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TOWN-GOWN TALKS TO CARRY ON TODAY

Bevy of speakers forces 1-day delay

BY JENNY HUANG
ASSISTANT CITY EDITOR

After more than four hours of presentations and public comment Monday, the Chapel Hill Town Council voted to continue today discussion of the proposed changes to UNC's Development Plan.

More than 40 local residents, Town Council candidates and UNC faculty, staff and students spoke on opposite sides of the debate over the proposed changes.

Despite the University's efforts to mitigate the town's concerns, residents made it clear that they want University officials to slow development and stop their political play.

The two modifications on the table for the council's consideration call for constructing a parking deck in Jackson Circle and building a chiller plant and parking deck facility near Cobb Residence Hall.

The proposed package also includes the University's pledge to side with the town on implementing improvements, such as additional sidewalks, to South Columbia Street — a reversal from UNC's previous position in support of widening the road.

The Development Plan is a short-term subset of the Master Plan, a 50-year blueprint for campus expansion. UNC formally submitted changes to the plan in April.

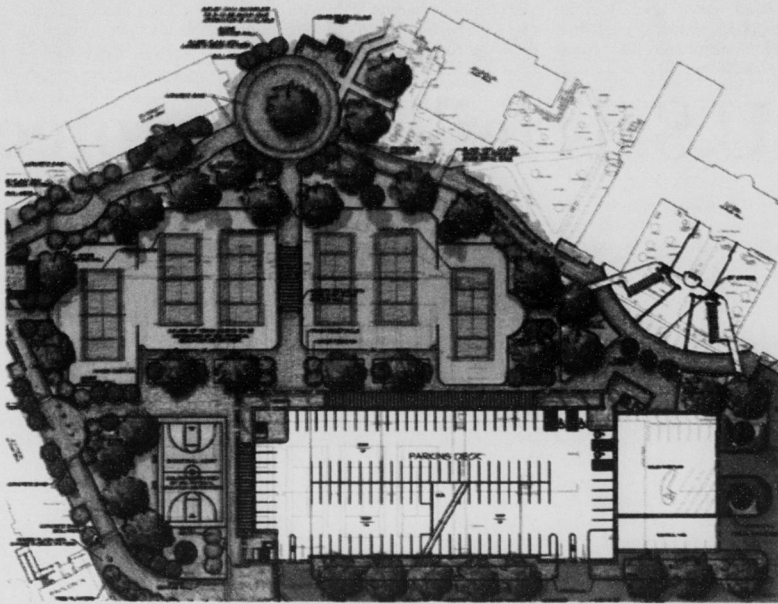
While local residents criticized the proposed changes for their potential to increase traffic and noise, UNC staff members and students advocated for the changes to alleviate parking shortages and improve the quality of campus life.

Gene Pease, Gimghoul Homeowners Association president, said residents of the Gimghoul Historic District still aren't satisfied with the University's reasons for building the chiller plant and parking deck facilities near their homes.

"Yes, the University has reduced the size of the chiller plant-parking deck," Pease said. "But it still doesn't change the fact that building a deck in this area is a very bad idea."

But Doris Friend, UNC Health Care director of employment, said

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Under a proposal suggested by UNC, the Master Plan would be modified to create a parking deck at the site of the current Cobb parking lot. Six tennis courts, a basketball court and additional green space are included.

ANALYSIS

Plan's parking shortage forces focus on transit

BY BROOK R. CORWIN
UNIVERSITY EDITOR

The UNC Development Plan contains numerous provisions to improve facilities on campus and to construct additions that will allow the University to grow.

Reducing the demand for parking spaces isn't one of them.

The Development Plan, a short-term component of the University's Master Plan for campus growth, increases the number of overall parking spaces on campus by 1,550.

But 1,360 of those spaces are for hospital patients and visitors, and with the number of faculty, staff and students expected to rise, the crunch for spaces only will worsen.

Last night, University officials tried to alleviate the parking shortage partially by petitioning the Chapel Hill Town Council to approve the construction of parking decks near Cobb Residence Hall and Jackson Circle. A decision on the proposal was deferred to today. The parking decks, which would replace proposed decks located on South Campus, would provide a combined 1,300 spaces — but the new decks still would leave the University with a shortfall in the thousands.

"It will help, but it's only a start," said Tommy Griffin, chairman of the Employee Forum and a member of the University's Advisory Committee on Transportation.

