

BOARD EDITORIALS

LET'S GET TOGETHER

Leaders from Chapel Hill and the University must agree to work as a team in order to combat future conflicts over development proposals.

For much of the past decade, University leaders have grappled with finding ways to meet an increased demand for UNC's services — and the issue isn't likely to go away anytime soon.

The campus's need to grow also comes during a time of many changes for the town of Chapel Hill, which is coping with its own growth while trying to protect its small-town feel.

Over the years, the pursuits of both of these groups, as they attempt to meet these goals, has not come without conflict.

The recent debates about changes to the Master Plan — the University's 50-year blueprint for growth — illustrate the challenges both groups face in agreeing on a common growth plan.

The Chapel Hill Town Council approved Tuesday by a vote of 6-2 a plan that calls for the construction of a 500-space parking deck and chiller plant near Cobb Residence Hall and an 800-space deck in Jackson Circle on South Campus.

The vote came after weeks of intense talks, including a nearly four-hour debate in the council's chambers Monday.

The approval of the Development Plan also called for the creation of a task force to oversee restoration of the Old Chapel Hill Cemetery that would include both town and University representatives.

Many town residents, especially those living in the Gimghoul Historic District, opposed the plans out of fear that they will dramatically increase traffic and noise near the area.

Residents also lamented the projects' close proximity to the historic cemetery.

University officials have countered that the projects are necessary in order to expand access to and resources on campus.

Some argue that having easy access to parking decks on campus can play a crucial role in attracting and retaining University faculty and staff members.

In addition, the chiller plant is essential to keep the northern part of campus afloat.

While it is important for campus officials to pursue the necessary avenues to manage growth, they must do so being mindful of concerns from town residents.

From the very beginning, the success and growth

of Chapel Hill and the University have been linked to both parties' interaction with each other.

The decisions enacted by one group no doubt affect the other, and leaders from both sides of the fence should be cognizant of this fact.

As such, UNC officials should be applauded for their efforts in reaching out for feedback from the Chapel Hill community in discussions about the parking decks and chiller plant.

University leaders could have brushed aside residents' concerns and gone directly to the council with their plans.

Instead, campus representatives sat down to hammer out a compromise on a smaller Cobb parking deck and a larger buffer zone for the chiller plant to which town officials could lend their support.

Campus leaders also retreated on their intentions to push for the widening of South Columbia Street and instead offered to back the town's plans to make the road more friendly to pedestrians.

These efforts illustrate that campus leaders are willing to work with the town.

Chapel Hill Mayor Kevin Foy even praised the University's efforts in working with town residents and council members regarding the plan.

In addition, by giving a thumbs up to the plan the council showed that it recognizes the University's need to grow, and one hopes that this spirit of camaraderie will continue.

Still, it would be overly optimistic to believe that there never will be any conflicts in the future.

As the years go on, there is a chance that campus leaders could identify other needs that could lead to proposals to amend the Master Plan once again.

But one hopes campus officials again will actively seek input from residents, including through public forums and surveys, and will take any of their concerns into consideration before making any decisions.

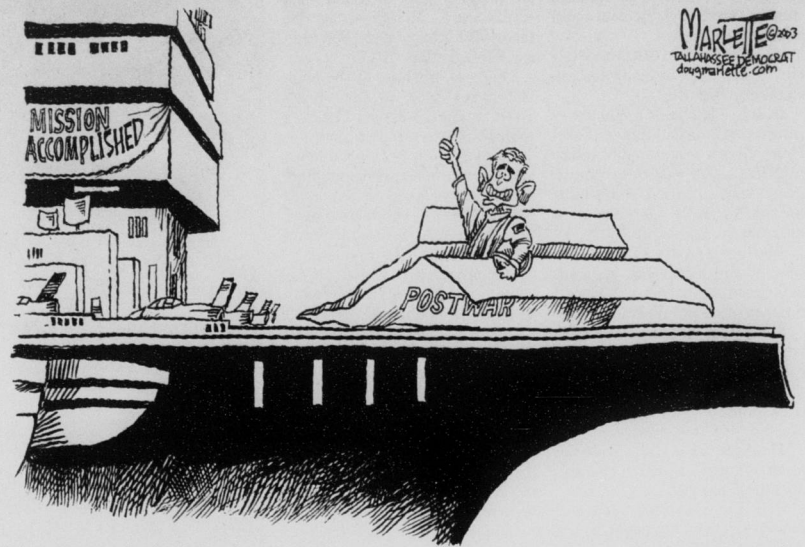
In turn, it's important that town leaders be more receptive to the debate and understand that growth at UNC is inevitable in the future and is to be expected when living next to a major university.

