Trustees to OK dental school site

By Jimmy Ryals
The Daily Reflector

The "ifs" and "whens" surrounding East Carolina University's dental school have largely been addressed. Today, the ECU Board of Trustees will tackle the "where" of housing ECU's newest college. The board will vote on whether to put the state's second dental school on a plot at the intersection of MacGregor Downs Road and West Fifth Street.

Approval seems likely, as the university has scheduled a 1 p.m. groundbreaking ceremony there.

A board committee unanimously approved the site choice Thursday. Pre-vote debate focused on whether the location would limit growth at the dental school and in ECU's other health sciences programs. When it opens in 2010, the new school will admit 50 students per year. The 112,500-square-foot dental school can accommodate classes of up to 65, said Brian Yachysen, an architect who helped design the structure.

Trustee Mark Tipton, a Raleigh homebuilder, questioned whether that will be big enough. While he said he supports the recommended site, Tipton suggested building to teach 85 students, a figure interim dental school Dean Dr. Greg Chadwick quoted as the current size of the University of North Carolina at Chapel

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Hill's dental classes.

"It doesn't make any sense to go ahead and start doing these things haphazardly and not think them out ... eastern North Carolina is not getting any smaller," Tipton said. "It's going to get more demanding as we go by."

Off-campus sites may allow for some expansion, Chadwick said. The ECU dentistry plan includes up to 10 clinics around the state where third- and fourth-year students will do clinical work.

"Maybe all education doesn't have to occur in that (main campus) facility," Chadwick said, adding that he's "very comfortable with where we are, with the plans we have right now."

Tipton also wondered how placement of the dental school would affect expansion of the nearby Brody School of Medi-
cine and the colleges of nursing and allied health sciences. Brody officials hope to add 37 students over the next few years.

Designers planned the dental school with the allied health and nursing expansions in mind, Yachysen said. Brody officials are looking for ways to expand in buildings already owned by the university, interim Brody Dean Phyllis Horns said.

"We very much believe that the site they've recommended is the best site for the school of dentistry's placement," said Horns, who is interim vice chancellor of health sciences.

Four factors gave the chosen site an edge over four others on the medical campus, said Yachysen, an architect with Bohlin Cywinski Jackson, the Wilkes-Barre, Pa., firm designing the dental school:

■ Availability of space for the 500 parking spots the school will require
■ Presence of a stormwater collection area
■ Proximity to the Laupus Health Sciences Library in the adjacent Health Sciences Building; dental students will use the library
■ A location that will allow sunlight to penetrate the building for most of the day.

Bohlin Cywinski Jackson, which will design ECU's regional clinics, also built schools of dentistry at the universities of Colorado, Maryland-Baltimore and Philadelphia.

The full board of trustees will vote on the dental school site today during an 8:30 a.m. meeting at Mendenhall Student Center. The groundbreaking this afternoon will include comments by N.C. House of Representatives Speaker Joe Hackney, ECU Board of Trustees Chairman Bob Grezczyn Jr. and Chancellor Steve Ballard.

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proached the city staff about making the changes to accommodate the growing, changing medical district.

Though the council was unanimous in its approval of those changes, a requested zoning change later in the agenda split the board 4-2.

The ordinance was requested by Mary H. Mann to rezone 63.5 acres located along the southern side of East 10th Street and adjacent to Oakhurst subdivision, Brook Valley Golf Course, and Pinewood Memorial Park cemetery.

The entire acreage was originally zoned to allow large single-family homes and agricultural uses. Council members Thursday didn’t disagree over changing 40 acres to allow smaller homes, or to changing 20 acres for office use.

But the remaining roughly 4 acres slated to be heavy commercial caused a split on the board and drew opposition from neighbors.

Rebecca Powers presented petitions with 100 signers expressing their opposition to the proposed heavy commercial.

They said it would "negatively impact the gateway corridor" of East 10th Street. She said they wanted to avoid making the thoroughfare into another congested Greenville Boulevard.

But another resident rose in support, saying the zoning change is "logical" for the area and provides for development such as restaurants to serve a growing residential area.

"If you look at it, we really don't have much down that way," he said.

When the council began discussion, board member Bryant Kittle said immediately that he wouldn't favor the proposed heavy commercial, which would allow a use such as mobile home sales.

"I think the heavy commercial is too lucrative in my opinion" and is "not conducive to what I think would be good development," he said.

He proposed general commercial, which still allows things such as restaurants and convenience stores.

Councilman Calvin Mercer, whose District 4 contains the tracts, said he favored making the 4 acres office rather than commercial of any kind.

The area is "in rapid commercialization," he said, noting the nearby Lowe's Home Improvement Warehouse and the Food Lion shopping center.

"The point is, there's lots of commercial around," he said.

