

The Daily Tar Heel

Talks set tone for future

HEATED TOWN-GOWN DEBATE SIGNALS ENMITY LATER ON

BY JENNY HUANG
ASSISTANT CITY EDITOR

It possessed the classic characteristics of a schoolyard battle: provocation, concessions and victory.

But at the end of the contentious town-gown struggle over UNC's proposed changes to its Development Plan, it was difficult to identify the bully.

After months of intense discussion and debate, the Chapel Hill Town

Council reluctantly approved UNC's modifications to the Development Plan on Tuesday in a 6-2 vote.

The approved changes allow UNC to construct an 800-space parking deck in Jackson Circle and a chiller plant and 500-space parking deck near Cobb Residence Hall.

The final proposal also includes UNC's offer to make improvements to South Columbia Street, a reversal from

its previous desire to widen the road.

Yet even after the University's concessions and the town's approval, it was clear from Tuesday's meeting that feelings of dissatisfaction remain.

Several council members said they felt betrayed by the changes to the plan and bullied by the University to approve its proposal. "We were given an ultimatum," said council member Ed Harrison.

Mayor Kevin Foy said that in the future, town residents should be more thoroughly incorporated into the growth planning process. "There should be a mechanism for community involvement at the stage of concept plan."

No matter the protocol for change, University officials warn, town-gown discussions regarding further campus growth are inevitable.

Nancy Suttentfield, UNC vice chancellor for finance and administration, said Tuesday that other changes likely will be made to the Development Plan.

"We're discovering new problems and situations that were not part of the research process in the Development Plan two years ago," she said.

The plan is a 10-year component of the Master Plan, a 50-year blueprint

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DTH/GARRETT HALL

Inside the current UNC cancer center, blood pressure is taken in the same room that houses a toilet.

University to press on with cancer center plan

BY LAURA BOST
STAFF WRITER

The University is moving ahead with plans for a new \$180 million cancer center despite the fact that state lawmakers have been unable to approve its funding.

Officials have submitted a Certificate of Need to the state — a request for approval to begin planning the center with about \$7 million from UNC Health Care's reserve funds.

The center first was proposed in 2002 as a replacement for the existing center, which is 50 years old.

"There's such a big need to replace the existing center and take care of patients," said Karen McCall, spokeswoman for UNC Health Care. "We know one way or another the center is going to have to be part of our future."

But for two years in a row, state lawmakers have not approved funding for the center. The Senate approved UNC's request for full funding this summer, but the project was stonewalled when the House failed to reach an agreement during the legislative session's final hours.

Senate lawmakers proposed a plan that would have provided full funding for the cancer center, but the House plan only called for initial planning funds.

The existing center treated 82,000 patients last year, and officials estimate that the number of

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ANALYSIS

NASA's future appears fragile

BY ELLIOTT DUBE
ASSISTANT STATE & NATIONAL EDITOR

For the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, two dates — July 20, 1969, and Feb. 1, 2003 — rest on opposite ends of the spectrum.

The pinnacle of NASA's achievements took place on the first date as Neil Armstrong took mankind's first steps on the moon.

NASA'S TRAGEDIES
The latter was arguably the agency's darkest day. In one of the worst accidents in NASA's history, space shuttle Columbia disintegrated; its seven-member crew died during re-entry.

■ Jan. 27, 1967 - 3 killed by fire in Apollo 1 module

■ Jan. 28, 1986 - 7 killed in explosion of Challenger

■ Feb. 1, 2003 - 7 killed in breakup of Columbia

On Monday, the Columbia Accident Investigation Board released a scathing report, seven months in the making, that details causes of the disaster and recommends improvements to NASA.

According to the report, a piece of insulating foam broke off the external tank and damaged the shuttle's left wing. The intense heat associated with re-entry weakened the breached wing, and the shuttle disintegrated.

The report makes 29 recommendations to change NASA's "culture," including 15 that are to be carried out before more shuttle flights are conducted.

The report makes it clear that NASA must fix the shuttle and begin researching and developing a complete revamping of the shuttle's design, said Howard McCurdy, professor of public affairs at American University.