By keeping an open dialogue, Chapel Hill and University leaders can help prevent any resentment that one side is not appreciative of the needs or concerns of the other.

ON THE DAY'S NEWS

"Change is scientific; progress is ethical. Change is indubitable, whereas progress is a matter of controversy."

BERTRAND RUSSELL, PHILOSOPHER



POP CULTURE

Rankings of pop idols offer only glitz and no substance

All the stars in all the world fought it out, and of course, Oprah Winfrey won.

A few weeks ago VH1 answered the question no one asked, and now we have the "200 Greatest Pop Culture Icons." Oprah, empress of a vast legion of suburban women, sits atop the list. Yeah, she needed that ego boost. Seen the cover of O Magazine recently? Maybe she bought the top spot.

It isn't just Oprah: I have major issues with this bloated excuse for another week's worth of specials on the former music network, now shunning music in its vainglorious incarnation as home of "The Greatest."

Here's a clue that the network's stretched itself thin with its spectacular makeover: The host is Kristin Davis, Charlotte of television's "Sex and the City."

What, Todd Bridges was busy? Who'll host "I Love the 1980s," Evan Marriott? I hope so.

As if the whole ordeal needed to be any more pointless. How is John F. Kennedy Jr. at number 24 while the original JFK wilts at 32? There's no John John without plain John — who are the ad wizards who made that call?

How George Clooney (33) landed higher than Kurt Cobain (37) or even newly conjoined Venus/Serena Williams (158) is beyond me.

But UNC fans rejoice: Michael Jordan (8) narrowly defeated living cartoon Michael Jackson (10) in the battle of those known eponymously as just "Michael."

It's a terrible list, and I'm ashamed to have watched so much of it, but the sad thing is that it says more about us, about a culture that idolizes news anchors (Katie Couric, a remarkable 39), magical children (Harry Potter,



BRIAN MILLIKIN
SO HOT RIGHT NOW

just 154) and the pathetic (Monica Lewinsky, 161).

It's not enough that we hold Wacko Jacko in such regard; we can't stand not knowing if he's better than Britney Spears (he is, by 10). I don't know what's worse, that they're so important or that we have to make them compete.

Ah, America. What makes a pop culture icon? VH1 mandates that the icon be immediately quotable, a Halloween costume and known by a single name or word.

Clever, but I believe it's something else — that we wish we were them. It's really VH1's 200 people we're most jealous of.

Image makes a pop culture icon, which is why so much of our star love is so misplaced even as we throw it around everywhere (who gave it to Ashton Kutcher all of a sudden?).

It's gotten to the point where we have TV specials exploiting our tastes and reminding us how we've failed our ancestors, because for every JFK there's a Jay Len (explain to me how he's 72, not 72,000).

Just how does one go about ranking pop culture icons? VH1 tried and failed. And the lesson learned? Never try.

I'd like to think that there's no way to rank what or who someone loves. It shocks me to the core that anyone could actually worship J.Lo to the point that she

"Just how does one go about ranking pop culture icons? VH1 tried and failed."

merits a top 20 position, but after I wake up (for I've passed out on the floor), I'm all right with that. My friends (and family) make fun of me for thinking Buffy is cooler than Tony Soprano, and in the end I'm okay with that, too.