Max Joyner said that the request "is smart growth," allowing a transition from residential to office to commercial.

Out of more than 60 acres, only 4 acres would be commercial, he said. Providing services and businesses allowed in that zone would keep residents from traveling back into Greenville's increasingly busy center, he said.

Councilwoman Rose Glover said the general commercial was "a good compromise."

"It's just 4 acres of land; you can't get a Lowe's (Home Improvement Warehouse) there, that's for sure," Glover said.

A motion to change the tract to office failed 4-2, with Larry Spell and Mercer in favor, and Glover, Joyner, Kittle and Mildred Council opposed.

The motion by Joyner to lower the requested zoning to general instead of heavy commercial passed, with the votes reversed.

Mayor Pat Dunn praised the board's orderly and civil deliberations as an example of true democracy in action.

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Visit reflector.com for more state, national and world news.
Area to benefit from biotech industry

By Mike Grizzard
The Daily Reflector.

A strategic plan months in the making for the BioEast Alliance shines a light on East Carolina University as “the potential star” for a life sciences and biotechnology community that would bring industry and new jobs to the region.

Mark Dibner, president of BioAbility, on Thursday unveiled the study conducted by his Research Triangle Park-based company on an alliance of Pitt, Edgecombe, Nash, Wayne and Wilson counties. He said each area stands to benefit greatly from a group effort, but ECU would have to play a vital role.

“I think it’s the largest engine that can build the longer-term future of biotech, create new companies,” Dibner told a group of economic developers and educators at the Hilton Greenville. “It’s somewhat dormant waiting to happen, but it is here, and I think it’s ready to happen.

The report was developed with help from 30 people from academia, industry and government, along with tours and analysis of the region. Dibner mapped out the strengths and weaknesses of the five counties and five strategies to make the BioEast Alliance a success.

Al Della, president of North Carolina’s Eastern region economic development group, said this will not be one of those strategic plans that gets put on the shelf.

“We are going to take very specific action, and we’re starting today,” Delia said. “This is just the beginning.”

Della said the BioEast Alliance name has been trademarked, and a Web site is being developed. A labor study of the region is planned.

The five specific counties

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STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES

A recently released study shows the strengths and weaknesses of a five-county area looking to recruit businesses specializing in biosciences.

Strengths of BioEast Alliance
- Quality of life
- Good area for some biotech life sciences needs (manufacturing, warehousing, packaging)
- East Carolina University

Weaknesses of BioEast Alliance
- Community college and three four-year colleges
- Proximity to Research Triangle Park
- K-12 education
- Distances/transportation
- Quantity of higher level educated employees
- Lack of buildings to show prospective clients

were selected because of their proximity to RTP, access to a skilled work force and community colleges. Pitt County appears to be the biggest potential benefactor because of ECU, but no one county can accomplish as much as a joint

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effort, Dibner said.

"There's a synergy that can be formed when you take the five counties and put them together," he said. "You're not trying to attract a company into an 80,000-person county. You're attracting them to a 400,000-person region. ... Of the whole eastern part of the state, this is where it's at. These counties are where we can seed the seeds of growth, and now we're here to plan the future growth."  

Wanda Yuhas, executive director of the Pitt County Development Commission, said economic developers in each of the five counties hope to build on already "strong working relationships."

"This is not for any of us the Pitt County show," she said.

The Eastern Region has made inroads in attracting biotech industries and is the lowest-cost pharmaceutical manufacturing area in the country, Dibner said. The BioEast Alliance has 19 biotech companies — 11 in Pitt County — employing 4,754.

The 13 counties comprising the Eastern Region have 23 biotech companies employing 5,013. The RTP region has 328 biotech companies employing 27,449. As RTP companies look to expand, BioEast needs to be in position with facilities and infrastructure, Dibner said.

"I'm seeing more and more RTP companies are willing to have other facilities in other areas, not only in juxtaposed counties but even a few counties away," he said.

But the most fertile ground of opportunity, Dibner said, is in company creation. That's where ECU could take a leading role with more graduate programs and research grants. ECU is dwarfed by its sister schools in Triangle in research funding.

ECU's research dollars totaled $37.97 million in 2006, compared to $883.42 million for Duke, $593.39 million at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and $208.96 million for N.C. State.

"If you don't have the researchers here to write the grants, you're not going to get the funding," Dibner said. "When you have cutting-edge research, you create new technologies. You, therefore, have disclosures and patents. Dislosures and patents can be licensed out or used to start new companies. New companies become the new members of your life sciences community."

Leveling the playing field will take a commitment from ECU leadership, the Legislature and the UNC Board of Governors, Dibner said.

"We've heard the stories of ECU as a research university, as a medical school, has been held back over the years," he said. "We'd like to see that overcome. ... I really think to make this region stronger that's something that has to be done. ... "You've done a lot with a little. We don't doubt that. But we need to do a lot more with a bit more there."

