

CHAPEL HILL DOWNTOWN PARTNERSHIP

Driving Downtown's Destiny

308 West Rosemary Street Suite 202 Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27516
919-967-9440

May 2, 2006

Mr. Kevin Foy, Mayor
Members of the Town Council
Town of Chapel Hill
405 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

Dear Mayor Foy and Members of the Town Council:

The Chapel Hill Downtown Partnership, through our 2006 plan of work, is addressing the basic issues that hinder our downtown community's growth and economic vitality. Through both consumer and downtown business and property owner surveys that the Partnership conducted last fall, panhandling was identified as one of the top five issues facing downtown Chapel Hill today. As an emotionally charged social and behavioral issue there is a push between those that feel that they have a responsibility to give and those that are fearful of an environment in which panhandling occurs. A local resident proposed a solution to panhandling; the installation of a Giving Kiosk, and the CHDP board adopted this proposal during our planning retreat last winter. The Chapel Hill Downtown Partnership is requesting that the Town Council authorize the Town Manager to assist our organization in accomplishing this goal to install a kiosk and to extend the ordinance which regulates panhandling near ATM machines and financial institutions to include the Giving Kiosk.

The Giving Kiosk, funded by a local resident, is a collection site that offers Franklin Street visitors the option of giving spare change or paper money donations to one of six local agencies that are charged with addressing downtown's human service needs as opposed to an individual panhandler. The kiosk is designed as a functional public art piece, hand-crafted by a local metal smith artist, and is proposed as a permanent addition to the streetscape for the 100 block of East Franklin Street.

A contributor will be able to read a brief description of six local agencies and can choose to give a donation to any or all of the organizations. The Downtown Partnership will manage the kiosk and agencies will be selected by the CHDP Board of Directors annually, based upon the services that they provide for the human service needs of downtown, as recipients of the kiosk. The proposed 2006-2007 recipients are: the Inter Faith Council, (IFC), Mental Health Association, Freedom House, El Futuro, Club Nova and Emergency Management Services, (EMS). In addition, an educational campaign that encourages directed giving, a description of the services provided by the recipient

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agencies, and how these issues effect downtowns today will coincide with the installation of the kiosk.

The location proposed by the Downtown Partnership, with input and assistance from the Public Works department, is on the sidewalk in front of the Tarheel Bookshop, 119 East Franklin Street, but we will respectfully consider any alternative sites that you suggest. The kiosk, 46" wide X 20" deep X 7' tall at it's highest point, is a two-sided structure that will sit perpendicular to the sidewalk by the guardrail that divides the sidewalk and Franklin Street. We feel that this is a highly visible location, which will allow pedestrians to get out of the foot-traffic flow, even during peak hours, and safely make donations. This location also offers the added security of street-lighting, concerned owner-occupied businesses, and adequate space for personnel to be able to empty the kiosk.

Our organization would like to finalize the details of the location, agency recipients, and design elements by June 1st in an effort to allow the artist ample time to construct and install the kiosk to coincide with the beginning of school in late August.

The design, construction, and the installation of the kiosk are fully funded by a local resident through a generous donation. Our organization is prepared to fund the educational campaign that will coincide with the installation, unless additional donations are collected by private contributors.

Thank you for your interest in downtown and your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E. Parham', with a stylized, flowing script.

Elizabeth H. Parham, CMSM
Executive Director

Cc: Cal Horton
Bill Letteri