



COLIN SUTKER
CITY COLUMNIST

Town must diversify businesses

As warmer weather makes its way up north, the town of Chapel Hill is shedding its winter clothes, embracing a greener, lusher look.

The past few days have been some of the most beautiful this town has ever seen, thanks to a wet, early spring.

But Chapel Hill has seen better times.

Financially, Franklin Street is no longer the economic powerhouse of Chapel Hill that it used to be.

Some have criticized Franklin Street stores for catering more and more to students.

The result has been shops that offer very little for the rest of the professional community, forcing them to do most of their buying in either New Hope Commons or Streets at SouthPoint, both in Durham.

Lining Franklin Street are bars, trinket shops and restaurants, all of which depend heavily on the student buck.

Unfortunately for some of them, most students do not have an incredible amount of cash to sling around — certainly not enough to sustain Franklin Street all by themselves.

With too many shops and not enough moola to go around, it's no surprise downtown looks more like a mouth missing a couple of teeth.

But the Downtown Commission, charged with maintaining and revitalizing Chapel Hill's charm and economic strength, received more evidence last week that Chapel Hill should focus more on attracting long-term businesses that focus less on students.

A report, compiled by the Baltimore-based University Retail Group, states that a mixture of both short- and long-term business would provide Chapel Hill with a more effective economic presentation.

Adhering to the report would involve courting more national businesses to Franklin Street than there already are.

The commission focuses on keeping a 80/20 ratio of local to national business.

And while some will haw over the loss of local independent businesses, their earnings aren't meeting standards.

National businesses attract a larger number of customers than local ones — look only to SouthPoint for proof — and local businesses would benefit from increased customer traffic.

And while perhaps residents do not shop in Chapel Hill as much as they used to, they still identify strongly with the town, something the Family of Communities campaign wants to embellish.

The campaign's message is to promote the integration of Orange County into the rest of the Triangle region.

Organizers hope by doing this they will strengthen ties between the communities within the Triangle in relationships that would benefit all.

Chapel Hill has a unique opportunity to turn business trends around and embrace both national business and community integration.

The downtown could both attract its own locals and others from around the region, making Chapel Hill business known for more than Tar Heel T-shirts.

As old practices are becoming increasingly ineffective, Chapel Hill is counting on a well-organized game plan of regional and national integration to help the town bloom into a new era of economic development.

Contact Colin Sutker at cosu@email.unc.edu.

BOT could act on traffic, parking

BY JOHN LIPPS
STAFF WRITER

The UNC Board of Trustees' Finance Committee will meet today to vote on proposed changes to the ordinance regulating traffic and parking on campus.

The Advisory Committee on Transportation has proposed major changes to the ordinance, including a new sliding-scale permit pricing policy that is based on employees' and students' incomes.

If the sliding-scale plan is implemented, permit prices will increase 5 percent each year for five years for students and employees earning less than \$50,000 per year. That rate would increase to 10 percent for those who earn between \$50,000 and \$100,000 and to 20 percent for those earning more than \$100,000.

Derek Poarch, UNC police chief and ACT chairman, highlighted the sliding scale as one of the suggested changes that best addresses the

needs of UNC's five-year parking and transportation plan. "This will help out our employees with lower salaries," he said. Poarch added that he would like to do more to help employees but that permit prices will increase for only five years.

Poarch would not predict how the proposed changes will be received by the BOT, but he said all the suggestions have been through ACT and UNC's vice chancellors and reviewed by the BOT's

Buildings and Grounds Committee. ACT has worked on the planned changes to the ordinance since July.

Faculty Council Chairwoman Sue Estroff said she thinks the BOT will accept the changes as they are. Estroff, who stressed the many hours and meetings that resulted in the proposed changes, said she is especially proud of the sliding scale for permit prices.