"More importantly, they have to fix NASA," he said. "NASA's a pale shadow of the institution that took humans to the moon in the 1960s."

He added that the agency's mind-set has focused less on reliability and safety than on keeping schedule and cutting costs.

Erik Conway, a historian working at NASA's Langley Research Center, said the agency has shown a dangerous willingness to face risk. "We've treated the shuttle as if it were an operational vehicle like an airliner when in reality it is not."

The loss of the Columbia and its crew echoed two other disasters that rocked NASA to its core.

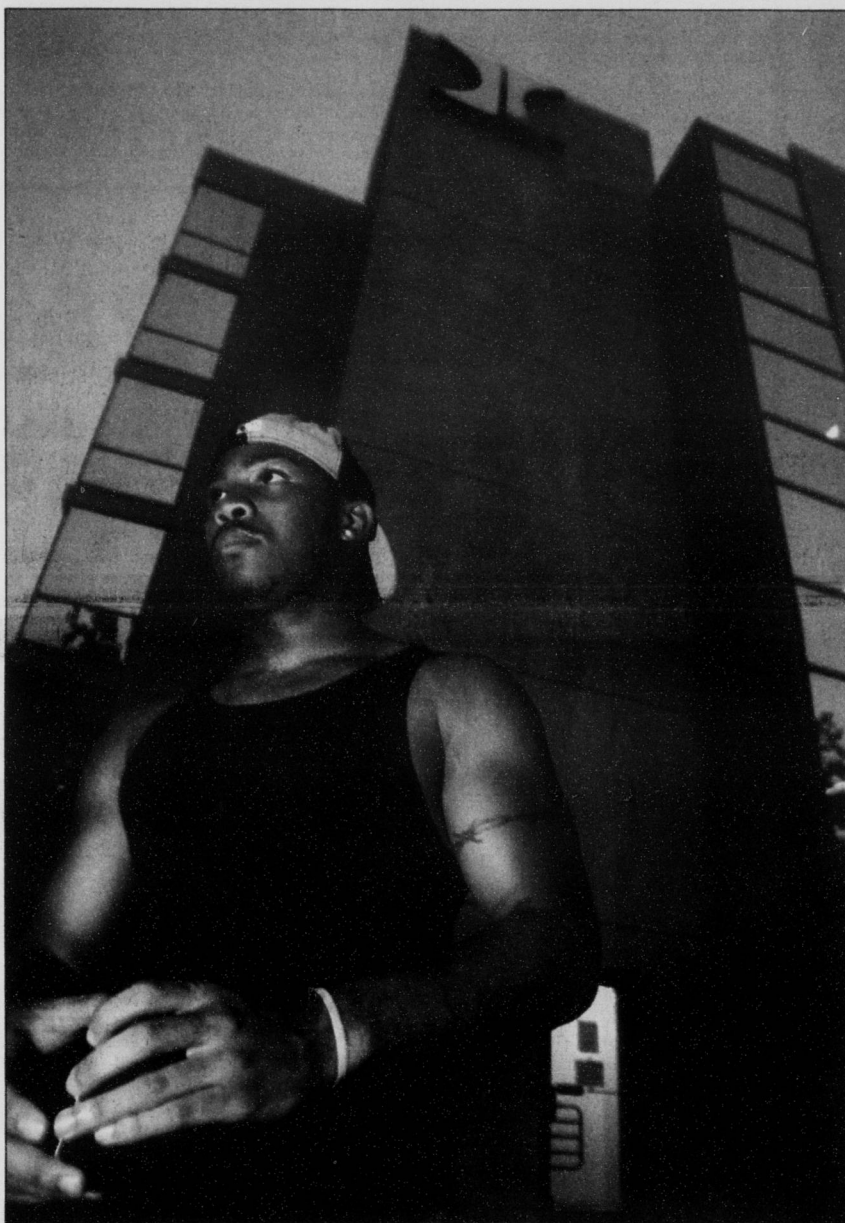
On Jan. 27, 1967, three astronauts died during a launch pad test when a flash fire erupted in their command module.

