

# Officials Research Causes Of Horace Williams Crash

The pilot of a plane that crashed at Horace Williams Airport last week says he remembers nothing.

**TED STOKLEY**  
Staff Writer

Investigators are looking for answers following the crash of a Cessna 152 airplane involving a local man at Horace Williams Airport in Chapel Hill.

Roderick Farb, 52, of Cedar Grove, was injured during a failed landing attempt on June 5.

William Sawyer, vice president of the Chapel Hill Flying Club, said the accident occurred when the plane touched down too far down the runway, and Farb's attempt to lift off again resulted in the plane crashing into the woods near the airport.

"It was a matter that he made the right decision, but made it later than optimal," Sawyer said.

Farb, currently in good condition at UNC Hospitals, said he was unable to recall any details of the accident.

"I don't remember anything about it," Farb said.

Sawyer said this was common in accidents of this nature.

"It's not uncommon for memory loss prior to the accident," he said.

"Sometimes your memory isn't as sharp as it should be."

Tisha Kincy, staff assistant for the National Transportation Safety Board, said Jeff Kennedy was in charge of the NTSB's investigation into the accident, but was unavailable for comment.

Carolyn Elfland, UNC associate chancellor for auxiliary services, said the Federal Aviation Administration and University Police were working to determine the cause of the crash.

"The FAA does their investigation," Elfland said. "The UNC police do their investigation. The police and FAA are cooperating on the matter."

Elfland said an official statement could take some time, because the FAA was so thorough.

"It takes several months for the FAA to come up with a definite cause," Elfland said.

The accident comes after the University had cut down surrounding trees to improve visibility at the airport.

Elfland said the FAA requested the changes so the airport would meet safety regulations.

Elfland said the airport had to

remove trees located near both ends of the runway, or the FAA would prohibit instrumental approaches, which involve planes using Global Position Satellites to land during the night and in conditions of limited visibility.

"The FAA told us to cut the trees down or they would take instrumental approaches away," Elfland said.

Additional clearing will be done to meet FAA requirements, although the FAA has issued no deadline, stating the airport need only make reasonable progress.

Elfland said she did not think the FAA would require further measures in light

of the accident.

"I believe the requirements will remain the same," Elfland said. "I don't really envision them changing any criteria. The crash wasn't related to any tree or they would have told us already."

Farb also said he did not believe the renovations were responsible for the accident. "I don't think it had anything to do with it."

The City/State & National Editor can be reached at citydesk@unc.edu.

*"The UNC police do their investigation. The police and FAA are cooperating on the matter."*

**CAROLYN EFLAND**  
UNC Chancellor for Auxiliary Services

# Rail Plan Receives Federal Funding

Triangle Transit Authority officials say \$12 million is only a fraction of the cost of the regional rail system.

**BY JIM HARRIS**  
Staff Writer

The Triangle Transit Authority plan to connect Wake, Orange and Durham counties with a rail system received \$12 million on June 8 from the House Appropriations Committee.

Although the \$12 million would greatly benefit TTA, officials said they needed more money before the conceptual ideas can become reality.

John Roberson, TTA senior transportation engineer, said the recent appropriation would definitely be useful but not sufficient.

"Continual appropriations from the federal level will allow the project to move forward," Roberson said. "Don't get me wrong, this is very positive."

"However, this is part of our current financial plan - nothing new or surprising."

Juanita Shearer-Swink, another TTA senior transportation planner, said the cost estimation for the Phase 1 project, which links Cary, Durham and Raleigh with a rail system, was incredibly high. She said the project would demand appropriations from not only the federal government but state and local governments as well.

"The overall cost of the Phase 1 project in the fiscal year 1997 is \$250 million and the federal share of that is \$100

million," she said. "The federal government will pay 50 percent while state and local governments each pay 25 percent of the cost."

Shearer-Swink said taxes for state residents would not necessarily rise because a method to earn the 25 percent needed from the regional sector would be effective.

"The state government gives Wake, Orange and Durham counties permission to levy a \$5 charge on automobile registration and a 5 percent rental car charge," she said. "This profit will give TTA the proper amount of money they need from the local and regional governments."

"Furthermore, after the initial cost of completing Phase 1, the \$5 charge for automobile registration and the 5 percent rental car taxation will supply enough money to maintain the operation of the rail system alone."

Joe Capowski, Chapel Hill Town Council member, said although Phase 1 did not include Chapel Hill in the plans, he was grateful the money was appropriated.

"We are happy to see them get money, because we want TTA to be successful," he said. "I would like to thank David Price for his involvement in getting the money for our transit system."

Roberson added that out of the \$100 million needed from the federal government by the year 2004, only \$24 million had been committed so far.

In response, Thomas Bates, press secretary for U.S. Rep. David Price, said Price's office had been trying to cooperate with TTA's agenda as efficiently as

*"Once Phase 1 is in place, we want to connect Chapel Hill in Phase 2, and this will be a major advantage for students."*

**THOMAS BATES**  
Press Secretary for U.S. Rep. David Price

possible. "What we have been trying to do is to steadily increase federal funding," Bates said. "Once construction is under way, we will look at the project's needs at a year-to-year basis."

"I think this is an important project for the Triangle. Once Phase 1 is in place, we want to connect Chapel Hill in Phase 2, and this will be a major advantage for students."

Shearer-Swink said the cost estimate of Phase 1 was subject to change because of necessary TTA re-evaluations of the plans.

"We are constantly working on the transit-system plans," she said. "We look at the environmental impact from the project, refining potential station locations and revising cost estimates."

Roberson said the TTA was near the end of the cost estimation that will dictate the construction of Phase 1 but needed more time to be exact.

"Within the next two months or so we will have a clearer picture of how much we need."

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