

Downtown wireless network slow to start

Dearmin pledges to help with effort

BY JAKE POTTER
STAFF WRITER

A downtown wireless Internet initiative that has sat idle for several months is slowly booting up. The Downtown Economic Development Corporation and the town's Technology Committee are discussing the possibility of bringing wireless Internet access to the downtown sector.

After the corporation proposed the idea earlier this year, the Chapel Hill Town Council formally referred the issue to Town Manager Paul Horton and the committee on June 27.

Corporation Executive Director Liz Parham, hired in late July, met Monday with committee Chairman Gregg Gerda and member Steve Irving to discuss plans for moving forward with the initiative.

"We need to find out how we can get this off the ground," Parham said.

"We need to find out the best way to do this, what areas we

should start with."

The corporation has thrown around the idea of creating a wireless zone within the downtown sector since February, but inactivity has caused some, including Irving, to push the corporation to begin work on the initiative.

"There's a lot of people talking about it, but there has been no action," he said.

Carrboro completed its downtown wireless setup last fall.

Parham said Chapel Hill and the corporation will work to develop surveys for business owners concerning the possibility of making the Franklin Street area wireless.

"We're surveying them so we can understand their needs, if they really want Wi-Fi," she said.

Businesses like Woody's Tar Heel Tavern & Grill and Jack Sprat Cafe already offer wireless access to its customers.

Residents of the Northside and Pine Knolls neighborhoods might

also get a separate survey as some within the committee have called for those districts, which sit just outside the downtown district, to be included in the wireless zone.

"We want to make this inclusive," Parham said. "We'll have different surveys for different needs."

But Irving said the addition of residential networks could pose a dilemma for the effort.

"Some people have talked about including the Northside and Pine Knolls neighborhoods, but at that juncture, it becomes a political issue," he said.

Irving said that continuing the group discussions would be vital to the effort's success.

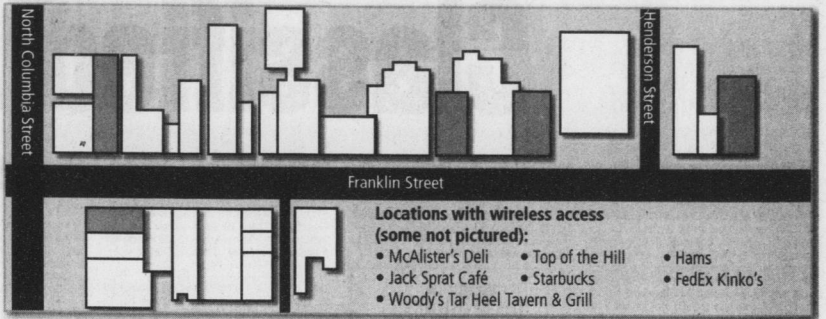
"It's very preliminary," he said. "We're just trying to get a feel for it."

The process could emulate Carrboro's wireless initiative, Irving said.

"Carrboro took two or three years to establish their service," he said of the wireless zone that now ranges from Carr Mill Mall to the Century Center and Town Hall. "It's a long time frame."

Wireless Internet access downtown

Though several locations on Franklin Street already offer wireless Internet access, the Downtown Economic Development Corporation and the town's Technology Committee are considering bringing wireless Internet to downtown.



SOURCE: AIRIMBA.COM, DTH STAFF

DTH/FEILDING CAGE AND BOBBY SWEATT

Student Body President Seth Dearmin, who included a wireless initiative in his campaign last spring, said he hopes his administration can help that process move more quickly.

"We're more than happy to help out, whether it's writing grants or looking at budgets," he

said. "We definitely need to work together."

Since being elected in February, Dearmin has consistently pledged to contact the town regarding the project.

When asked about the meeting between the corporation and the technology committee, Dearmin

said he had not heard of it.

The corporation will hold its regularly scheduled meeting at 7:30 a.m. today at the Midway Business Center, off West Franklin Street.

Contact the City Editor at citydesk@unc.edu.

School rules combat obesity

BY SETH PEAVEY
STAFF WRITER

State health and education officials have encouraged schools to provide more time for physical activity in students' schedules in an effort to prevent childhood obesity.

The Move More School Standards were announced Friday and include recommendations that students should receive no less than 90 minutes of physical education per week and 30 minutes of physical activity per day.

The initiative is a joint effort between the N.C. Division of Public Health, the N.C. Department of Public Instruction and the N.C. Cooperative Extension Service.

Joyce Harp, professor of nutrition and medicine at UNC, said obesity, a major health problem facing Americans, can place individuals at higher risk to diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, arthritis and even sudden death.