The space agency suffered another devastating blow when space shuttle Challenger exploded during its launch on Jan. 28, 1986, killing all seven crew members.

To prevent future accidents, Congress probably will be asked to increase NASA's level of funding.

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"In retrospect, I realize that we inadvertently may have offended some of the students." DENT DAVIS, HILTON MANAGER



DTH/KATE BLACKMAN

N.C. Central University senior Derek Morrison stands outside the back door of the Hilton Hotel in Durham. According to the contract they received, NCCU students being housed in the hotel were instructed not to use the front door.

HILTON TAKES HEAT

Students complain, hotel apologizes about door restrictions

BY ELLIOTT DUBE
ASSISTANT STATE AND NATIONAL EDITOR

DURHAM — Some N.C. Central University students are upset about a policy at the Durham Hilton that allows them to use only the building's side and rear entrances, but the hotel's general manager said he apologizes for any offense taken.

About 130 students are staying at the hotel while numerous residence halls at NCCU — a historically black university — are being treated for mold.

A contract between the hotel and the university written last Friday states, "Entrance through (sic) the Main Lobby, Lobby Side Entrance, Meeting Space Entrance or Employee Entrances are all prohibited."

The document also establishes that students will not be permitted to

travel above the hotel's third floor except for evacuation or family visitation purposes.

In addition to students, the hotel serves as a temporary home for many transient guests, said manager Dent Davis — creating the possibility of an overcrowded lobby when students take a shuttle to and from NCCU's campus.

Davis said he had thought it would be best to move NCCU's shuttle stops away from the front entrance and closer to where the students are located.

"We anticipated that roughly prior to eight o'clock in the morning we would have all these students trying to get on the shuttle at the same time," Davis said.

He added that setting restrictions on the doors was a mistake. "In retrospect, I realize that we inadvertently may have offended some of the students."

He said that the hotel focuses this heavily on logistics with any large group to control the flow of people occupying the building's lobby.

Managerial concerns about students loitering in the lobby are understandable, said Marcus, an NCCU senior living in the hotel who declined to give his last name. But he said students should be allowed to use the front door to enter and leave.

Marquita, a junior who also declined to give her full name, added that unlike the front of the hotel, the back section lacks seats and seems less safe at night.

Junior Chad Johnson said he

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GOP candidates play catch-up in governor's race

BY EMMA BURGIN
ASSISTANT STATE & NATIONAL EDITOR

Republicans vying for the state's top executive position might not have appeared much in the news lately, but they're brainstorming campaign strategies to help them oust Democratic Gov. Mike Easley.

Political pundits say they have their work cut out for them.

Easley is starting to appear in public more often, most notably in visits to communities hit hard by the Pillowtex closing that cost 5,000 North Carolinians their jobs, said Thad Beyle, UNC professor of political science. Easley has been criticized in the past for not being visible to North Carolinians.

"He's showing interest and concern," Beyle said. "Easley is sitting on top of a difficult situation. He's beginning to be a little more public about what he's trying to do about it."

As a result, Easley has tightened his grip on re-election during the summer months, said Ferrel Guillory, director of UNC's Program on Southern Politics, Media and Public Life. "He has strengthened himself," he said. "All of his legislation, with the strong exception of the lottery, has been adopted."

Guillory said Easley's most recent exertion of power over the legislature seemed to reaffirm his capability to govern.

Easley mandated that the N.C. General Assembly convene Tuesday — despite the legislature not being in session — to take action on a Senate bill he vetoed last week. The legislature can override a veto with a three-fifths majority in both the House and Senate.

The bill is a relatively unimportant banking bill, but the veto spoke loudly to legislators, Guillory said.

Easley was the first governor to use veto power, which he exercised on an appointments bill last

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DTH FILE PHOTO/BETH FLOYD

Gov. Mike Easley has used veto power to assert his authority over the General Assembly.



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O.C. superintendent confident in the face of challenge PAGE 4

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Men's cross country boasts improved roster PAGE 11

WEATHER
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