

2 Fraternities Lose Houses, 1 Closes Doors for Sprinklers

Renovations result of Chapel Hill mandate

By JENNIFER JOHNSON
Staff Writer

Three houses in Fraternity Court are now sporting boarded-up windows while repairs are being made, but when the boards come down, new renovations won't be the only change for some of them.

Due to the high cost involved in installing new sprinklers and revamping old houses, some fraternities have had to give up their homes.

The Chapel Hill Town Council passed an ordinance in 1996 mandating that all fraternity and sorority houses install sprinkler systems by November 2001. The requirement was prompted by a 1996 fire in the Phi Gamma Delta fraternity house that killed five students.

As of now, all houses not under construction have met the requirements.

Jay Anhorn, director of Greek affairs, said that the sprinkler systems themselves

range in cost from \$50,000 to \$80,000 and that the renovations can bring the total for each house to about \$1 million.

The Sigma Nu fraternity house at 109 Fraternity Court is closed, and the chapter is inactive. Anhorn said the Sigma Nu alumni decided to close the house and the chapter but hope to reorganize in fall 2003. He said the house will probably be rented out to other fraternities until then.

The Pi Lambda Phi fraternity has not lost its chapter but has lost its house, located at 107 Fraternity Court. The house has been sold to Guy Solie, head of the realty company Trinity Properties, who owns several houses around Duke University and N.C. State University.

Solie plans to divide the house into six air-conditioned suites with amenities like Internet connections. He said the house will not be a fraternity house but could be rented by individual fraternity members. "The dorms are deplorable, and I'm horrified that all the dorms don't have air

conditioning," Solie said. "I have a vision for University housing in 2002."

Construction on the house will probably be finished this fall, but the house will not open until the spring, Solie said.

Pi Lambda Phi is still an active chapter, even though it had to give up its house. The members are living around Chapel Hill, said K.C. Carter, the fraternity's president.

The house occupied by Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity at 106 Fraternity Court is being completely remodeled after the new sprinkler system is installed. Anthony Wood, a representative of Resolute Building Co., the company doing the work on the house, said that the building has been gutted and that new construction will begin in September.

Wilder Harvard, the president of Pi Kappa Alpha, said the fraternity alumni, who provide the majority of the funds for the construction, decided to completely redo the house while new sprinklers are installed. "Part of being a (member) is the house, and the alumni love coming back to the house," Harvard said. "We're very fortunate."

The Pi Kappa Alpha house is scheduled to be finished in January. Until then, Harvard said, fraternity members are meeting in houses around Chapel Hill that have been passed down to the brothers over the years.

"Last year it was almost depressing because we didn't have a house, and there were so many unknowns," Harvard said. "But this year, we know we're going to get it."

Harvard said he is looking forward to the opening of the houses in Fraternity Court because it hasn't seemed the same with so many houses under construction.

"It honestly can't be called Frat Court right now."

The University Editor can be reached at udesk@unc.edu.

Town Aids UNC Development Plan

Officials approve several new projects

By JON DOUGHERTY
City Editor

Chapel Hill and UNC relations appear to remain amiable as the town recently approved building permits allowing the University to begin work on several projects.

In mid-July, Chapel Hill Planning Director Roger Waldon gave his staff's approval of the first projects laid out in the University's Master Plan.

The Chapel Hill Town Council gave the first part of the plan - the Development Plan - its stamp of approval last October, although specific blueprints were not reviewed by town staff until just prior to construction.

The first projects in line are a \$10 million dollar renovation of Alexander, Connor and Winston residence halls and the \$64 million construction of the Ramshead project, which will house a cafeteria, a parking deck and student recreational facilities.

Both construction projects already have begun.

These projects will be the campus community's first introduction to the University's Master Plan, a document town officials and University administrators labored over for more than a year.

Waldon said the town has a regulatory role in the process now that construction is beginning.

"Each building plan goes through a three-week review process," Waldon said.

