

# University Florist shop to renovate, expand Franklin Street site

By **BETH BUFFINGTON**  
Staff Writer

Something new will replace the closed Grump's bakery shop at 124 E. Franklin St. — well, sort of.

The University Florist and Gift Shop, which has been downtown since 1946, is being renovated and will expand into the space left by Grump's, said Charles House, owner of the University Florist and landlord of the unoccupied space.

"If Grump's hadn't closed, we probably would have just waited for the lease to expire and then eventually go on with our (renovation and expansion) plans," House said.

The florist temporarily closed for the renovation in early May, when the construction began. Renovation is expected to be completed by the first of August, he said.

"Our intentions are to close the

Timberlyne (Village) store once the renovation is over and combine much of what we sell in that (Franklin Street) store," House said.

When Grump's closed last November, House said he had many businesses interested in renting the space.

But after sandwich shops, food stores, clothing outlets, a shoe store and two jewelers expressed interest, House said he hung on to his space.

"There's a myth about Franklin Street — that it's a golden mile, and that's not always true," said George Lawrence, owner of Grump's and The Bread Shop, Inc.

"They think that if you open up a store that 5,000 to 8,000 students will walk by each day and give you their money," he added.

Unless the business idea is good and the store is run well, stores won't survive even on Franklin Street, Lawrence said.

"I think my idea was good, but I didn't do it well," he said.

Plagued with the common mistakes of overcapitalization, competi-



Tar Heel/David Minton

The site that once housed Grump's bakery will get a facelift and become part of University Florist

tion and management problems, Grump's closed its doors, Lawrence said.

"There was a point when the IRS (Internal Revenue Service) came after me and almost closed both businesses," he said. "If (Grump's) had been my only business, and if I could

have been there 18 hours a day, it may have succeeded.

"(House) is going to use the entire

## Smith Center

director be someone who will listen to student concerns, Swofford said.

space for his business, and he has a very successful business," Lawrence said.

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Part of the position is to serve the University community, he said.

The committee should work with the students more, said Brian Holiday, a junior from Wilmington. There should be a committee with a racial balance of students to get a variety of ideas about what students want, he said.

"It (the committee) should get someone who's not going to be biased, who could get groups that appeal to everybody," Holiday said of the new director. "They try to get people who attract the alumni, and I think that's wrong."

Christopher Allman, a senior from Greensboro, said he thought the idea behind the committee showed a lot of insight.

Camp started off well with the Smith Center, and the new director should continue to improve upon that, Allman said. "If concerts are going to be the main source of revenue, then he (the new director) needs to make sure there will be some quality shows," Allman said.

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