

KEVIN FOY | Chapel Hill Mayor

BY JAKE POTTER
ASSISTANT CITY EDITOR

It's no coincidence that Chapel Hill Mayor Kevin Foy sits in the middle of his peers at Chapel Hill Town Council meetings.

Many have lauded Foy's ability to take the role of mediator among opinionated council members.

"(Although) it's one of the things to be expected ... I think the council, with his leadership, has raised some good points," said former town Mayor Jonathan Howes.

Foy, who originally hails from Ohio, is seeking a third mayoral term this November.

He won a seat on the council in 1997 and successfully ran for mayor in the 2001 and 2003 elections.

Foy, 49, has lived with wife

Nancy in Chapel Hill since the 1980s. He received a history degree from Kenyon College and studied law at N.C. Central University.



Before serving the town, Foy was chairman of the Democratic Party precinct.

Howes, now special assistant to Chancellor James Moeser,

said Foy has been "effective" in his old role.

Some local political groups agree — Foy has garnered endorsements from Students for a Progressive Chapel Hill and the Sierra Club's state chapter.

Foy has centered his platform on careful growth in projects such as Carolina North and using tools available to the town to better an affordable housing crunch.

Among Foy's accomplishments is a successful effort to get 1 percent of town funds devoted to public art. He also helped usher in fare-free transit, which he avidly rides.

But Foy's most recent mayoral term also has seen him make a push for downtown prosperity.

"It still is a local and lively downtown, but as we go into the future, it's likely that people will continue to be mobile and have other alternatives," he warned in a September interview.

To better promote the area's downtown resources and combat

outside markets such as The Streets at Southpoint in Durham, the town established the Downtown Partnership last year. Foy himself joined the board in February.

Finding a middle ground between corporate and locally owned businesses is key to continuing downtown's prosperity, he said during the September interview.

"Downtown is now in a competitive environment, and we want it to be in fighting shape ... (but) nobody wants downtown to become an imitation of a mall."

Howes said Foy accurately represents the town as its spokesman.

"He's an easy person to talk to, he's got a personable manner," he said. "I think that's needed in a job like his."

Nice to meet you

Age: 49

Job: attorney

Favorite movie: n/a

Inspired by what album: Tift Merritt

Political figure he would most like to meet and why: Iranian prime minister Mohammed Mossadegh because he lived and was a leader in a time and place that directly shaped our world today

KEVIN WOLFF | Chapel Hill Mayor

BY TED STRONG
CITY EDITOR

In Owen Wister's landmark 1902 novel, *The Virginian*, a quiet stranger from — where else — Virginia comes to town and changes the landscape forever.

Kevin Wolff's got the quiet stranger from Virginia part down just fine.

Whether he'll have a lasting effect on town politics remains to be seen.

Wolff — a patent lawyer most recently out of Alexandria, Va. — has an extensive academic background but is new to politics.

He garnered a master's degree in business administration and a law degree from Indiana University-Bloomington after obtaining an

undergraduate degree in electrical engineering from Youngstown State University.



Before that, he hailed from Poland, Ohio, a town he said was much the same size as his current home in Chapel Hill, where he lives with his wife, a graphic artist, and their two

boys.

When Wolff first came on the election scene, he declined to comment specifically on any issues, saying he was getting to know the community.

It's been more than a month

now, and Kevin Wolff has begun to speak out on a few issues, at least.

At Tuesday night's candidate forum — held by the Chapel Hill-Carrboro Chamber of Commerce, among others — Wolff took a pro-business stance, calling for more predictable, business friendly town policies.

But that in and of itself might not be enough to put him into office, as Wolff has made few waves in his pursuit of the town's helm.

Often busy with work in Virginia and in Chapel Hill, Wolff has managed to attend only a handful of the numerous forums and community get-togethers that have marked the campaign.

With 35 days left before the election, he'd raised \$30 and spent

\$5 — the fee to enter the race.

But it might be that even showing up once in a while, Wolff accomplishes what it is that he set out to do.

He cited Mayor Kevin Foy's uncertainty about running for another term as a key factor in his snap decision.

Ex-Town Council member Gerry Cohen, who still keeps close tabs on Chapel Hill politics even though he works drafting bills for the state legislature in Raleigh, said that Wolff's involvement in the campaign very likely would affect incumbent Mayor Kevin Foy's attitude to the whole affair.

"It may make Kevin Foy sharper his message," he said.

Nice to meet you

Age: 46

Job: attorney-at-law

Favorite movie: for the college crowd, *Animal House*

Inspired by what album: The Eagles, *Greatest Hits*

Political figure he would like to meet and why: Winston Churchill because of his leadership, tenacity and wisdom

JASON BAKER | Chapel Hill Town Council

BY JAKE POTTER
ASSISTANT CITY EDITOR

He might be young, but his college education is good for something — Jason Baker is the only municipal candidate thus far to take advantage of the free advertising of a Facebook group.

"I've already got a committed Facebook ad donor," he said, chuckling.

But those who have followed Baker's campaign are quick to point out that his efforts to become the third college student in town history to take a seat on the council are nothing but serious.

Baker, a 21-year-old sophomore majoring in political science, is seeking a seat on the Town Council, something that only one student

— Mark Chilton, now a Carrboro alderman — has accomplished successfully in Baker's lifetime.



Baker advocates for responsible town growth and an invigorated public transit system. "I really feel responsible growth is one of the toughest areas we as a community need to grapple with," he said.

Carolina North, the University's proposed satellite campus, is a focal point for town growth that must be planned for carefully, Baker said.

Town officials should push for more homes and a better public

transit infrastructure, Baker said, moves that could help University staff who need affordable housing.

University senior Tom Jensen, who works with Baker in Young Democrats, said Baker has the determination necessary to win.

"The thing people need to know about Jason is that he's incredibly driven," he said.

Students for a Progressive Chapel Hill, led by Jensen, is endorsing Baker for council.

Baker has called for an examination of the town's public transit schedule to better define what areas need more or less service.

"I really don't feel like we need to be saying, 'you know, we have an adequate transit plan,' without adequately studying that," Baker said.

The evaluation also might address environmental concerns.

"It's kind of embarrassing — Chapel Hill is supposed to be the bastion of environmental concerns, and we don't run on biodiesel," he said. "Durham has buses that run on biodiesel."

Baker also wants to establish wireless Internet in low-income areas and work to solve shops' high turnover on Franklin Street.

And Baker is keeping his peers in mind. "I hope that students take interest in the elections," he said.

"Mark Chilton told me he was jealous that I could talk to 90 percent of the student population on Facebook with only a couple of clicks. As the elections get closer, maybe I'll 'poke' everybody."

Nice to meet you

Age: 21

Job: student UNC-CH; event management specialist, Spintacular entertainment

Favorite movie: *American Beauty*

Inspired by what album: Steve Earle's *The Revolution Starts Now*

Political figure he would like to meet and why: UNC alum Paul Wellstone because of his advocacy for the environment and other progressive causes, grassroots campaigning and ability to