"State law mandates that any building built on state property must also meet local codes.

"We have engineers that look at the blueprints and make sure the codes are being met. The planning board then considers the recommendations and issues a site planning permit."

Once the town gave its approval to the Development Plan, it accepted a position of minimal control over the proceedings to follow, said Richard Ducker, an professor at UNC's School of Government.

"The town has the right to review the blueprints, make suggestions and raise concerns over the effect to the community, but they essentially cannot halt construction."

The town and University's relation-

ship has become a hot topic in recent years as the University looks to expand its boundaries and facilities while the town looks to spare its residents some of the ills associated with being a college town.

The University has drawn fire from some businesses and residents for purchasing property in the downtown business district.

This can reduce retail floor space and take the buildings off the town's tax rolls.

Robert Humphreys, executive director of Chapel Hill's Downtown Commission, has said he isn't concerned so much about the University buying property in the business district.

He said he is more concerned about the loss of store front locations, which means fewer businesses move to the area.

But for now, UNC has a green light to begin several other projects in coming months.

Among those are the \$87 million science complex that will house lecture classrooms, student laboratories and an astronomy observation deck.

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Bush Continues to Back Pakistani Leader

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON - Despite his abrupt move to grab more power, Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf is "still tight with us in the war against terror," President Bush declared Thursday.

Bush promised to be in touch with Musharraf "in more ways than one" about Musharraf's decision to amend Pakistan's constitution and greatly expand his authority. But Bush said he is not inclined to pull his support from Musharraf because the Pakistani leader has lent vital help to the U.S. effort to nab Taliban and al-Qaida fugitives who

fled to his country from Afghanistan.

"He's still tight with us in the war against terror, and that's what I appreciate," Bush told reporters while visiting Squires Mountain in Oregon. "He understands that we've got to keep al-Qaida on the run. ... And I appreciate his strong support."

Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage is due to arrive in Islamabad on Saturday to talk with Musharraf about the constitutional changes announced Wednesday, said State Department deputy spokesman Philip Reeker.

U.S. officials will make sure that Musharraf, a military general, is aware of

the importance of restoring civilian rule, Bush said. "Obviously, to the extent that, you know, our friends promote democracy, that's important," the president said.

Musharraf seized power in 1999 through a bloodless coup. The United States initially treated him as a pariah, but Musharraf managed to turn that around after Sept. 11 last year by cutting support for the Taliban in Afghanistan and joining the anti-terror effort.

Musharraf announced Wednesday several steps that would allow him to dissolve the elected parliament and appoint military leaders and Supreme Court justices.



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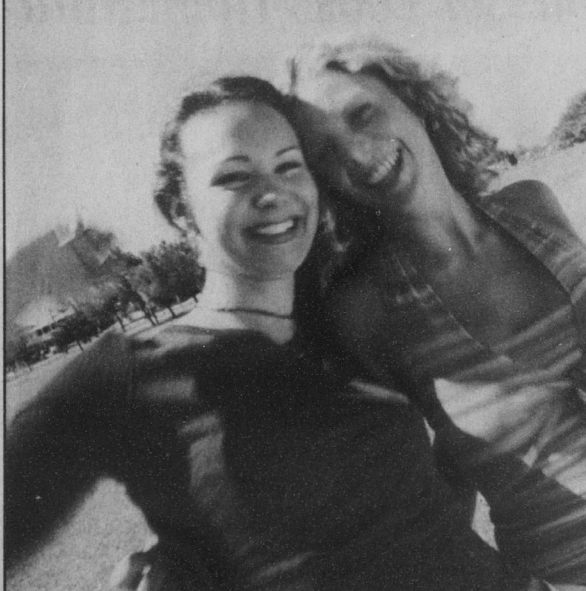

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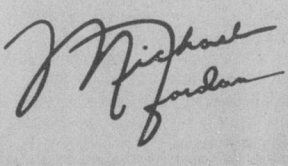
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