If I've learned anything from all the embarrassing amount of time I've spent watching movies and TV, reading magazines and absorbing all the unimaginable minutiae, it's that there's no quantifying what you like, no telling someone that what they like isn't as good as what you like.

Have your opinion, please — opinions make life worthwhile — but don't ever be fooled that you're right.

I'm addicted to these lists, in spite of my hate. I rank my favorite stuff, from albums to flavors of Cap'n Crunch (berries win, clearly).

It's pointless, and I know it, but it still makes me happy when I see Superman ranked second, as in some small way it validates the Superman sheets my bed once had or the fact that my dresser drawers are still painted red. It's pop culture at its best.

I suppose I should thank VH1 for reminding me that it's the little things that matter. I'll keep them in mind from here out.

Even if Oprah owns them all.

Contact Brian Millikin
at millikin@email.unc.edu.

TRAINING THE BEST

The Ready to Teach Act will provide states with the resources needed to attract and retain quality teachers to the nation's public schools.

Whether it was the friendly face who greeted you on your first day of kindergarten or the tough math wiz who drilled geometry formulas into your head, chances are you have a memory (or two) of a teacher that sticks out in your mind.

For most of us, teachers played a critical role in our early development and are one of the many long-lasting imprints from our childhood.

But all around the nation, many school districts are having a difficult time recruiting and retaining individuals to serve in the classroom.

More than two million additional teachers will be needed at the nation's public schools during the next decade, the National Education Association reports on its Web site.

Finding the resources to identify, train and keep these teachers could be soon be made a little easier by provisions within the Ready to Teach Act of 2003.

Under the bill, eligible states can receive money to implement teacher preparation programs, such as a charter college aimed at teaching education. In addition, states can develop programs to retain and promote teachers.

The bill, which cleared the U.S. House of Representatives in July, has been referred to a Senate committee.

The Ready to Teach Act is a great initiative that will help to ensure that our nation's schools have the tools they need to recruit and train the best and

brightest educators and also find ways to decrease turnover.

Another benefit of the program is that it will give leaders a chance to learn from successful education initiatives occurring in other states.

Much of the inspiration for the national movement comes from North Carolina's own Teaching Fellows Program.

The initiative, which began in 1986, provides four-year scholarships to 400 N.C. high school seniors each year who commit to teach at a public school in the state after graduation.

The additional resources provided by the Ready to Teach Act come at a critical time when other educational and service initiatives have taken dramatic financial hits.

Earlier this year, Teach For America lost a major chunk of its funding due to budget cuts to the AmeriCorps program. The initiative has trained more than 9,000 educators since 1990.

Education and congressional leaders — including Rep. David Price, D-N.C., who has spearheaded efforts to boost educational training — should be praised for taking concrete steps in order to boost the number of teachers before the problem worsens.

There is no cure-all strategy for solving the teacher shortages that many areas are facing, but the Ready to Teach Act and its grants for states are a good first step.

EDITORS' NOTE: The above editorials are the opinions of solely The Daily Tar Heel Editorial Board, which were reached after open debate. The board consists of eight board members, the assistant editorial page editor, the editorial page editor and the DTH editor. The 2003-04 DTH editor decided not to vote on the board and not to write board editorials.

READERS' FORUM

Campus memories to live for many years to come

TO THE EDITOR:

Today I read a reprint of an article by Vermont Royster in the Wall Street Journal's online "Opinion Journal."

It struck a special chord with me, because 30 years ago as an incoming freshman from out of state I attended UNC's "Freshman Camp" and Royster was the keynote alumnus welcoming us to the camp and to the University. He gave a great talk and was a big part of a memorable week of orientation before classes started.

I had heard of The Wall Street Journal, where he was editor emeritus, but I really did not appreciate the scope of his experience and the brilliance of his writing until years later in graduate school when I started reading his editorials in the Journal.

Then and today when I read his articles, I feel privileged to have known such a renowned Tar Heel up close and personal for that one day. So for all you incoming freshman, know that you are entering a very special place. I hope that you too will hear from today's incarnation of Vermont Royster who will introduce you to the mystique of Chapel Hill as he did for me 30 years ago. Good luck!

