

14-Home Development Gains Town Approval

Upset residents told council members an affordable housing site in their area was inappropriate.

By JACOB MCCONNICO
City/State & National Editor

Despite last minute protests by neighbors and a 142-signature protest petition, the Chapel Hill Town Council has approved a request by the Orange Community Housing Corp. to build low-cost townhomes on Scarlett Drive.

The council voted 8-1 last week to approve the proposal, which calls for the construction of 14 townhomes, a 25-space parking lot and a recreational and garden area on a one and a half acre lot at the corner of Scarlett Drive and Legion Road.

Elliot Sleight, a resident who has lived near the proposed site for over a year, said the area was not large enough for the development and the council should consider an alternate location.

"This is a grievous mistake," he said. "This area is not right for this. I think it is a mistake that is going to be with us for years to come. Fourteen houses on an acre and a half is crazy."

Linda Mews, another resident of the area, said she did not see the need for the development.

"I just don't know why you would alienate 200 residents, property owners and voters to accommodate 14 unknown families," she said.

Council member Flicka Bateman said the council had denied an original proposal by the OCHC to build a five home development on the site.

"We told them no and asked them to

eke out everything they could from this land," she said.

Town Manager Cal Horton said the town had an interest in the property and had spent \$143,000 on the project.

Council member Julie McClintock said approving the proposal would be a mistake and provided the one dissenting vote.

"I am struck by the number of people who are against this project," she said. "It goes against my grain to do something that we think is good and have all these people against it."

Council member Joyce Brown said the council should take measures to "mitigate traffic" at the site and recommended involving residents in this effort.

"This is something that we are going to have to have to address because we keep hearing complaints about density," she said.

Linda Tingen, another resident of the area, said the development did not belong in the neighborhood.

"You are insisting on putting a square peg in a round hole where it doesn't fit," she said. "The people who are in favor of this project do not have to live in that area."

However, Edith Wiggins, a council member, said the development would do more good than harm for the town.

"I am so convinced that this is going to be an asset that I would welcome it in my neighborhood," she said.

The council spent over one hour debating this issue. After hearing complaints from eight residents and support from one resident Bateman moved to approve the building permit.

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

Candidate Focuses on Planning

By JACOB MCCONNICO
City/State & National Editor

Bill Strom wants to make the need for long range planning the focus of his campaign for Chapel Hill Town Council.

Strom, 43, who announced two weeks ago that he would seek a seat on the Town Council, said he had a clear understanding of the issues that faced the council.

"To me the challenge that the council faces is how we welcome the growth and how we shape the growth as a community," he said. "The council should be making long-range policy."

In addition, he said creating a livable, well-planned environment was of great personal importance to him.

"I have a 7-year-old son who I want to see grow up in a healthy, happy community," he said. "Being sensitive of the

challenges of raising a small child in Chapel Hill is one aspect I would bring to the town council."

According to Strom's press release, the candidate has served as director of the Orange Water and Sewer Authority since 1997 and was a participant in over 20 Chapel Hill and Orange County political and social efforts in the last 10 years.

The candidate has also worked with grass roots organizations like Citizens Against Urban Sprawl and The Alliance for Neighborhoods.

Council member Joe Capowski said Strom had been active in local government for many years and was a good choice for the Town Council.

"He's what I would call a 'Town Hall junky,'" he said. "I think he will do well. He will be an asset to the town."

Strom moved to Chapel Hill in 1992 and has lived in Orange County since 1985. He is a native of New York, N.Y., and graduated with a B.S. in Business Administration from Ithaca College in Ithaca, N.Y. He also attended Duke

"To me the challenge that the council faces is how we welcome the growth and how we shape the growth as a community."

BILL STROM
Chapel Hill Town Council Candidate

University and in 1991 received a M.A. in Liberal Studies.

Strom said his time on the board of OWASA had given him some of the tools to be an effective council member.

"I believe I have a track record of setting goals and getting things done," he said. "I have an understanding of planning and business. I have a history of being collegial and working with others."

Dan VanderMeer, chairman of the OWASA board of directors, said Strom had been instrumental in making decisions during his time on the board.

"Bill Strom's voice has been one of

reason, cooperation, creative thinking and real impact during his two years on the OWASA board," he said.

Strom said he was also interested in encouraging the town and University to work on projects together.

"I think that in the long term, the well-being of the University and the town are inseparable," he said. "Projects the town and the University can enter into together are better for the well-being of the community."

