

Officials: Cost of Arts Common to Be at Least \$25 Million

By BRANDON WHITESIDE
Staff Writer

The UNC Board of Trustees met at the Carolina Inn on Wednesday afternoon to hear proposals that included a plan to develop an Arts Common in the northwest area of campus.

The region, to be bound by Franklin and South Columbia streets, Cameron Avenue and McCorkle Place, will include a 282-capacity underground parking deck and improved facilities for the departments of Arts, Music and Communications.

Project coordinators pitched a preliminary plan to the board, providing only information at this point. Subsequent meetings will determine an official approval of a long-term master plan for the project.

The project's representatives aim to create an improved environment for the arts to benefit both students and event attendees.

In addition, they hope to focus on the area's outdoor aesthetics.

"(It's) the last piece of historic campus that's not developed," said project manager Peter Mullin.

"(It will be) a bridge between theylvan arcadia of McCorkle to the urban

character of downtown Chapel Hill," he said, referring to the landscape development intended for the open space above the underground parking garage.

Proposed structural development and renovations will affect several buildings, including Smith Hall for the music department, the original Carnegie Library of Hill Hall, the Hanes Art Center and the front of Swain Hall.

And building additions are in store for the Ackland Art Museum and Hill Hall to accommodate an art and music library. New buildings also will be added.

Gerrard Hall and Playmakers Theatre also are under consideration for renovation, extending the project outside the bounds of Arts Common area.

Plans for both buildings entail air conditioning, heat, handicapped spaces and bathrooms, while an improved stage and seating will accommodate the Playmakers Theatre.

Once the final project is approved, coordinators will begin preliminary planning for construction to begin in 2004.

The first of several phases will necessitate the demolition of Abernethy Hall, Evergreen House and part of Swain to

dig a hole for accommodating the parking garage.

For efficiency's sake, the basements of the outlying buildings will be renovated during the duration of the area's dig.

Thus far, \$25 million in bonds has been allocated for the project, but coordinators say much more will be needed.

The parking garage will be constructed with money to be repaid by parking fees upon the structure's completion, but remaining development will necessitate fund raising throughout the project's entirety.

Steve Allred, chairman of the Arts Common Planning Committee, esti-

mates a minimum project duration of 10 years at best, providing ample time for the establishment of finances through private donations, grants, gifts and additional bonds.

Fortunately, project support is strong. The committee includes Town Council representatives, Franklin Street business owners and Chapel Hill Mayor Kevin Foy.

"They really care about the project," Allred said. "It will make it a more attractive destination for the town."

The Arts & Entertainment Editor can be reached at artsdesk@unc.edu.

SuperTarget Might Open in South Square Mall

By MARGAUX ESCUTIN
Staff Writer

If approved, a new SuperTarget will be located at the site of the now vacant South Square Mall in Durham, but officials are not sure when construction might begin.

The last store at South Square, Radio Shack, left the mall Sept. 13. The only obstacles barring construction of the new Target are approval of a site plan and hiring of appropriate contracting companies.

Dick Hails, assistant director of the Durham Planning Department, said the site plan for the new Target was turned in several weeks ago.

"We've been wanting to get Target in south Durham for 10 years," he said.

But Brie Heath, Target media relations representative, would not comment on whether Target planned to build at the South Square Mall site.

"We don't announce anything about stores until the paperwork has been processed," she said. "We have to go to

the city. Zoning, planning, and other commissions would have to sign off.

"Construction has to start before we announce the store."

Hails said the Durham City Council must approve the site plan before construction can begin. "City Council hasn't had the opportunity to see if it was the right location," he said.

A site plan is approved based on proper layout of technical merits and health-safety standards - fire lanes, landscaping and sewer connections to name a few.

The Durham City Council approved the transit plan last fall, but it is subject to changes. The council will hold a meeting at 7 p.m. Oct. 21 at City Council Chambers to address the plan.

Hails said Target would strengthen an already strong economy in the area.

"It's our largest retail area in the city," he said. "It's been an important part of the community for a long time."

"If strong stores went there, it would reflect on the strong economy on that part of town."

will replace the razed property.