With a shortage of campus parking, University officials say, the transportation priorities of UNC must switch to mass transit and park-and-ride services.

Accommodating all demand for parking, officials say, will sacrifice the ambiance and learning environment of campus.

"The general notion is that we're trying to take those who don't need a car on a day-to-day basis and shift them to mass transit," said Dean Bresciani, interim vice chancellor for student affairs and a member of ACT. "We want to devote the campus to educational endeavors instead of parking."

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New process delays UNC students' visas

BY MICHELLE JARBOE
FEATURES EDITOR

Before she left Japan for the United States, Masako Hioka read news of slow-moving lines in front of the U.S. embassy in Tokyo and of repeat efforts by visa seekers to arrange interviews at the nearest consulate.

With most international travelers to the United States being required to interview in person before obtaining a visa, students attempting to reach universities have encountered some roadblocks.

"The interviews started in August, and I got my visa just before that," said Hioka, an English major. "I was lucky."

On May 3, a message was sent from Secretary of State Colin Powell to all consulates requiring that an in-person visa interview be implemented no later than Aug. 1 for the majority of foreign travelers wishing to enter the United States temporarily.

According to the document, the goal of the interview would be "to elicit information to help determine individual applicants' eligibility for a visa."

"Information crucial in identifying those who seek to enter the U.S. for other-than-legal purposes, including those related to support for or commission of terrorist acts, can sometimes be first obtained in the interview process."

Though the new regulations have yielded a sometimes "significantly" larger pool of applicants to be interviewed, consulates and embassies are prohibited from expanding their resources in order

to meet the demand for appointments, according to the document. "Posts should not, repeat not, use overtime to deal with additional workload requirements but should develop appointment systems and public relations strategies to mitigate as much as possible the impact of these changes."

Though historically, students have been required to undergo an interview process for their visas, the extension of the interview to other travelers caused long waits and delayed trips for some.

Sanja Vujaskovic, an international student and a scholar adviser at the University Center for International Studies, said one French student planning to attend UNC this semester does not have his interview until Sept. 10.

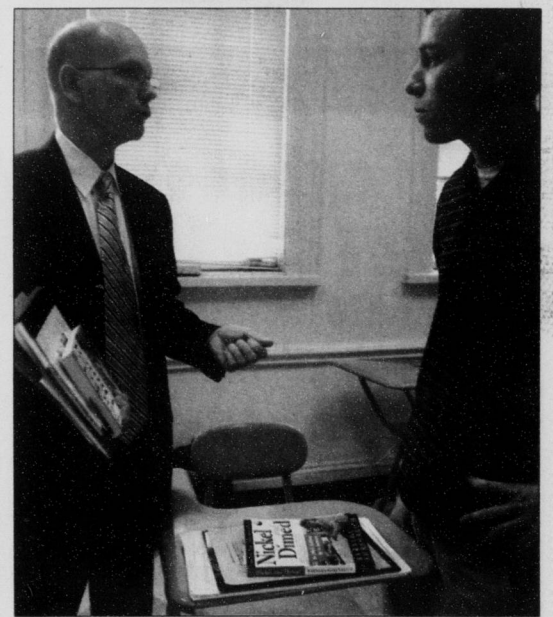
The student, who traveled in the United States this summer, merely was told to come to the embassy when he temporarily returned home. Once there, he was informed that it was necessary to set up an interview, although there was no appointment available until after the start of the semester.

"There's no real guarantee that he will either get the visa or be allowed through immigration because he will be late for the start of school," Vujaskovic said.

Other students had their interviews set for Aug. 25, leaving little travel time before classes started today, said Elizabeth James, Student and Exchange Visitor Information System compliance officer at the international center.

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NICKEL AND DIMED



DTH/KATE BLACKMAN

Chancellor James Moeser (left) and Student Body President Matt Tepper discuss the summer reading session they led in Bingham Hall on Monday afternoon. The controversy surrounding "Nickel and Dimed" turned out to be quieter than last year. For the full story, see page 3.

Speaker list on Moeser's desk

BY JENNIFER IMMEL
ASSISTANT UNIVERSITY EDITOR

At a time when the last thing on most seniors' minds is graduation, the selection of this year's Commencement speaker already is in its final stage.

But although choosing a speaker early gives UNC more leeway to get the person it wants, some have questioned whether enough effort was made by the Commencement Speaker Selection Committee to get student input.