In addition, Strom said the environment was an issue that was of importance to him.

"Community's that have strong environmental rules have good growth," he said. "As we make decisions about our future, we have to keep our eye on environmental issues."

Strom said he would launch a Web site later in the campaign and in order to columns and position papers that he has written.

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

Bard Takes the Stage Cliff's Notes Style

By VERA KALE
Arts & Features Editor

What better way to satisfy a craving for theater than to watch all of Shakespeare's plays?

Of course most people do not have that kind of time. The Open Door Theater provides the solution to that problem, offering up all 37 plays, plus Shakespeare's 154 sonnets, in one 90-minute performance.

With so much packed into one play, "The Complete Works of William

Shakespeare (Abridged)," by Adam Long, Daniel Singer and Jess Winfield, promises to be a fast-paced comedy.

The show premiered yesterday and runs through Saturday at the amphitheater above the Rosemary Street parking deck.

Performances begin at 7 p.m. A five dollar donation is requested.

Open Door Theater founders and Co-Artistic Directors Michael Babbitt and Robert Kramer direct the show. Both are veterans of PlayMakers Repertory Company and graduated from UNC-Chapel Hill with Masters of Fine Arts Degrees.

In choosing the show, Babbitt and Kramer had a certain agenda in mind.

"We wanted to do something that's a portable show and that we could do outside," Kramer said.

"We also wanted something that would be fun, that the public could enjoy."

Meeting the above criteria, the play boasts a simple premise: three guys who love Shakespeare want to share that love with the audience.

The result is a hectic comedy that involves a great deal of spoofing that

Kramer said was "intentionally confusing."

He added, "The majority of the play is not actual Shakespeare. It's Monty Python type stuff."

The three actors play all the various roles and are visible at all times to the audience, even when offstage. Just as actors did during performances in Shakespeare's time, the men play female roles as well.

Kramer said the play also featured a great deal of interplay with the audience, an important part of the Open Door Theater's philosophy.

The company gets its name from the book "The Open Door" by Peter Brook which expounds on the idea that actors must "knock down walls" to defy convention and draw in the audience.

Babbitt said, "We are set on creating living, vital theater in a professional atmosphere. Our idea is that theater belongs in the community ... the com-

munity is what makes the dynamic theater work."

Babbitt cautioned that audience members should not worry about too many inside jokes for English majors.

"There are inside jokes for everybody," he said, and added that the play is accessible to all ages and all interests.

Babbitt also added that though the entire play did not make use of Shakespearean language, a good part of

it does. But he said that should not scare people away.

"The language is modern English. It's what we use today and people should learn to enjoy it."

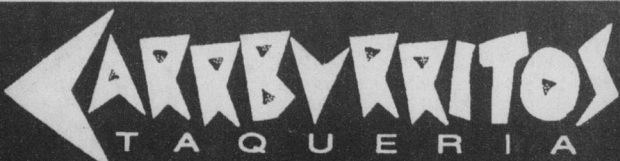
"Shakespeare isn't stuffy," Babbitt said. "The depth of what Shakespeare is the issues that he deals with in his plays. It can be fun."

The show also runs at 5 p.m. July 31 and at 2 p.m. Aug. 1 at the West End Wine Bar, and at 6 p.m. Aug. 6 on the lawn of Weaver Street Market.

"The majority of the play is not actual Shakespeare. It's Monty Python type stuff."

ROBERT KRAMER
Artistic Director of the Open Door Theater

The Arts & Features Editor can be reached at vee@email.unc.edu.



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For The Record

In the July 1 article "Town Moves to Dump Landfill," the county recycling manager should have been identified as Blair Pollock.

The July 8 article "Proposal On Bond Under Fire" should have stated that a proposed \$2.7 billion was in danger of failing.

The Daily Tar Heel regrets the errors.

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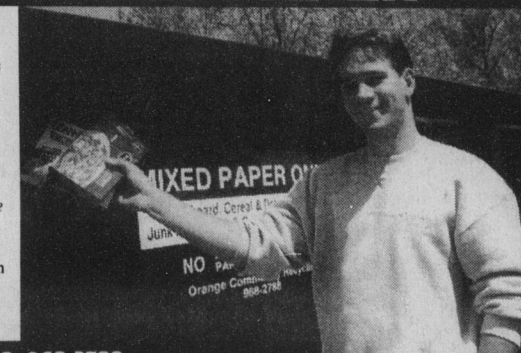
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