And childhood obesity is becoming increasingly common across the country and the state.

"North Carolina children are more overweight on average than their national peers," said Sheree

Vodicka, Heavy Weight Initiative Coordinator for the N.C. Division of Public Health.

She said more than one in five N.C. children between the ages of five and 11 are now overweight.

"One reason is that kids these days are more sedentary," Vodicka said, adding that more time is spent playing video games than playing outdoors.

Easier access to unhealthy foods also is to blame, she said.

Harp said preventing obesity at an early age is critical to ensuring that children stay healthy as they grow older.

"Once a child or adult becomes obese, it is very hard to lose the weight," she said.

There is only a 15-percent chance that an obese individual through dieting and regular exercise will be able to lose the weight and keep it off, Harp said.

At Carrboro Elementary School, children participate in 30 minutes of physical education class three days per week, with about 20 to 25 minutes of recess on the other days, said the school's principal Ibis Nunez.

This is slightly short of the minimum physical activity time recommended by the "Move More" initiative, but it can be difficult fitting more into the school day.

"The state dictates how many instructional minutes have to occur," Nunez said. The remaining time must be divided between recess, lunch and other activities.

But the Chapel Hill-Carrboro City school system has taken the extra step of creating a policy banning the sale of unhealthy foods such as chips, sodas and sugary snacks on campus, she said.

Other recommendations of "Move More" include reducing elementary school physical education class sizes to one teacher for every 25 students, ensuring that instructors have the proper qualifications and providing adequate facilities.

"Lots where students used to have recess are now filled with mobile trailers," Vodicka said.

"Physical education has taken a back seat to academics."

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

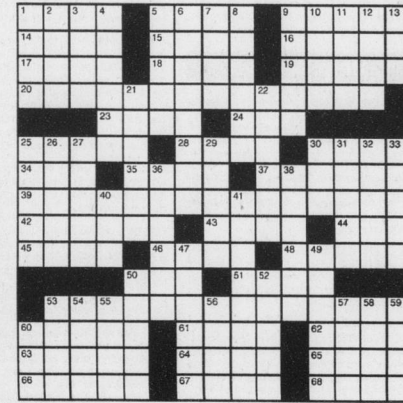
THE Daily Crossword By Philip J. Anderson

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- ACROSS**
- 1 Buddy Down Under
 - 5 Siberian river
 - 9 Boorish
 - 14 Matured
 - 15 Behind schedule
 - 16 Wheel spokes
 - 17 Lumber source
 - 18 Q.E.D. word
 - 19 Roasting compartments
 - 20 Carpenter's tantrum?
 - 23 Dote lead-in?
 - 24 Imitate
 - 25 German sausage
 - 28 Back of the neck
 - 30 Palm fruit
 - 34 Stevedores' org.
 - 35 Skeptic's retort
 - 37 Caught red-handed
 - 39 D.C. shopping spree?
 - 42 Brunch choice
 - 43 Corn units
 - 44 Born in Bordeaux
 - 45 Armed conflicts
 - 46 Material flaw
 - 48 Hones
 - 50 Sea wiggler
 - 51 1958 Pulitzer Prize winner
 - 53 Brit's beach sport?
 - 60 Fear-shaped fruit
 - 61 Rope fiber
 - 62 "Star Trek:
- TNG" character**
- 63 Assign
 - 64 Ballerina's skirt
 - 65 Actor Holliman
 - 66 Rock
 - 67 Fr. holy women
 - 68 Concavity
- DOWN**
- 1 Alg. or trig.
 - 2 Taj Mahal's place
 - 3 Pour profusely
 - 4 Botanical swellings
 - 5 On guard
 - 6 Rigid disciplinarian
 - 7 Deseret, today
 - 8 Capture again
 - 9 Director Cameron
 - 10 Starist Shankar
 - 11 Arabian Gulf port
 - 12 Belt out
 - 13 Female sib

- 21 Lure
- 22 First of several
- 25 Surviving wife
- 26 Muslim scholars
- 27 Olympian Johnson
- 29 All confused
- 30 Carried out
- 31 Fashionable shape
- 32 Belief
- 33 Advantages
- 36 Once __, twice shy
- 38 Response
- 40 They: Fr.
- 41 Leech
- 47 Votes in
- 49 Hoisted
- 50 Maternally related
- 52 Spiritual leaders
- 53 Religious sect
- 54 Angelic feature
- 55 Makeup marketer
- 56 Clumsy fellow
- 57 "Dies __"
- 58 Norse goddess of fate
- 59 Young sow
- 60 Neon or chlorine

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