

# Residents voice concerns about shelter relocation

Foy mediates between town, IFC

BY RYAN C. TUCK  
CITY EDITOR

Although Mayor Kevin Foy repeatedly stated that the Chapel Hill Town Council was taking no action regarding plans to relocate a men's homeless shelter, debate spilled into the council chamber Monday night.

A group of residents from The Meadows and Turnberry neighborhoods off Legion Road presented a petition to the council asking it to halt investigations of town-owned property off Legion Road as a potential site for the relocation of Inter-Faith Council's shelter.

The shelter now sits at the corner of Rosemary and Columbia streets.

In December, the council authorized Town Manager Cal Horton to begin investigating the Legion Road site with IFC.

"Is this the highest and best use for the land?" Meadows resident Lynne K. Kane asked the council in a petition that extended beyond the permitted time.

Although Kane and many other residents who had signed the petition attended Monday's meeting, a large group of residents and representatives of IFC also were present to counter the petitioners.

IFC volunteer R. Michael McGee spoke on behalf of the IFC, saying that there is no typical poor person.

"It might be true that many shel-

ter residents are substance abusers, but it is also true that many are not," McGee said, adding that the council should not respond to the petitioners' "knee-jerk constructionism."

Foy ultimately led the council in receiving and referring Kane's petition, reiterating between speakers that the IFC only had asked the council for assistance in investigating the Legion Road site.

Kane's petition, which lists as its primary concerns that the site would be close to residential space, is similar to a petition submitted in the fall from residents of another would-be shelter location.

When the IFC announced in August that it had purchased an option on a tract of land off Merritt Mill Road, area residents signed petitions, attended government meetings and met with IFC officials to oppose the IFC's relocation.

For IFC Executive Director Chris Moran, both petitions are the result of a knowledge gap.

"People should want to learn more about what we do," Moran said. "There's nothing to be afraid of."

Moran explained that the Legion and Merritt Mill sites are only options. The IFC also has looked at a site off Millhouse Road near the new Town Operations Center.

"What happens when people buy houses? They explore," Moran said.

"That's all we're doing."

Kane said that she understood the investigation into the Legion Road site was preliminary. But she said her petitioners wanted to act before it became more. "Don't waste time or staff salary," Kane told the council.

"IFC has obviously recognized that homeless men should not be located near women and children because of the separation of the (men's and women's) shelters," she said. "Guess what? There are women and children (on Legion Road)."

"It's not 'not in my back yard,' but concerns over residential safety and the best use for the land."

Moran said he hopes the community can realize that homelessness issues are bigger than the IFC and that they help to address the issue, not combat it.

"We've enjoyed the partnership we've had with the town downtown," he said. "But we've outgrown that space."

Moran said he invites anyone with questions or concerns regarding the IFC or its plans to relocate to call him at 929-6380.

Contact the City Editor at [citydesk@unc.edu](mailto:citydesk@unc.edu).

# Town mulls rezoning airport tract

BY DAN SCHWIND  
SENIOR WRITER

While UNC has not made a formal change to its plans for a future satellite campus since last spring, the Chapel Hill Town Council continues to prepare for the undertaking.

Much of the debate among council members at the portion of Monday's council meeting devoted to Carolina North was whether the town should rezone the portion of the Horace Williams property within the town of Chapel Hill to make the tract Office/Institutional-2.

Council member Edith Wiggins said the town shouldn't act without first hearing from the University.

"Until they deny an invitation to sit down and work with us, I just don't think it's a good idea," she said. "What would that mean for long-term relations with the University?"

But Mayor Kevin Foy stressed that it would be beneficial for the town to rezone the entire tract to OI-2.

"It gives uniformity to the parcels there, and it gives assurance to neighbors that nothing can happen without their involvement," he said.

The property now falls under three different zoning districts: Residential-2, OI-2 and Office/Institutional-3.

Rezoning the entire property to OI-2 would allow more development in the areas now zoned R-2, but less development in areas now

zoned OI-3.

Rezoning to OI-2 would also give the council more control of OI-2-zoned property, which requires council approval of development plans. OI-3-zoned property requires only planning board approval.

The council first considered rezoning the property at its Oct. 11 business meeting.

Four days later, Chancellor James Moeser wrote a letter to Foy objecting "in the strongest possible terms" to the rezoning.

"For the record, the University has not submitted a request for rezoning," Moeser stated in the letter. "When it does, we expect to consult with the town to identify appropriate ways to proceed with any rezoning consideration."

The zoning issue will be reconsidered during a March 21 public hearing.

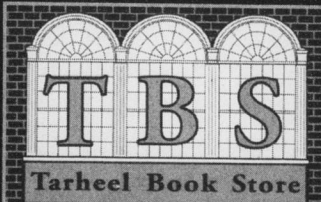
There was also debate among council members as to the best way to maximize open space and land conservation at Carolina North.

The "Principles, Goals and Strategies for Guiding the Development of the Horace Williams Property" report, written by the Horace Williams Citizens Committee and accepted by the council last March, has "a goal of preserving 75 percent of the Horace Williams property."

Council member Jim Ward questioned the goal, saying the council might be asking too much.

But Foy said he believed the council should reiterate its ultimate goals, which could still be negotiated. "I just think we need to set out what it is that we want."

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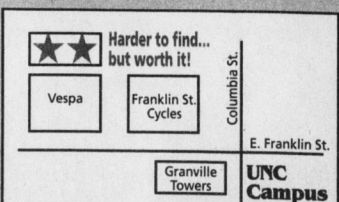
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