Chapel Hill, especially since UNC now has powerful friends to call on in the General Assembly.

JON HARRIS — EDITORIAL NOTEBOOK

Old Faithful

Chapel Hill voters need to give the same support they always give to Jesse Helms in a possible 2002 re-election bid.

Chapel Hill is in for some more bad news. As if getting slapped around by the University wasn't bad enough, Chapel Hill's favorite North Carolina Senator may not be their United States Senator for the next congressional term.

Sadly, Jesse Helms, our US Senator for four consecutive terms, may choose not to run in the 2002 election.

I know it pains the Town's residents to think of someone else besides Jesse Helms representing them in the US Senate.

Even though it's a tough sell, Chapel Hill voters must be convinced to support a re-election bid for ol' Uncle Jesse.

First, some of the anti-progressive stances in his past will require some overlooking.

Like the time when he called the Civil Rights Act of 1964 "the most dangerous piece of legislation ever introduced into the Congress."

Ah yes...so the old Dixiecrat party platform may not be progressive enough for Chapel Hill.

The townspeople will also have to forget what he did last week.

Helms sponsored a bill to cut federal funding to school districts who bar the Boy Scouts from meeting at their schools in order "to combat the organized lesbians and homosexuals in the country."

Okay, so maybe ol' Jesse's past doesn't go too far in winning the votes of the people of Chapel Hill.

But on top of all those shady incidents (which are too numerous to list) from the past, the old Cold War berserker has thawed out a little bit. Helms has even become an

advocate for some of the favorite bumper sticker causes here in Chapel Hill.

For example, he recently met with U2 singer Bono to discuss the AIDS crisis in Africa, international debt relief and landmines.

Then Helms proved his rapport with Chapel Hill's young voters by going to a U2 concert — his first rock concert ever.

Even though he said it was the noisiest thing he ever heard, nobody that old goes to a rock concert unless they are in tune with the younger generation.

Here are a few other reasons why Chapel Hill should urge Helms to run in 2002:

1. He defends the weak.
2. He single-handedly prevented world domination of the United Nations.
3. He risked sedition to speak his mind.
4. He is helping developing countries to the road of economic success by giving them sound advice.

Helms told Mexican President Vicente Fox to "stay away from the media, the Marxists, and the US State Department."

The people of Chapel Hill have probably not forgotten the time Helms called Chapel Hill a zoo. So when 2002 rolls around, I expect a fiery grass roots campaign here in Chapel Hill in support of our loyal dinosaur. I mean senator.



FBI Needs to Get Its Act Together

The Federal Bureau of Investigation has been in the news a lot recently. First was the bad news that one of the FBI's very own agents, Robert Hanssen, had spied for the Soviet Union for over 15 years.

Then came the real bombshell: turns out that the FBI ignored a court order to turn over all of its documents in the Timothy McVeigh case, withholding thousands of pages of evidence from the defense.

Here was a guy who had blown up a building in broad daylight and then confessed to his crime in a national bestseller.

Yet unbelievably, the FBI managed to mess things up. This is your tax dollars at work ladies and gentlemen: an FBI that is so inept that it can't even tag all the bases after hitting a home run. The evidence in the McVeigh case was overwhelming. McVeigh himself was the remorseless, self-confessed perpetrator of the bombing and the FBI still dropped the ball.

The surprising thing is that people are actually surprised.

Despite its carefully crafted public image — who could hate the guys on the X-Files team, the ones who beat the mob with Elliot Ness and Company, the impeccably dressed G-Man keeping the world safe from evil — FBI screwups are the rule instead of the exception.

Robert Hanssen and Tim McVeigh are only the most recent examples.

There's Waco and Ruby Ridge — two events that Tim McVeigh says led him to commit the Oklahoma City bombing.

Whether the actions of the FBI were criminal in these cases is debatable, but most people seem to agree that the situations could have been handled better.

The FBI lied about the use of incendiary devices at Waco and bulldozed the site in an attempt to make sure no one could contradict them. The FBI killed an unarmed woman and an infant at Ruby Ridge, adding to the body count of a 14-year-old boy and a U.S. Marshall.

This isn't paranoid right-wing militia fantasy material — you can get this stuff right off the pages of the New York Times or Washington Post. The siege at Ruby Ridge was even made into a network movie, starring Kirsten Dunst as white separatist Randy Weaver's daughter.



BILL HILL
STREET NAME = GRAPPA BOY

The fact is that the FBI comes out smelling stinky if you take a hard look at either of these events.

Anyone remember Eric Rudolph? He's the guy implicated in bombings throughout the south, including the Olympic Centennial Park bombing during the Atlanta Olympics. After one of the largest manhunts in FBI history, the mad bomber remains at large, probably somewhere right here in North Carolina.

How's that for our state's tourist image? Hundreds of man-hours notwithstanding, the FBI has not yet been able to catch one of America's Most Wanted.

Did I mention the Olympic bombing? What about Richard Jewell, the hapless security guard who made the mistake of actually warning the crowd at the Park that he had found a bomb.

