

Elon Forest supports university sustainability plan, town intends to expand development



SARAH BETH COSTELLO | Graphics Editor

Elon University's administration will request the preservation of the forest at the October Board of Trustees meeting.

Melissa Kansky
Multimedia Editor

As construction continues throughout campus, Elon University plans for one area on campus to remain untouched. During the Board of Trustees meeting in October,

Elon's administration will recommend the preservation of university owned land, designated for an Elon Forest.

Elon acquired the forest property along University Drive and Powerline Drive in Elon approximately 15 years ago. Although a portion of the land

now houses the Colonnades and Koury Business Center, the administration will propose that the forest along Powerline Drive remains untouched.

"Ever since we owned the property it's been used as a research area for biology," said Gerald Whittington, senior

vice president for Business, Finance and Technology.

While Whittington said he acknowledges the academic opportunities the forest offers the university, he said he values the historical, he said he values the forest, as well. The forest contains some of the oldest trees in Alamance County. The same species of trees have been destroyed in other parts of the county.

"We thought it was the right thing to do to preserve the land in its current form," he said.

Although the Board of Trustees has not yet approved the area as a no development area, Whittington said he expects the proposal will pass.

"Step one is getting the proposal approved," Whittington said, "and whatever else we do with that area will be consistent with the minimal invasive use of that space."

Preservation will not require much funding. Whittington predicts spending will not exceed the cost of signs and the construction of a few trails.

"We want to have as low of an impact as possible," Whittington said. "We want to see the wildlife come back as the animals learn that the area is a safe place to be."

Although minimal construction accommodates Elon's definition of sustainability, the Town of Elon's development plans do not coincide.

Mike Dula, Elon's town manager, said he predicts

development along University Drive, which intersects with Powerline Drive.

Dula said he does not oppose the university's proposal to preserve the forest, but encourages a mixture of the space and land use.

Sean Tencer, Elon town planner, said he believes a conglomeration of land use will promote sustainability.

While zoning once kept incompatible land uses separate from each other, present development plans include commercial, residential and industrial construction in one location.

"The new urbanist movement is more sustainable," Tencer said. "You live, work, eat and play all in the same area. You don't rely on products being shipped into your area. You start to support the local area."

But Burlington and Gibsville borders Elon on three sides, Dula said, and developers can only move north toward University Drive.

"Everything between the Town of Elon and the area around Church Street is pretty much developed," Dula said. "University Drive is newer, and we expect to develop it later."

And despite the town's intention to expand, the location of the Elon Forest is labeled university property.

"The Elon Forest is part of the university master plan," Tencer said. "They decide where they want to build and what they want to preserve."

Students take advantage of textbook rental program

Caitlin O'Donnell
News Editor

When Elon University freshman Ashley Watkins arrived on campus in August, there was one important item she forgot — textbooks.

"Getting things like sheets or a desk lamp for my room took precedence over books," she said. "(I) found out that I had to buy from the campus store."

Rather than buying new or used copies of the books, Watkins took advantage of a new book rental program available to students.

Operated through Barnes and Noble, the book store announced last semester a one-year trial of the rental program.

"There is always continued striving on how to keep textbook prices down and this seemed like the next logical step," said Kathy Scarborough, manager of Elon's Campus Shop.

Scarborough said 30 percent, or around 180, of the titles in the book store are available to rent.

"The cost to rent is 45 percent off of the new book price, so students save over 50 percent off the cost of a new book," she said.

Watkins said price was a big factor in her decision to rent, rather than buy books.

"When it came down to price, renting the books saved me more money," she said. "You save the money up front and don't have to search for a place that will buy your book back for a fair price."

According to the original press release from Barnes and Noble in April, students can rent the textbooks online and are also able to highlight and notate in the books. They are required to return the rentals within

10 days of finals.

Scarborough said students and parents have responded well to the program.

"We are continuing to rent books until the end of the month so the percentage (of students expressing interest) is constantly growing," she said.

If books are not returned or are not in a proper condition for resale, a fee is applied to the rental charges.

"We ask for credit card information up front in case the book is not returned, much like renting a car," Scarborough said.

One disadvantage to the program, she said, is that a used textbook sold back to the school at the end of the year for 50 percent of its price is less expensive.

For example, if a book is \$100 for a new copy and \$75 for a used copy, a rented copy would cost \$45.

"Here is the simple math," Scarborough said. "If you purchased a used copy, and we were able to give you cash back for the book because that version was being used again, you would receive \$37.50 back in cash. This would make the net cost of a used book \$37.50 (compared to the \$45 rental fee.)"

Scarborough said it is too early to determine whether the program will continue next year.

Though Watkins said the Campus Shop is a good option for students to purchase books last-minute, she recommends students look online for cheaper prices before making a final decision.

"I would rent again if I was unable to find a cheaper copy elsewhere or if I needed a last minute book," Watkins said. "(But) I am certain that there are cheaper prices out there."



PHOTO COURTESY OF UNIVERSITY RELATIONS

During College Coffee Sept. 14, ARAMARK presented Elon University with a \$15,000 check for Campus Kitchen Project. The gift will fund the first year of the program.

ARAMARK gift to fund first year of campus kitchen

Jack Dodson
News Editor

A \$50,000 gift from ARAMARK to Elon University will fund the first year of the university's new Campus Kitchen Project, which will bring leftover food from Elon's kitchens to the surrounding community through a partnership between the catering company and the Kernodle Center for Service Learning.

According to Jeff Gazda, resident district manager for ARAMARK at Elon, the idea for the gift came from a discussion he was having with Laurie Lambert, the wife of President Leo Lambert, who has been involved in the development of Campus Kitchen on campus.

During College Coffee Sept. 14, ARAMARK officially announced its gift to the school, handing a check during the event. Elon University President Leo Lambert spoke at the event along with representatives from ARAMARK and the Kernodle Center for Service Learning.

"This is not a university with a

wall around it," Lambert said. "This is a university that is in touch with our neighbors, and we are just thrilled to have this gift, which will support the entire first year of operations for Campus Kitchen."

ARAMARK is also providing other resources for the Campus Kitchen Projects, including equipment, storage space and expertise.

Gazda said the project is part of an effort to connect faculty, staff and students at Elon to the broader community.

"It's a win-win situation for everyone," he said.

He said although many of the dining halls don't have much leftover food after every meal, catering jobs will contribute to the project. But this is the first year of the program, he said, and he's not sure how much food will be distributed.

"We don't know yet, we haven't started, so it's a learning process for all of us," he said. "I think we'll have enough to make a difference and help some folks in the community."