

MLK debate follows U.S. trends

ECU geographer provides insight

BY VIRGINIA WOOTEN
STAFF WRITER

The debate in Chapel Hill over renaming Airport Road in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. follows a line of similar struggles in towns and cities across the nation.

Derek Alderman, a cultural geographer at East Carolina University, has extensively studied the politics behind naming streets in honor of King and said that the events in Chapel Hill are not unprecedented.

At least 650 towns and cities in the United States have streets named in King's honor, 30 of them in North Carolina. "Naming streets for King has proven to be controversial in many places inside and outside North Carolina," he said.

He pointed to High Point as a prime example of the struggles such a proposal causes within a community. "Factions within the

city have been trying to name a street for King for over a decade.

According to High Point Council member Bernita Sims, advocates have repeatedly changed the location of the proposed street after encountering obstacles such as the state government, the local university and retirement homes whose elderly populations can't afford the processes it would take to change their address.

Some towns also opt for compromise by naming only part of a proposed street after King.

Such was the case in Greenville, where only part of a major street was changed, due to resistance from business and residential interests, as well as ECU.

Zephyrhills, Fla., renamed a street for King, but after a change in political composition the town council reversed the decision. The signs remain as an honorary dedication, but the official address was restored to its original name.

"In some ways, these struggles are like an X-ray. They really expose division within communi-

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DEREK ALDERMAN, EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY GEOGRAPHER

ties," Alderman said.

"The fact that you have such a progressive sophisticated place such as Chapel Hill, and the fact that this street naming issue is controversial really still speaks to the many different ways that people identify with King."

He feels confident that most Chapel Hill residents respect King and his memory, but that the issue lies in to what extent people personally identify with his legacy.

Alderman attended the May 24 Chapel Hill Town Council meeting at which citizens voiced their opinions on the proposed renamings, saying that the Chapel Hill debate is unique.

"One of the things that I saw that was pretty important when I attended the public hearing last

week is that there does seem to be some strong, very vocal, white support for renaming the street for King. You don't always see that in more conservative towns," he said.

Alderman believes that these street naming struggles can be healthy for a town because they open up dialogue.

"It forces people to talk about race ... to talk about where America is in relation to what King was striving to build," he said.

"King was not the only person who advocated civil rights, but his face, his name, his image have become almost a metaphor for talking about the larger movement for civil rights."

Contact the City Editor at citydesk@unc.edu.

COMPROMISE

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tions:

- renaming the Airport Road to Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard effective May 9, 2005 (the 45th anniversary of King's visit to Chapel Hill);

- establishing a task force to look for further possibilities to honor and maintain King's message;

- creating a body to rename the current Martin Luther King Street, located off of Legion Road;
- changing the Chapel Hill Town Hall address to Martin Luther King Boulevard.

At the May 24 meeting, Council member Bill Strom, who serves on the committee, motioned for the council to refer the item to the staff and vote on it without further committee discussion.

Wiggins quashed that notion, immediately noting that citizens' input should be taken into account.

She opened Tuesday's discourse with a statement to that effect. "In all fairness to all the people who have participated, we need to get together again and talk about all the options."

Jan Cosby, a Chapel Hill resident who was vocal in her disdain for the renaming, said she was pleased that Wiggins took her feelings into consideration, but could not say the same for others.

"Some of the the committee members other than Edith Wiggins had their minds made up

"Over time a name means something, and a dedication can lose its meaning."

SALLY GREENE, COUNCIL MEMBER

and weren't willing to open up to any other suggestions," she said.

After it was clear that simply dedicating to road wasn't an option, Wiggins said the town should also share in the cost and effort of going through a name change. "We are saying to the citizens who have to endure the change that we are willing to do it as well," she said. "I think that's tremendously symbolic."

Others were pessimistic about Wiggins' effort of good faith to change the town hall address.

"They're not paying for it, we are," said Ellen Sorrells, who owns a business on Airport Road. "They're just spending more tax payers' dollars."

Wiggins said that the two public meetings and the passionate feelings expressed outside of them have been beneficial to the town.

"There's probably been more discussion about Dr. King in the past few months than we have around his birthday," she said.