But plans to build a transit system might foil the development of the new Target.

The Durham City Council wants to "build a high-quality regional transit system from Duke to UNC and Durham to Chapel Hill," Hails said.

Chapel Hill, Durham and the N.C. Department of Transportation mapped out a tentative route for the transit system that travels through the site, potentially preventing future store construction.

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Visa Troubles Keep Valdés Out of U.S.

By BRIAN MILLIKIN
Assistant Arts & Entertainment Editor

He'd been booked for months, the posters had been printed, and tickets had been sold - but the show won't go on.

Renowned jazz pianist Chucho Valdés had been scheduled to perform Oct. 4 at Hill Hall, kicking off the Carolina Union's Performing Arts Series for this academic year.

But Valdés is Cuban, and after he learned that he would be unable to obtain a visa to enter the United States in time, he was forced to cancel his performance - as well as his entire fall tour. Along with several other Cuban musicians, he could not attend the Latin Grammy Awards in Hollywood on Sept. 18 for the same reason.

It has long been difficult for Cubans to obtain visas to the United States because of the relations between the two countries, said Robert Locke, director of the International Center at UNC.

But after new security provisions put in place under the recent Homeland Security Act, the process of getting a visa has become longer and harder.

"Now, before (the government) can issue a visa the application has to go through extensive background checks," Locke said. "The FBI and other agencies will all review it."

Cuba and other countries marked by the government as particular threats or as sponsors of terrorism have seen even greater restrictions. But the changes affect visitors from other countries as well.

"Frankly, we're seeing (changes) across the board, in Western Europe and all over," Locke said. "People are finding it takes a couple of months to get clearance."

As in Valdés' case, the wait can be painfully long, though Locke expects

the situation to lighten eventually.

"It's new, the sharing of information between these agencies," Locke said. "They predict it'll get better as time goes on, but initially it's taking forever."

Few would disagree that the security measures aren't warranted, but some take issue with the extent of the effects.

"It's amazing that people who give their best have to jump through so many hoops to come to the U.S.," said Delvis Fernandez Levy, president of the Cuban American Alliance.

Travel between the United States and Cuba already was overly stringent before the new restrictions, Fernandez Levy said. It's now even more difficult for all Cubans to visit the United States - including previously welcomed celebrities like Valdés.

"I fail to see how a person who has been coming to the U.S. for many years - a musician with no political message - how that could be a threat or a potential threat," Fernandez-Levy said.

But the Carolina Union isn't letting the Valdés cancellation get it down. The Union has scheduled Ray Baretto, a well-regarded Latin jazz performer, to fill in for Valdés. All Valdés tickets will be honored, and refunds will be offered if anyone wants one.

"We have a great show in his place, the greatest congo player in the world," said Charles Phaneuf, Carolina Union president. "It'll be a very good show, and everyone who comes out will be pleased."

Phaneuf isn't even that upset about the situation - he hopes to be able to schedule Valdés again this spring.

"I'm hopeful that we can have Ray Baretto now and Chucho later."

The Arts & Entertainment Editor can be reached at artsdesk@unc.edu.



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For the Record

In the Sept. 25 article "Legislature Approves 1/2-Cent Tax Increase" it was reported that Sen. Virginia Foxx is a Democrat. She is a Republican. The Daily Tar Heel regrets the error.




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The University and Towns IN BRIEF

2 Districts Remain Empty After Election

Board of Elections Chairman Brian Fauver said Wednesday that two seats on Student Congress are still empty

after Tuesday night's special election. John Holmes and Marc Nelson, who were tied for District 5, both declined their spots on Student Congress.

Amy Brooks could not accept her election to District 20 because she does not live in that district, Fauver said.

Fauver is still waiting for responses from two other potential representatives elected Tuesday night.

Stephanie Hunter, elected to District 2, and Doug Lecompte, elected to District 14, have yet to confirm their spots on Congress.

Students have 24 hours from the time Fauver contacts them to turn in their financial statements, which confirm their seats on Congress.

The other five seats in Congress that were empty have officially been filled.

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Information Session:
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