Rob Channon
Class of 1977

Columnist ignores benefits to boosting enrollment cap

TO THE EDITOR:

Nathan Denny's premier editorial makes excellent points, though the points don't agree with each other.

He asserts that our "top priority, as stated in the University's mission, is to serve all the people of the state." He argues that therefore the lion's share of the student population should come from the North Carolina.

But then he argues (rather spuriously) that since more out-of-state students paying at an increased rate will mean a lower allocation from the state, the University will gain nothing.

If we suspend disbelief and believe this argument makes perfect sense, who does Denny suppose would benefit from a lower allocation to UNC-Chape Hill?

His beloved "people of the state," of course.

A smaller need of allocation for our school would lessen the state's budgetary woes and might entice the legislature to hesitate cutting an already thin appropriation for the school.

As an article on page six of the same issue points out, we received \$24 million in cuts and had a 5 percent increase in tuition last year alone.

Perhaps if we ask for less, the legislature will feel worse about

taking away more.

Rich Finneran
Sophomore
Classics and Philosophy

Student upset over lack of information about projects

TO THE EDITOR:

Everyone knows that construction should be endured for the future development of the University. However, students do deserve to be fully informed on how construction affects them, especially students living on campus.

The University's Construction Watch Web site, located at <http://constructionwatch.unc.edu>, is clearly lacking to inform residents of relevant construction projects.

For example, the current project on Stadium Drive is virtually left out. I have still to find one mention that the road is one-way and that walkways near Carmichael and Teague residence halls are blocked by fences.

On the other hand, the Department of Housing and Residential Education provides details of how construction will affect students living on-campus and dates of projects.

Although this is a valuable resource, one would expect the University's main construction Web site to provide similar information to help everyone better

cope with construction.

Will Hall
Senior
Psychology

SEAC to celebrate 15th year anniversary over Labor Day

TO THE EDITOR:

If you're staying in Chapel Hill over Labor Day weekend, you have a great opportunity to network with dozens of students and alumni who have been part of the nation's oldest and largest student environmental organization — the Student Environmental Action Coalition.

SEAC's history began in the spring of 1988, when students from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill placed a notice in Greenpeace Magazine asking to hear from student environmentalists interested in forming a network.

SEAC moved into the Campus Y and held Threshold, its first national conference, at which 1700 students from 43 states and over 225 schools came to Chapel Hill. SEAC as a national organization was born!

At UNC, SEAC has a proud history of activism and volunteer work. We started the recycling project you see on campus. We were instrumental in initiating the University's campaigns for sustainability and energy efficiency. SEAC has been an ally to the cause of the lowest paid workers on cam-

pus.

On the national level, SEAC's work helped to stop the construction of a massive, destructive dam project in Canada; protect Native American sacred land in Arizona; initiate sustainable energy and paper purchasing policies at countless universities and high schools.

The public is invited to a round table discussion on Sunday, titled "15 Years of Student Environmental Activism and Leadership: Celebrating SEAC's 15th Anniversary," in the Johnston Center for Undergraduate Excellence, Graham Memorial Hall, from 2:30 to 5:00 pm.

For more information about the reunion visit www.seac.org. A few people are needed to host participants or volunteer. Contact Andrew Pearson, kangaroo@email.unc.edu, 919-960-5217.

Andrew Pearson
Student Environmental Action Coalition

TO SUBMIT A LETTER: The Daily Tar Heel welcomes reader comments. Letters to the editor should be no longer than 300 words and must be typed, double-spaced, dated and signed by no more than two people. Students should include their year, major and phone number. Faculty and staff should include their title, department and phone number. The DTH reserves the right to edit letters for space, clarity and vulgarity. Publication is not guaranteed. Bring letters to the DTH office at Suite 104, Carolina Union, mail them to P.O. Box 3257, Chapel Hill, NC 27515 or e-mail them to editdesk@unc.edu.

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