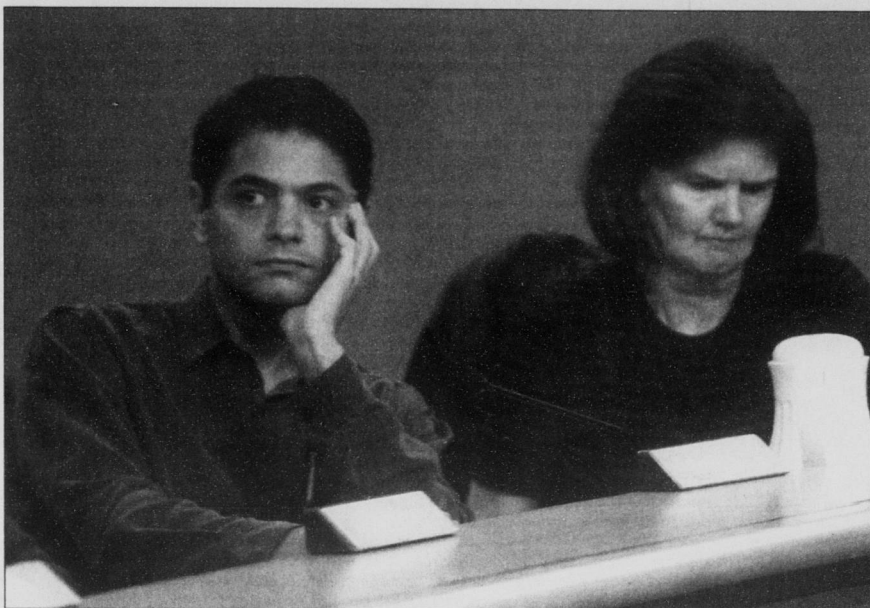
"The big news is that we volunteered to have the people who

make more pay more," she said. "How often does that happen?"

Poarch said that in the event the BOT does not choose to adopt all the changes, it could choose to accept some and reject others.

Estroff pointed out that last year the BOT rejected the proposal for nighttime parking but accepted other proposed changes.

ACT's original proposal included
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Town Council member Mark Kleinschmidt (above left) is one of two openly gay elected officials in the area. Carrboro Alderman John Herrera (below) is the only first-generation Hispanic immigrant in N.C. municipal government.

Minority leaders stress need to push for diversity

BY MAGGIE KAO
SENIOR WRITER

After years of paving the way for progressive communities in the state, Chapel Hill and Carrboro minority leaders say the towns still have a journey ahead on the road to equality.

Several elected officials weren't surprised by a recent survey that revealed that almost 42 percent of Carrboro minorities think race relations in the town are poor to fair, as compared to more than 23 percent of white residents who expressed the same.

The survey also showed that minorities believe citizen input is less important to local governments' decision-making.

Valerie Foushee, a Chapel Hill-Carrboro Board of Education member and a native of Chapel Hill, said she became involved in town issues out of concern for minority representation.

"I wanted to serve to ensure that all students would have an equal opportunity," Foushee said.



DTH FILE PHOTO/HUNTER MCRAE

Foushee said the school system has made great strides in minority student achievement since she took office. But she added that area schools need to continue on the path to equality for all students.

"I see a movement to provide equal access, but I don't think we're there right now," Foushee said.

Carrboro Alderman John Herrera agrees with Foushee that the towns have room for improvement but also remains enthusiastic in his praise for the area.

"I think that the town of Carrboro is

one of the most open societies in the country," he said.

"Carrboro really appreciates diversity — not only of race but also of ideas, lifestyles, religions and age."

Since his election last year, Herrera said, he has had a positive experience serving as the only first-generation Hispanic immigrant in N.C. municipal government.

Herrera, a native of Costa Rica, came to study in the United States in 1984 and has lived in Carrboro since 1992. "I feel a big responsibility to better represent the people of Carrboro and bring a voice that was not there before," he said.

But Herrera also expressed concerns about the inclusive nature of Carrboro town government. He said it is difficult for working residents and minorities to be involved in decision-making when town positions require so much time.

"I think it's really hard to be a per-

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CAPS site addresses war anxiety

BY LIZZIE STEWART
STAFF WRITER

Anxiety isn't uncommon among college students who juggle pressure from school, work and relationships.

But as the nation grows more absorbed in its war with Iraq, students might begin to feel more anxious than usual.

UNC's Counseling and Psychological Service has created a Web site that explains how the war in Iraq might contribute to students' anxieties, prompting those students to adjust their lifestyles to ease tension.

"Given the pending situation that we have, we want our students to have something to help them cope with the things that they might experience," said John Edgerly, director of CAPS.

Edgerly said that many students who have used the page found the Web site helpful and that practicing the tips on the Web site eased their anxieties.