His reward for helping move people away from the blast and save lives?

A grueling three-month investigation from the FBI, publicly naming him as the prime suspect in the bombing. While he was eventually cleared, it wasn't before the FBI had tricked Jewell into making incriminating statements about himself.

Speaking of prime suspects, let's talk about Wen Ho Lee, a man that the FBI once described as "one of the most dangerous threats to national security that our nation has ever seen."

Lee was kept in jail for nine months in part due to the testimony of an FBI agent — an agent who later recanted his testimony because he "repeatedly erred" when he originally convinced the judge of Lee's danger. These "errors" were so egregious that the judge in the case eventually apologized to Mr. Lee for the way that he'd been treated.

The apology from the judge took place the

day Mr. Lee got out of jail.

He was released as part of a plea bargain because the FBI couldn't prove its case.

Louis Freeh's FBI couldn't be bothered to polygraph whitebread Robert Hanssen to see if he was a spy, and instead throws an Asian man into solitary for nine months because they "think" he might be selling secrets to China.

Here's the punch line: it turns out that they got the wrong guy. While the FBI was out on a veritable hate-crime holiday against Wen Ho Lee, it was really one of their very own that was the spy. Go figure.

This type of behavior is as much a part of the FBI's institutional history as Carolina Blue is here in Chapel Hill. Just look at the discredited COINTELPRO operations of the '60s and '70s — operations where the FBI blatantly disregarded the Constitution to infiltrate and destroy suspected "radical" groups.

Jailed American Activist Leonard Peltier is another example of an FBI gone wrong. Peltier and two of his friends were accused of killing two FBI agents on the Pine Ridge Indian reservation in 1975. Peltier fled to Canada and fought extradition, while his two accomplices were tried here in the U.S.

After Peltier's co-defendants were acquitted, the FBI produced a fake affidavit to secure his return to the U.S. Between the trial of his friends and Peltier's trial, the FBI miraculously found new evidence, evidence which more strongly linked Peltier to the murders.

The only problem is that the evidence was falsified by the FBI. Worse, the record strongly suggests that the FBI encouraged false testimony from fake eyewitnesses at Peltier's trial.

Peltier was convicted and his appeals have been exhausted. He has served 24 years in Federal Prison for a crime that he did not commit. And, as in the McVeigh case, the FBI has withheld thousands of pages of documents from Peltier's defense. Yet unlike the McVeigh case, the FBI continues to hide over 6,000 documents, including ballistic evidence that might prove Peltier's innocence.

Louis Freeh may be leaving, but I'll bet money that the FBI doesn't change a bit.

Bill Hill's e-mail is now monitored by the FBI. Stand up to "the Man" and reach him at wbill@unc.edu.

READERS' FORUM

Alumna's Attitude Draws Criticism from Current UNC Student

TO THE EDITOR:

Ruby Sinreich's letter to the editor in regards to voting against the entire budget really has me up in arms.

You are so callous!

This university has been in desperate need for these funds and I am ashamed of all the alumni who have taken what they needed to better their lives, and then left the university behind to be forgotten once they get theirs.

You don't even deserve to be an alumna.

If that's your attitude toward this school, to bite the hand that fed you, then your degree should no longer be valid.

You are not worthy of it. Every year this campus provides

affordable miracles and changes lives and destinies. I've been almost embarrassed at the altered conditions on this campus in the recent past due to a previous lack of funds from the General Assembly.

But I was elated when the majority of citizens of the state of North Carolina voted to support our system of higher education in this state by voting yes to last year's bond referendum.

Your "so be it" would be a vote against future generations who have not yet had your now obviously undeserved privilege to benefit from all UNC has to offer.

I have news for you.

Your shallow, insensitive, and ungrateful opinion are not going to setback any of the admirable steps taken by the voters of North Carolina who outnumber you in their benevolent decision.

They are in their right mind and

have shown they place a priority on this University so much that they are willing to take this bond upon themselves. And you are not going to deprive UNC of that.

"Vote against the entire budget?" You should be ashamed of yourself.

I am. It is wonderful people like the voters in the past who made this institution what it is today. And you have those supporters to thank yourself.

I trust the Mayor of Chapel Hill to handle the University's upcoming rezoning requests in a much more reasonable fashion.

Teri Austin, RDH Student, Post Certificate Completion of Bachelors in Dental Hygiene

The length rule was waived.



The Daily Tar Heel welcomes comments and criticism. Letters to the editor should be no longer than 300 words and must be typed, double-spaced, dated and signed by no more than two people. Students include their year, major and phone number; Faculty and staff include their title, department and phone number. The DTH reserves the right to edit letters for space, clarity and vulgarity. Publication is not guaranteed. Bring letters to the DTH office at Suite 104, Carolina Union or e-mail forum to: editdesk@unc.edu.

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Office: Suite 104 Carolina Union
Campus Mail Address: CB# 5210 Box 49, Carolina Union
U.S. Mail Address: P.O. Box 3257, Chapel Hill, NC 27515-3257