



ERIN MENDELL

Stop Feuding Over Plan and Get Creative

It's time for Chapel Hill Town Council members and the designers of the University's Master Plan — its blueprint for growth — to start thinking outside the proverbial box when it comes to public transportation options.

At a public hearing Wednesday night, town residents voiced their concerns about how the Master Plan would affect them.

Their questions centered on a proposed transit corridor that would cut through neighborhoods south of the University.

Residents of the affected neighborhoods are worried they'll lose their homes, some of which are in the path of the potential transit corridor.

And they're justified in their concern. (You would be too if someone showed a map with your house bulldozed and replaced with train tracks.) But residents are overreacting — at least for now.

Although Susan Ehringhaus, senior council for UNC, could not say whether the University would buy people's homes unless the homes were on the market, she said the University hadn't done so in the past and didn't want to in this case.

(As a state university, UNC can force people to sell their homes so the University can build something such as a road there, as long as the state approves.)

Chapel Hill Mayor Rosemary Waldorf said it would probably take decades for the University to begin construction on a proposed transit corridor.

Besides that, there are two other Master Plan options, neither of which would use land the University doesn't already own.

The other two options focus on bus routes and park-and-ride lots, both of which could be successful in that they might ease traffic congestion on the main part of campus.

But all the plans the University is proposing and town residents are suggesting are fairly conventional.

And they're overlooking an option that could make everyone happy — a monorail system.

That's right, folks, a monorail. Right here in Chapel Hill.

And there are plenty of good reasons for it.

For one, there's a lot of talk from both sides about environmental concerns.

Adam Gross, a consultant for the University, said all the Master Plan options encourage people to rely on mass transit.

Well, buses could do that, but the gas guzzlers certainly aren't environmentally friendly.

But monorails run on electricity, so not only do they not release pollutants or use up valuable natural resources, they also don't become more expensive to operate when fuel prices increase.

In addition, because monorails are well above ground, they won't get in the way of anyone's house.

Of course, there's still the possibility that some residents would end up with big cement pillars in their yards, but we can worry about the details later.

A monorail in Chapel Hill might not be practical, but town and University leaders seem to be in need of a little creative inspiration.

And town residents, while right to voice their concerns, should cut the University some slack once in a while. It's not some huge development monster looking to swallow their homes, their lives and their children.

UNC Health Affairs, which will receive a shiny new complex through the Master Plan, is the largest employer in Chapel Hill, so many residents probably have the University to thank for their jobs.

The realization of the Master Plan would do a lot of necessary things for the University such as making South Campus a nice place to live, making things safer for pedestrians and expanding the hospital.

The community and the state are growing, and UNC has to keep up with that growth.

It's time for everyone involved to chill out and get creative.

Columnist Erin Mendell can be reached at mendell@email.unc.edu.

QNC Skits Promote Confidence

BY TORI KISER
Staff Writer

With a beachball and lots of laughter, Anoushka Brod, the guest speaker for Thursday night's meeting of the Queer Network for Change, taught members about self-confidence and accepting themselves.

Brod brings experience in improvisational training from her group Transactors Improv Troupe.

In about an hour, the group acted out five skits.

"The beachball activity was my favorite activity because everyone was laughing and having a good time," said Sarah Levin-Richardson, co-president of QNC.

The activity consisted of hitting a beachball around a circle as many times as members could to demonstrate teamwork.

Levin-Richardson said the improv exercises are implemented to encourage everyone to be comfortable in silly situations.

Brod teaches that a person should have confidence in whatever he or she does, and that it is important to be comfortable with yourself.

"These activities really got people energetic and working as a team," Levin-Richardson said.

"Basically, the improv meeting was for fun."

But the entire evening was not totally devoted to having a good time. The first

half of the QNC meeting was dedicated to promoting awareness of classes that focus on gay and lesbian studies.

These courses have existed for some time, but due to a severe lack of registration and unclear course titles, many students are unaware of their presence.

"Under-enrollment for these courses sends signals to the senior administrators that there is no interest," said Erin Carlston, assistant professor of English.

One of Carlston's classes that focused on gay and lesbian literature should have been convening this fall, but she said it was canceled due to lack of registered students and other problems.

"Enrollment figures do not accurately

See IMPROV, Page 6



Sarah Levin-Richardson (left) and other Queer Network for Change members look on as Jesse Davidson performs improvisational comedy.



Tom Bythell (right), UNC's forester of 2 1/2 years, and Gus Adams inspect the health of a tree in the quad. Bythell is in charge of tree maintenance on campus as well as University-owned land in Orange County.