Paul Gemperline, associate vice president in the Division of Research and Graduate Studies, said recruiting high-quality students for graduate and doctorate programs is essential for ECU to play its part in the BioEast Alliance.

"... If we could just remove some of the roadblocks, and some of the significant ones are the support for graduate education. We can't make competitive offers to recruit graduate students," Gemperline said. "... It's the students that are the engine that makes the research enterprise grow at a university."

The return will be well worth the investment, he said. "We can do this," he said. "It's going to take a little bit of money. But we can show in previous examples from other areas as well as our own that for every dollar you spend you're going to get a whole lot more in return for the future."

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Musical dances around dreams, falling in love

By Kelley Kirk-Swindell
The Daily Reflector

It’s so real and present about issues that are with us today, but at the same time it takes you away to a magical place,” said East Carolina University junior Erica Tavarozzo about “Flora, The Red Menace.”

She should know. Tavarozzo, 21, is playing the lead role of Flora Mazaros in the musical, which opens at 8 p.m. Thursday at East Carolina University’s McGinnis Theatre.

Flora is a struggling designer and a member of an artist's cooperative of bohemian dancers, musicians and designers who are struggling to find work. Set during the Great Depression, Flora is seeking employment, hoping to find a position making just $15 a week. Her determination earns her a position at a large department store earning $30 a week.

Flora falls in love with Harry, another struggling designer, who then attempts to convert her to his Communist way of thinking. But the department store’s matriarch, Comrade Charlotte, wants Harry for herself.

The story is based on the novel “Love is Just Around the Corner” by Lester Atwell. John Kander wrote the musical's score, and Fred Ebb wrote the lyrics. Kander and Ebb are known for such smash Broadway hits as “Cabaret” and “Chicago.” Liza Minnelli played the lead in the Broadway version of the show which opened in May 1965 and ran for 97 performances.

The fresh-faced 19-year-old Minnelli won a Tony award for her portrayal of Flora.

For Tavarozzo, it is for life that makes her role so enjoyable.

“She’s got this uplifted optimism,” Tavarozzo said. “She drives for success.” But that’s not the only positive personality trait that the Maryland native likes about her character.

“What I like about her is that she helps so many other people with their dreams,” Tavarozzo said. “She has this very, very vibrant personality. That’s fun about her character, she’s so tough and resilient.”

While Tavarozzo can be more reserved, she has some of that toughness and resilience as her character. Tavarozzo moved to Greenville four semesters ago after completing a two-year degree in her home state, leaving all her family and friends behind.

“At first it was a big adjustment, but I think it’s one of the best things anyone can ever do,” Tavarozzo said. “It really made me grow as a person.”

Tavarozzo is working on a bachelor of fine arts degree in the professional acting program at ECU.

She originally started in classic voice, but changed her major after just one semester.

“I really, really wanted to do musical theater,” she said. “There is something so different about it.”

The role of Flora is Tavarozzo’s first lead at ECU. She played a principal role in ECU’s production of “Hello, Dolly!” earlier this school year.

“I’ve always wanted to be in theater. I was a member of a children’s playhouse when I was 8, so I’ve been doing this since I can remember,” she said. “I loved to be on stage, loved to sing.”


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MOTOWN TRIBUTE

ECU presents Black History Month concert

The Daily Reflector

East Carolina University's School of Music and the office of Co-curricular Program and Cultural Outreach will present its annual Black History Month concert, "A Tribute to Motown," at 8 p.m. Saturday at Wright Auditorium under the direction of jazz professor Carroll V. Dashiell Jr.

The program will include Motown classics like "Respect," "Dr. Feel Good," "Dancin' in the Street," "Sugar Pie Honey Bun," "Kansas City" and "My Girl." In years past, the concert has featured contemporary music in addition to the classics.

The concert will feature vocalist Aishah and special guest vocalist Bill Crews.

Other musicians include Bill Ford and Jon Ozent, keyboards; Carroll V. Dashiell Jr. and Christian Dashiell, bass; Jeff Bair and Vaughn Ambrose, saxophones; Carroll V. Dashiell III, drums; Joe Phillips, guitar; Joey Stultz, ethnic percussion; Mitch Butler, trombone; Bryan Castro, tenor sax; Tim Odom, trumpet.

Background vocalists include Cameron Dashiell, Deb Nanstell, Katy Avery, Christie Dashiell and Rochelle Rice.

Tickets are $10 for adults and $5 for students. Call 328-4788.
Students protest war ‘in a creative way’

Rally at UNC’s Pit includes mock draft cards, sarcasm, SDS, veteran

BY ERIN CALLENDER
STAFF WRITER

CHAPEL HILL — For John Heuer, burning a fake draft card on the UNC-Chapel Hill campus was a sort of déjà vu.

