

# Partnership sharpens focus

## DEDC gets new name, energy

BY TED STRONG  
CITY EDITOR

The DEDC is no more. The Downtown Economic Development Corporation rechristened itself as the Chapel Hill Downtown Partnership on Monday at a meeting marked by calls for definite progress on a variety of topics.

"I think it's a positive name," said the partnership's executive director, Liz Parham. "It promotes the biggest asset that this organization has."

The partnership is comprised of board members appointed by the University, the town and local business owners — three of the groups with the biggest impact on an area that has been called the University's welcome mat.

The partnership also decided to move forward with a push to adopt the Main Street approach to downtown economic revitalization.

Parham said the new approach is a better-rounded one, encom-

passing a variety of sectors, from forming community partnerships to promoting downtown events by creating a series of committees.

"What our program is about is really putting together an environment that's going to foster economic growth," she said.

Parham said that the new program would function more cohesively than previous, relatively independent methods.

Parham offered to find more information on the method before the vote, but the body's members didn't need convincing.

"I don't see why we should wait," said chairwoman Andrea Rohrbacher before the board unanimously adopted the approach.

Another item that received calls for action was the push to put town-run wireless Internet into the downtown.

"Presumably, it's not just for show," said Mayor Kevin Foy, one of the board's members. "It might be. If that's the case let's forget it and just move on."

Roger Perry, a member of both the partnership and UNC's Board

of Trustees, noted that Carrboro recently instituted its own free wireless access in its downtown.

He suggested that the smaller town's experience could become a source of valuable — and readily attainable — guidance for Chapel Hill.

"It seems to me we ought to be able to figure out how to talk to Carrboro real quickly," he said.

He criticized what he saw as unproductive and vague discussion of the project by board members.

"Organize this thing, provide the seed money for this thing, quit talking about it," he said.

He also called for the possible approval of a feasibility study at the partnership's next meeting — scheduled for Oct. 10, after the board changed its meeting schedule to the second and fourth Mondays of each month.

"If that costs money, I think we should be willing to appropriate that money at the next meeting or quit fooling with it," he said.

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

# Tex-Mex pervades Chapel Hill

BY EREN TATARAGASI  
STAFF WRITER

A new restaurant set to open in November will bring a new twist on an old favorite to Franklin Street.

[B]Skis Tortilla Wrap Grill will make its home at 147 E. Franklin St., providing diners with an American twist on the Mexican burrito.

"There are no beans and no rice," said owner Bradley Smith.

Instead the restaurant will offer grilled tortillas with customers' choice of cheese, meat and other toppings.

Smith said [B]Skis will attract a college crowd because the hours have been built around students' late-night schedules.

The eatery will be open from 10 a.m. to 3 a.m. Sunday through Wednesday and from 10 a.m. to 4 a.m. Thursday to Saturday.

Although Tex-Mex is not new to the area, the number of venues serving south-of-the-border chow has expanded recently.

[B]Skis will join Qdoba, Cosmic Cantina, Carrburritos, Armadillo Grill and Burrito Bunker in offering hand-wrapped to order fare.

Aaron Nelson, executive director of the Chapel Hill-Carrboro Chamber of Commerce said he thinks the recent surge of Tex-Mex places just follows the latest trend.

"Customers are showing support for the Mexican and Tex-Mex restaurants right now," Nelson said. "But there was a time when they were supporting smoothies."

Business owners attribute the local explosion to the food's ability to be made quickly and for minimal cost — two things that are attractive to the college market.

"It's definitely our cost that helps attract the college crowd," said Cameron Seftin, general manager of Qdoba.

"Our most successful time is our late-night," Seftin added.

Cosmic Cantina has been providing late night meals to the Chapel Hill community for six years.

"The college kids make the business for us," said manager Luis Herrera.

Although college students contribute to their business, Carrburritos manager Mike Ellis said it's the area residents that keep business going all year.

Armadillo Grill, which has been at its Carrboro location for 12 years, also has been able to survive because of a steady local flow, assistant manager David Poindexter said.

Burrito Bunker, at 161 1/2 E. Franklin St., has been tucked into the back alley for the past 13 years and manager Shaun Dindial said



DTH/RAJ SAHA

Lauren Arnold, who recently moved to the area from Miami, places an order at Qdoba Mexican Grill on Sunday evening.

he doesn't know how they've lasted so long.

"I guess we're just unique," Dindial said. "And it's good cooking."

But even with all the competition, Poindexter said the town is big enough for all the eateries.

"It's kind of like apples and oranges," he said.

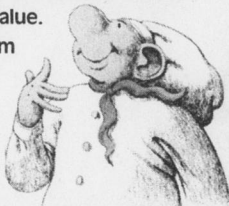
"Sometimes I go to Carrburritos myself."

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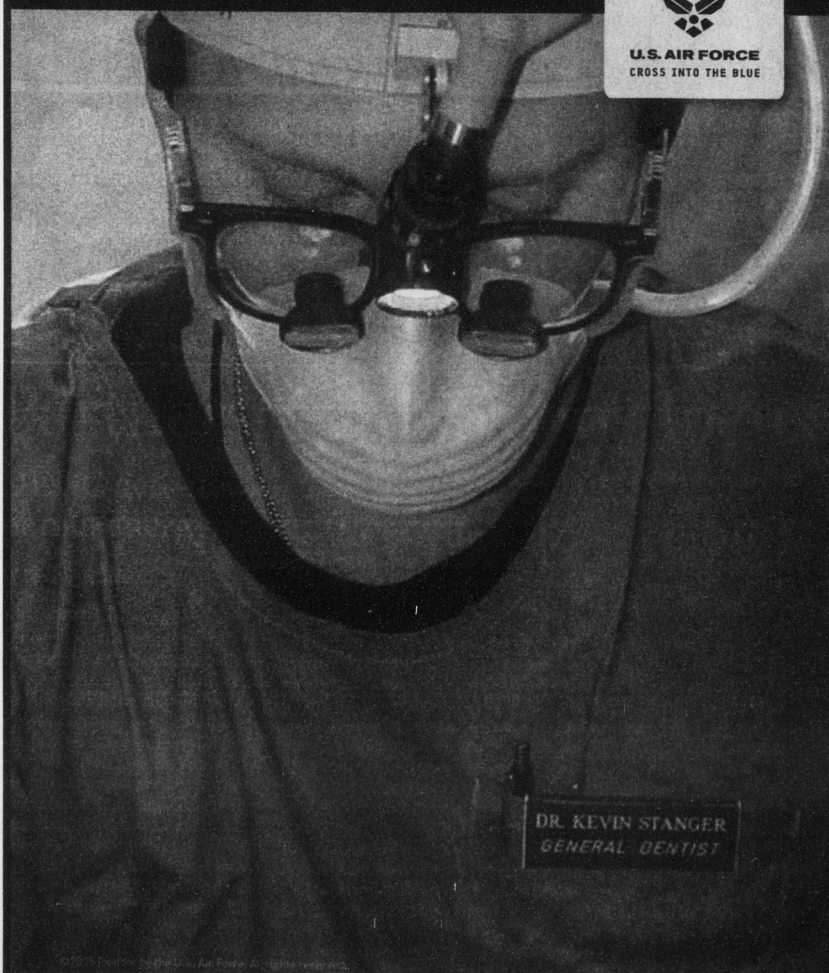
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