All four of the resolutions will go before the full town council June 14.

Contact the City Editor at citydesk@unc.edu.

Iraqis get countryman as nation's new leader

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BAGHDAD, Iraq — Iraqi officials prevailed in their choice for president over the candidate favored by the United States, allowing a U.N. envoy Tuesday to appoint an interim government reflecting Iraq's religious and cultural diversity to rule after the return of sovereignty June 30.

Ghazi Mashal Ajil al-Yawer, a Sunni Muslim critic of the occupation, was named to the largely ceremonial post. Al-Yawer was the choice of the U.S.-picked Iraqi Governing Council, which dissolved itself immediately so that the new government can start work even before it takes power from the American-led coalition at the end of the month.

Among its first tasks will be to negotiate a crucial agreement on the status of U.S.-led international forces that will remain here after

sovereignty is restored and to tackle the country's tenuous security situation.

At the U.N. Security Council on Tuesday, the United States and Britain circulated a revised resolution that would give the interim government control over the Iraqi army and police and end the mandate for the multinational force by January 2006 at the latest.

Critics of the plan — namely France, Russia and Germany — had said the previous U.S. resolution did not go far enough in its attempts to grant Iraqis genuine power over their own national affairs.

The new Cabinet will take over day-to-day operations of government ministries immediately, although the U.S.-run Coalition Provisional Authority remains the sole sovereign power in Iraq until June 30.

BUDGET CUTS

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increases approved March 19 by the UNC-system Board of Governors, many of which are slated to go toward reducing class sizes, increasing the number of class sections offered and hiring more full-time faculty.

It is unclear what the fate of the governor's other budget proposals will be. For universities, they included \$64 million to fully fund enrollment growth, a 2 percent raise in faculty salaries and the

removal of campus-based tuition hikes.

The details of the House plan now will be hashed out in appropriations meetings, beginning as soon as today and culminating in a full committee meeting Friday.

For his part, Black said the delayed process is not surprising. "When the word came out that there was a \$195 million surplus, we came up with \$2 billion in questions."

Contact the State & National Editor at stntdesk@unc.edu.

SIGNAGE

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Baddour, who is chairman of the task force, has said in the past that the corporate presence would have as little effect on the University as possible.

"I can't imagine that we would change the names of our facilities ... I think we'll always be the Dean Smith Center and Kenan Stadium," he said at a forum in April. "We won't use floor logos like the McDonald's one on the Georgia Tech court."

The task force — assembled by the BOT in October — was charged with the responsibility of examining the possibility of signing with corporations to allow permanent advertising in Kenan Stadium and the Smith Center.

The revenue from corporate advertising in sports venues would provide necessary funds to the

booster club that funds student athletes' scholarships. Due to recent tuition increases, the club failed to cover all its scholarship obligations.

The funding alternatives to corporate signage included increasing ticket prices, increasing student fees and eliminating teams.

Judith Wegner, chairwoman of the faculty, said that although she was not happy with the idea of corporate signage and its effect on the University, the task force did successfully explore other options.

"They really had talked about how unfortunate it was to have to go this route, but it was really because they felt there would be some serious shortfalls."

Contact the University Editor at udesk@unc.edu.

Staff Writer Lauren Harris contributed to this article.

MORRISON

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Originally the trustees considered the option to renovate only Craig and Ehringhaus Residence Halls and replace Hinton James and Morrison. But in an April retreat, trustees decided against the 8-year, \$179 million plan.

Student Body President Matt Calabria, who was inaugurated as an ex officio member of the BOT during last week's meeting, said that many students were opposed the demolition of Morrison.


"We're very happy with that decision," he said Monday, describ-

ing the BOT's action as "the most financially viable decision."

"All the students I talked to were in favor of renovating the building instead of tearing it down," Calabria said. "And the enhanced suites ... will really benefit students in the future."

Colin Scott, president of the Residence Hall Association, said he also was pleased with the board's decision. "In a survey) students said they wanted the enhanced suite option. What (the BOT) supported is what students wanted."

Contact the University Editor at udesk@unc.edu.



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