Dedicated Forester Takes a Bough

BY KRISTINA HODGES
Staff Writer

Two married UNC alumni recently returned to campus, hoping to spend the afternoon relaxing beneath the tree where they first met and he proposed.

But the couple would never see the tree again — at least in one piece — because the tree had been cut down.

The distraught husband called UNC's grounds department in tears to express his disappointment in the removal of the tree.

He was unaware that the man on the other end of the telephone, UNC forester Tom Bythell, cares about every tree on campus.

Bythell even tracked down the tree and salvaged a piece for the couple before it was turned to mulch. "It absolutely kills me every time I have to take down a tree," he said. "I am the biggest lover of trees at this university."

As forester, Bythell is in charge of keeping up with the welfare of the trees that grow in UNC's 4,000 acres in Orange County.

For more than two years, his job has included irrigation, management of tree crews

and pest control.

Bythell, a 42-year-old Durham resident, helped develop and now runs an environmental education program for the University.

The Tree Protection Initiative aims to educate developers about the importance of trees on campus and how to avoid damaging them.

Through TPI, Bythell has changed policies and contracts to take trees into consideration. "We are on the cutting edge of tree protection," he said.

Bythell said he came to UNC from Princeton University — where he was head arborist — because he believed he could make a difference. "I didn't need a job when I applied here. I just thought it would be a great place to work."

Since his arrival, Bythell has been busy overseeing the health and safety of University trees.

Bythell said campus construction poses a threat to University trees.

Underground work can kill trees' roots, he said, noting that it can take up to five years for trees to die after it is impacted by construction.

Through TPI, Bythell gets the University's grounds department involved in the pre-design of construction to save as many trees as possible.

But being UNC's forester does not stop with saving the trees from development damage.

Taking down trees also is part of Bythell's job. For this reason, Bythell said he has gotten a "tree killer" reputation. "Sometimes we might have to remove one tree in order to save four or five others," he said. "People have actually tried to prevent some of my employees from taking down a tree. They will physically hug it."

Bythell said many people do not understand most of the trees he removes are decaying from old age. Some even have incurable diseases that could spread to other trees, he said.

Every year he plants 100 trees and 15 to 20 replacements for the trees he had to cut down.

Kirk Pelland, UNC grounds director, said Bythell is very committed to his job. "Part of the role of the staff is to maintain an environment conducive to learning, and Tom really does that," he said.

Bythell said his dedication stems from his commitment to maintain UNC's image and heritage. He said, "That is what people notice about UNC — the Carolina-blue skies and big trees."

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Special Elections To Fill 13 Open Congress Seats

The Oct. 17 elections follow this month's appointment of the new Elections Board chairman and selection of the board.

BY STEPHANIE HORVATH
Staff Writer

Students will have another chance to hit the polls and choose who will represent them now that the Elections Board has announced special elections to fill vacancies in Student Congress.

Thirteen empty seats in Congress will be filled Oct. 17. The elections could not be held until the newly appointed Elections Board Chairman Jeremy Berkeley-Tuchmayer selected an Elections Board. The Rules and Judiciary Committee of Congress approved the board Tuesday, and it goes before full Congress for approval Oct. 3.

Berkeley-Tuchmayer was named Elections Board chairman in mid-September, filling the position that had been vacant since Congress rejected Student Body President Brad Matthews' nomination of then-Elections Board Vice Chairwoman Marissa Downs in April.

Speaker Alexandra Bell said Congress has been operating despite the vacant seats, but she looks forward to seeing them filled. "I prefer to have more people in there, more opinions."

She also said the special election will provide a chance to diversify Congress. "I'd like to see a more diverse Congress, more women," Bell said. "It's kind of a big, white, male Congress which isn't bad. It's totally not that anyone's doing a bad job, but Congress just doesn't look like the University right now."

The process begins next week with candidate interest meetings at 5 p.m. Oct. 2, Oct. 3, and Oct. 9 in Suite C of the Student Union. Students interested in running must submit a petition with 10 signatures from residents in their district by Oct. 10.

Five of the empty seats are for off-campus undergraduate districts, including Granville Towers. Three seats are for the undergraduate on-campus districts that include Hinton James, Morrison, Craige, Ehringhaus residence halls and Odum Village. The remaining five seats are for graduate districts.

"Graduate students often have a lot to do, so it's much harder to find someone for those seats," Berkeley-Tuchmayer said.

