

CITY

Stricter town noise ordinance, nuisance clause anger fraternities

By Nicole Perez
Staff Writer

Some fraternity representatives said they were unhappy with the new Chapel Hill noise regulations and charged that they were not properly represented during the decision to reduce the permitted noise level.

The Chapel Hill Town Council voted in May to lower the permitted noise level to 70 decibels from 75 decibels.

"Seventy decibels is pretty low," said Jack McLemb, manager of the Delta Upsilon fraternity house at 407 E. Rosemary St. "It seems like it's getting harder and harder to do what we've always

done in the past."

The amended noise ordinance also includes a nuisance clause dealing mainly with sudden, loud noises during the night, said Joe Herzenberg, chairman of the noise ordinance committee and a member of the town council.

Although a former president of the Inter-Fraternity Council and a former president of Chi Psi fraternity were on the noise ordinance committee, some fraternity members said they still felt they hadn't had a chance to express their viewpoints.

"I understand that we live in a residential area with families living right next door, so our noise really affects

them," McLemb said. "But, it seems like all these things are happening to us, and we don't have any input."

Chapel Hill Police Department officials said the noise regulations would make their jobs easier, although lowering the noise level may not help.

"The nuisance clause is helpful because it gives the police department definite guidelines as to what is and what is not acceptable," said police spokeswoman Jane Cousins. "(But) I don't think that lowering the decibel level will make a difference either way."

Herzenberg said he hoped the new decibel level would please everybody. "It would be my hope that the lower

decibel level would be noticeable to those who supported lowering it and not noticeable to those who enjoyed the music," he said.

But some fraternity representatives said the ordinance may cause people to unfairly single them out.

"Seventy (decibels) is kind of low, and I'm sure they'll target fraternities if they are enforcing any kind of noise ordinance," Sigma Chi fraternity member Scott Castleman said.

Herzenberg said the regulations did not target fraternities. "It wasn't fraternities that prompted the changes," he said. "It was people having amplified music in their backyards in residential

areas."

Fraternity members said they would do their best to comply with the new rules.

"We always try to comply with the regulations," McLemb said. "It hasn't

been a problem in the past, and hopefully it won't be a problem in the future."

Fraternity representatives said they thought the new regulations would not affect rush proceedings significantly.

Future social studies school under consideration

By Peter Wallsten
City Editor

Social studies education isn't respected enough in North Carolina, according to a group of educators, students and residents who met this week.

John Rimberg, sociology professor at Pembroke State University, brought the group together to discuss the idea of opening a N.C. School of Social Studies to increase awareness.

Al Baldwin, a history teacher at Chapel Hill High School, said: "Having a public high school that concentrates in humanities, foreign languages and social studies is a great idea. There's a great consensus for not necessarily going for those kids with the highest scores but to get a diversity."

Rimberg will hold meetings across the state to gather support for the concept. About 15 people met in the Chapel Hill Public Library Monday to discuss the school, which would be modeled after the N.C. School of Science and Math in Durham.

If built, the school would be the first of its kind in the country. The public residential high school would attract juniors and seniors with exceptional ability in the humanities.

Rimberg's proposal calls for either one centrally located school or a group of schools located on the UNC system's smaller campuses, such as Pembroke State and Appalachian State University. The school network would be affiliated with the UNC system and funded primarily by the state.

It would include conversational classes in as many as 15 foreign languages, in addition to studies in international relations, politics and current events, Rimberg said.

Students and teachers would be close knit at each location, he said, adding that he hoped the network would consist of five schools with 50 students on each of the campuses.

"There won't be a lot of electives," Rimberg said. "If you've chosen this school, you've chosen your electives. At some schools, they would be electives, but at this school, they would be part of the core curriculum."

Although the school would be fairly specialized, the teachers could teach a broad range of subjects, Rimberg said.

"The teachers and the students will get to know each other well," he said. "The teachers won't be specialists; they'll be generalists. The students aren't going to be narrowly trained, either."

Rimberg said he hoped to admit some foreign students to the school, including exchange students from countries such as Japan, Saudi Arabia and Switzerland.

"The inducement is we will accept students from those countries, but at three times the going rate," he said. "They (the countries) will pay a lot for the opportunity to have students attend the N.C. School of Social Studies."

Planning is still in the early stages, Rimberg said. "The baby is still developing in the womb," he said. "If we're pregnant, we're only a few days pregnant."

Rimberg said he and a small group of people were working together to start the school. They are in the process of opening a central office in Hillsborough's historic Burwell School, which is presently used as a small museum.

"I knew (Hillsborough residents) were interested in specialized schools because they put forth an offer to locate the School of the Arts there in 1967," Rimberg said. "It's consistent with social studies because it is historical."

Rimberg said he chose Hillsborough because it also was near Interstates 85 and 40 and easily accessible from Raleigh and Chapel Hill. Although a school would not be located in Hillsborough, the director of the network of schools would keep his or her office there.

Funding from the state and from UNC General Administration is crucial, Rimberg said. Supporters of the school will try to gain the support of UNC-system President C.D. Spangler and several private foundations in North Carolina.

"I'm not trying to recruit the support of the chancellors," he said. "But I am looking to recruit the support of President Spangler and the General Administration. We will need to get the support of the Board of Governors."

Rimberg said he hoped to begin lobbying the General Assembly in about five years. He acknowledged that funding could be a problem but said that people still should prepare for the school.

"I don't think Christopher Columbus planned his trip the day before he left," Rimberg said.

Some members of the discussion group said they were not sure if a social

studies school could work.

Anthropologist Peter Stone said: "I've put my life into social sciences, and I've been very disappointed with what's been contributed. I look at the American family, and it looks like a battle zone. Race relations, another battle

zone. Does anybody even want the social sciences?"

Stone said he was concerned with specialized high schools and the effect they could have on education.

"I'm particularly disappointed with over-specialization in the social sci-

ences, particularly with feminism and black studies," he said.

But a school specializing in the social sciences is necessary to encourage students whose talents may not include

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