Students perceive the Web site as a step in the right direction to recognize and attempt to solve the problem of war anxiety in students. "It's a good idea. ... There's definitely students here who would benefit from it," said freshman political science major Sophie Pearson.

For students who have family or friends in the military, the Web site offers students a place to discuss things such as anxiety caused by the war, she said.

Andrea Montoute, a freshman music major, said she understands firsthand where this anxiety comes from. Montoute's brother was deployed just before President Bush gave his ultimatum to Saddam Hussein.

"We have no clue where (my brother) is," Montoute said. "It adds to the anxiety; I want to have some way of contacting him."

Common symptoms of anxiety include fatigue, irritability and difficulty concentrating, to name a few.

Suggestions to ease anxiety include a regular sleep pattern, a balanced diet and regular exercise.

The Web site also suggests that students talk openly with others about their feelings and make room in their schedules for recreation and relaxation.

Some students appreciate what the service has to offer even if they don't see themselves benefiting from it personally. "It's probably a good thing for everyone, but especially for those who have family over there," said Amanda Goodwin, a junior chemistry major.

The Web site attempts to get students engaged in

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3rd high school may worsen traffic

BY RYAN C. TUCK
STAFF WRITER

The highly congested Smith Level Road received a new complication Thursday when the Chapel Hill-Carrboro Board of Education approved a new 1,000-student high school on the adjacent Rock Haven Road.

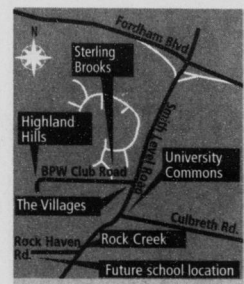
With the approval of the Rock Haven site, traffic on Smith Level is bound to get worse.

The N.C. Department of Transportation wants to add two lanes to a span of Smith Level Road between Rock Haven and Morgan Creek roads to alleviate traffic.

But March 18, the Carrboro Board of Aldermen decided NCDOT's proposal for Smith Level Road was not the best plan.

The board unanimously passed a resolution requesting instead that NCDOT install intermittent medians, turning lanes, crosswalks, bus pull-offs, bike lanes and gutters.

The board said the NCDOT plan



DTH/STAFF

is flawed because it doesn't include estimates taken since the introduction of Chapel Hill Transit's fare-free bus program, which has increased ridership by 42 percent.

Another concern for the aldermen was that widening the road merely would facilitate traffic cutting through Carrboro to the

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Conservatives counter anti-war protests

BY JOE SAUNDERS
STAFF WRITER

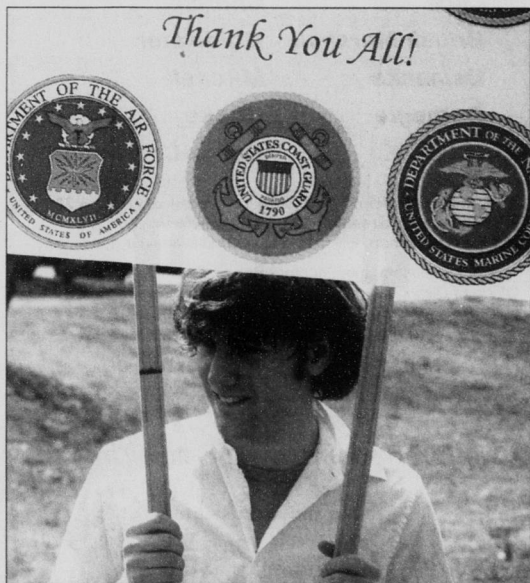
While anti-war protesters have constituted the most vocal political movement on campus in recent weeks, many conservative-minded students said their convictions in support of President Bush and the war with Iraq are just as strong.

In addition to demonstrations and protests, students have expressed their support for the war in various ways.

Allie Perry, president of College Republicans, said her organization has been participating in activities that allow students the opportunity to voice their support for U.S. troops and the war effort.

Next week, College Republicans will set up a table in the Pit and give students an opportunity to sign cards and write messages of encouragement for the troops in Iraq, Perry said. "We'll send them to Fort Bragg," Perry said. "Then they'll send them to the troops."

Lisa Andrews, second vice chairwoman of College Republicans, said the group is not so much ded-



DTH FILE PHOTO/LAURA MORTON

Freshman Livingston Sheats attends a pro-war rally Saturday. Many students have expressed their support for the war in Iraq.

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