Heuer said he burned draft cards in 1971 while refusing to be part of President Nixon’s army. He put his cigarette lighter to a symbolic card Thursday to support a student group’s anti-war rally.

“It’s important to get the word out in a creative way,” said Heuer, a retired UNC facilities designer.

About 30 people attended the noon rally in the Pit outside the Student Union. Members of UNC-CH Students for a Democratic Society handed out fake draft cards and sarcastically solicited passers-by to sign up for military duty in Iraq.

War is peace, the protesters said mockingly. For permanent peace, we need permanent war, they said.

The rally featured two speakers who were scheduled to participate in a campus teach-in about the war Thursday night.

Dahlia Wasfi, whose mother is American and father is Iraqi, began speaking out internationally after visiting occupied Iraq in 2004 and 2006.

“My family in Iraq has been liberated,” she said, “liberated from water, food, security and health care.”

Iraq war veteran Jason Hurd served in Baghdad from November 2004 to November 2005. He said one of his jobs was to shoot at anything that came within 50 meters of military vehicles.

“I went to Iraq to help people, but instead I ended up shooting civilians,” Hurd said. The people said they never had to worry about their safety before the Americans arrived, he said.

Hurd, who said he now takes medication to deal with nightmares and flashbacks, serves as president of the Asheville chapter of Iraq Veterans Against the War.

The organization, founded in 2004, calls for the immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops, reparations to the Iraqi people for the damage they have suffered, and full benefits and support for troops returning home.

Despite the opening sarcasm, graduate student Tamara Tal said SDS is serious about ending the war.

“The majority of Americans want this war to end,” she said. “We need to stand up, speak out and end it.”
38-player lacrosse suit gets fanfare

The group's action against Duke is laid out in the nation's capital with major exposure.

BY ANNE BLYTHE AND BARBARA BARRETT
STAFF WRITERS

WASHINGTON - The latest Duke lacrosse suit got off to a big start Thursday with publicists, lawyers of national renown, a media blitz at the National Press Club and a lawsuit with its own Web site.

The 38 members of the 2006 Duke lacrosse team who filed the suit in federal court say their reputations were damaged by their association to an escort service dancer's phony gang-rape allegations.

The players chose not to appear at the news conference, said Bob Bork Jr., the group's hired publicist, because they don't want to attract attention.

The suit contends the players suffered emotional distress and other injuries when the university remained silent about evidence that early on contradicted the allegations of Crystal Gail Mangum, an escort service dancer hired to perform at the team's now-infamous March 2006 party.

No player listed in the suit was charged in the case, but the players' attorney, Chuck Cooper, said they nonetheless had been through "a horrifying personal nightmare."

The event was at the National Press Building in downtown Washington, a block from the White House.

"This is kind of a media center," said Bork, son of the Supreme Court nominee rejected during the Reagan years. "And Durham isn't Sorry."

Cooper, who has connections to the late Chief Justice William Rehnquist and President Reagan, issued what amounted to an opening argument.

He described team critics and protesters as an "angry mob," and said the players were "reviled almost daily in the local and national press."

For this, he said, the players suffered "guerrous, lasting injuries."

The players, Cooper said, sued reluctantly. "To hold Duke accountable," he said.

Steven W. Henkelman, a Philadelphia architect and father of player Erik Henkelman, spoke about the spring of 2006.

Henkelman said his son was forced to move out of his Durham home for fear of retribution, then was devastated when Duke President Richard Brodhead canceled the 2006 season.

Henkelman said Duke administrators turned against the team.

"They were willing to sacrifice a few — our sons — for the good of the administration," he said.

During the news conference, Duke sent out the first of two releases Thursday.

In each, Pamela Bernard, Duke's general counsel, disclosed that the university had offered to cover legal fees and other costs incurred by the players during the prosecution of former Durham District Attorney Mike Nifong.

"Their legal strategy — attacking Duke — is misdirected and without merit," Bernard said.

The second statement in late afternoon said: "We have now seen the lawsuit and as we said before, if these plaintiffs have a complaint, it is with Mr. Nifong."

In all, the suit names 29 defendants. They include the university, Brodhead and more than a dozen Duke officials: the city of Durham, city manager and various police officers.

Nifong is not a defendant, Cooper said, because he has filed for bankruptcy and is offered protection by federal law. However, the suit condemns Nifong's handling of the case.

Cooper was asked about the players' conduct at the party with two escort service dancers and underage drinking.

"Cooper said the team had been "severely punished" and players had expressed their shame.

Only three members of the 2006 team have not filed suit — Matt Zash, a former captain; Matt Danowski, the current coach's son, and Kevin Mayer.

The three players charged and later cleared in the case sued the city, Nifong and others five months ago.

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