

57

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Bill Pendergraft

**Sent:** Tuesday, June 17, 2003 11:11 AM

**To:** Town Council

**Subject:**

## **Light and Liberty**

Was I surprised by the plans of UNC-CH to build a towering parking garage next to the Old Chapel Hill Cemetery? No.

My grandparents, aunts and uncles, and father are all buried in the Cemetery, and all were reared, both literally and figuratively, downstream from the great UNC-CH development tsunami. We have never seen a time when the University development wave did not roll over the fields and forests of Chapel Hill, engulfing backyards and schoolyards, threatening the cultural and natural history of the town, and overwashing its environs, transforming natural communities into blacktop and shopping malls.

Our family was never surprised by the growth, but always surprised by its lack of thoughtfulness. How could our State's self-proclaimed best and brightest not lead the State and even the nation in intelligent planned growth, and how could the very institution with the mission of enlightenment be so unenlightened as to foul its own nest, and destroy the very fabric and pattern of its past? How could the "great institution," pose a larger threat to the community than even the most egregious developer; and do so with tax funds? How could elected officials be historically complicit, allowing money to become policy?

Our questions have not been answered, however my family's concern shall remain not with the dead, but with the living. Maybe it's really all about mediocre theater, and great parking.

Bill Pendergraft  
Chapel Hillian in Abstensia  
PO Box 99  
Beaufort, South Carolina