But Bell said several students already have shown an interest in running. "I've been getting e-mails for the last month about wanting to run," Bell said. "I think four to five candidates in each district have contacted me. I'm confident Jeremy can get the word out to off-campus and graduate students."

Berkeley-Tuchmayer said the Elections Board plans to publicize the election by putting up fliers, setting up a table in the Pit and sending e-mails through listservs. But attracting voters to the polls might prove more difficult than rounding up candidates.

"It's a special election, and it's hard to galvanize an election when people go to the polls and can't vote," Berkeley-Tuchmayer said. "You have to live in an open district to vote. Most of those districts are off-campus."

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Educational Foundation President to Resign

BY ANGELA PARKER
Staff Writer

Moyer Smith, president of the Educational Foundation, Inc., announced Monday that his 14-year tenure at the foundation would come to an end Dec. 31.

Smith said his retirement had been discussed since last spring due to his recent involvement with the Carolina

First Campaign, a multibillion dollar fund-raising project for the University.

"I had planned to retire in 2003, but that would mean retiring in the middle of the campaign," he said.

The Educational Foundation was chartered in 1938 to help UNC grant financial aid. The foundation also provides services and funds for facility construction or purchase of equipment.

Much of the funding goes to sports

facilities, and the foundation also coordinates season tickets for UNC athletics.

John Cherry, executive vice president of the foundation, said he was not surprised Smith was retiring — only that the retirement would come so soon. "The date for Smith's retirement is earlier than everyone expected," he said.

A direct committee composed of members of the Executive Committee of the foundation will carry out the search for

Smith's replacement, hoping to find someone who can take the position Jan. 1, 2001.

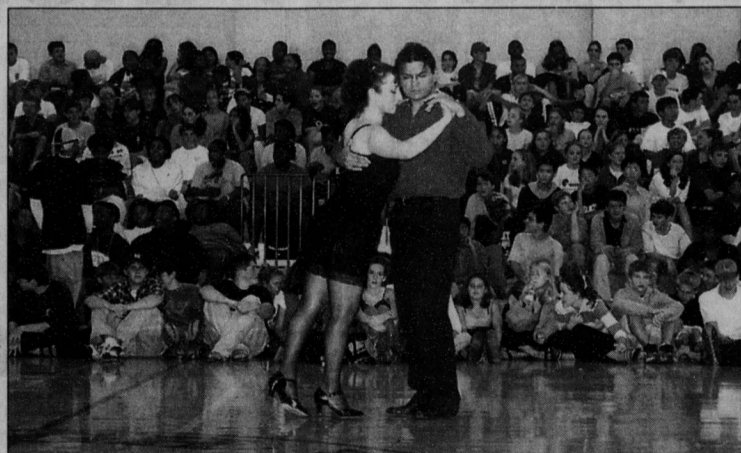
Smith said by officially retiring Dec. 31, he could stay and train his successor, provided the committee finds a replacement sometime in the near future. "A December retirement should allow for a smooth transition period, which makes sense for everyone involved," he said.

As president of the foundation since 1977, Smith was responsible for the

administration of the Educational Foundation office. "I originally took the job as president to have the opportunity to give something back to the University and play a leadership role," Smith said.

Smith received his undergraduate degree from UNC in 1961 and his master's degree in 1965. Smith is also a former UNC football letterman, assistant football

See SMITH, Page 6



Jason Laughlin and Gulden Ozen of Baila Tango North Carolina perform the tango for a group of East Chapel Hill High School students Thursday.

Local High School Holds 2nd Annual Diversity Day

BY KELLIE DIXON
Assistant City Editor

The East Chapel Hill High School step team rhythmically pounded the wooden gym floor as part of the high school's Diversity Day.

The step team was among other groups that performed at 2nd annual Diversity Day. The program showed diversity through performances from the Remember Quartet, the high school step team, two dancers from the N.C. Tango Association, the ECHHS chorus and the Chapel Hill High School chorus.

The event, which was held during the regular school hours, also gave students the chance to discuss issues pertaining to ethnicity. Michelle Johnson, a social worker at ECHHS

and organizer of the event, said this is the second year ECHHS has held the forum. Johnson said when she arrived three years ago, she saw an ethnic separation and wanted to try to bridge the gap.

Forty-two speakers from community organizations were present and students chose two sessions to attend during the morning hours.

"The (community speakers) came to talk about diversity and the type of work they provide and the population of people they service or services they provide," Johnson said.

Freshman Camia Collins said she enjoyed Diversity Day for several reasons and was inspired to learn more about a mentoring program called Blue Ribbon. "We learned a lot of good stuff about

See DIVERSITY, Page 6