The committee, comprised of students and faculty, submitted three names to Chancellor James Moeser in May for both the winter and spring readings. Moeser has the final say as to who is invited.

Senior Class President George Leamon said he thinks the entire senior class will be satisfied with the committee's recommendations.

Leamon, who is not supposed to reveal any of the names, said the person who was unanimously supported by the committee was one of the people both he and Senior Class Vice President Doug Melton supported. Last year the pair said they wanted to recruit a speaker with strong ties to UNC and mentioned two names: civil rights leader Julius Chambers and musician James Taylor.

Although the committee isn't moving any faster than before — entertainer Bill Cosby was sent his invitation this exact time last year

"I have made no secret of it. ... I don't think enough outreach has taken place."

REBEKAH BURFORD, STUDENT BODY VICE PRESIDENT

— student awareness of its progress has not been as pronounced.

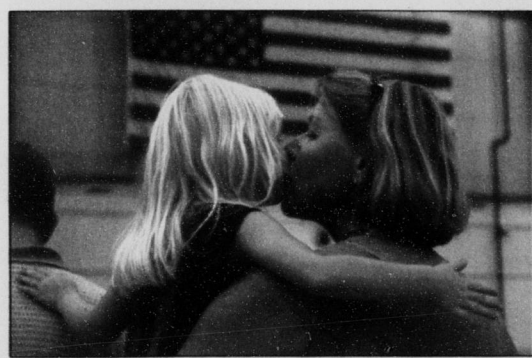
In April, Leamon and Melton sent an e-mail to rising seniors asking for suggestions for this year's Commencement speaker. Leamon and Melton said they heard from a number of students, but they could not recall how many. "I think that we did all we could to successfully recruit names," Leamon said.

He added that most of the names students suggested, such as Bill Clinton, Tom Hanks and

Michael Jordan, did not meet the challenging criteria necessary for a Commencement speaker: someone who is well-known, is worthy of receiving an honorary degree and who will speak for free.

But Rebekah Burford, student body vice president and a member of the Commencement speaker committee, said she wished more effort had been made to get input from seniors. "I personally feel,

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DTH/BRIAN CASSELLA

Mary Johnson kisses her daughter, Claire, 4, during a party the family held Saturday at a National Guard Armory to thank their friends.

Major mom thanks 'lifeline' at home

Returns to home base after 3 months

BY MATT HANSON
SENIOR WRITER

Matthew, Alex and Claire Johnson darted in and out of Army helicopters Saturday while their mother, Maj. Mary Johnson, manned her spread of party food — a welcome change from her spring in the Iraqi desert.

While Mary flew in helicopters as part of an assignment in the Middle East, family friends delivered home-cooked meals to her children and

her husband, Maj. Chris Johnson.

As thanks, the Johnsons hosted a party at the National Guard Armory at Raleigh-Durham International Airport on Saturday for those whom Mary calls her "lifeline back home" — the cooks and other friends who sent mail to her base west of Baghdad.

These people helped keep her spirits up in the scorched desert wasteland, where she said trash piles were pushed aside to make

room for a makeshift tent town. Mary lived there near an oil pipeline from early April to late June.

Messages she sent to friends back home are littered with tales of blistering winds, pesky bugs and furniture made out of nearby trash piles. "The wind blew so strong a couple of evenings ago that I thought Jesus was coming to get me," she said in one of her last transmissions.

At one point she contemplated shaving her hair because of caking sand and grit.

But in the messages, Mary also repeatedly thanked her N.C. lifeline

for sending letters and packages. "I felt bad for some people that weren't getting mail," Mary said. "My heart broke routinely. I cried thinking about them here (at home) without me."

But Mary enjoyed returning to the responsibilities of an officer after seven years as a stay-at-home mom. "I didn't hate it; I'll even go so far as to say I enjoyed it," she said. "If I was single or had no kids, I could say it was a good experience."

After all, she spent her early

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INSIDE

'THROUGH REBEL EYES'
Exhibit aims to dispel teen stereotypes by studying race, sex and media **PAGE 19**

INSIDE

SUMMER AT THE CAPITOL
Student leaders put University issues on the table with state lawmakers **PAGE 4**

SPORTS

FRESH FACES
UNC men's soccer will open its season Friday with 16 new players **PAGE 17**

WEATHER

TODAY Mostly sunny, H 92, L 70
WEDNESDAY Partly cloudy, H 94, L 69
THURSDAY Partly cloudy, H 91, L 69