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Chapel Hill, NC's Southern Village 20th Anniversary Celebration Includes Hotel Groundbreaking

Chapel Hill, NC (June 22, 2015) - Developers and officials in Chapel Hill, NC recently held a groundbreaking to celebrate the beginning of construction for the new Southern Village Hyatt Place Hotel which will open in Fall 2016. The ceremony took place June 4 for the five-story, 110-room hotel which will have 1,700 square feet of flexible, high-tech meeting space, in addition to a 1,680 square foot third-floor outdoor function space.

The hotel will be located on 15-501 South, adjacent to Southern Village and near the entrance to Market Street. Kirkland Construction of High Point is the general contractor. RBA, a Charlotte architectural firm designed the hotel and its interiors. Beacon Investment Management Group of Charlotte will hire staff and manage the new Hyatt Place.

The kickoff event coincided with the 20th anniversary of **Southern Village**. Southern Village is an ideal example of what is called the New Urbanism, but it's not really new and it's not all that urban. Pope Pius II built the first village of its kind five centuries ago in Italy. He called the town Pienza. His vision, which promoted the creation of diverse, walkable, communities—communities comprised of the same components as conventional development, but assembled in a more integrated fashion—is alive and well all over the country today.

“The magic of this place—and it's something we can appreciate now, 20 years down the road—is that it feels like it's been here forever,” said D.R. Bryan, architect of Southern Village, while announcing the new hotel project.

The new hotel project will attract even more visitors to the heart of the community. Southern Village feels comfortable and familiar, even if you've never been here before. No two buildings are alike, which gives the impression that Southern Village was built slowly, over time, when in fact it was built rather quickly. Here is the coffee shop, the ice cream parlor, the movie house, the grocery, a beer joint—all the iconic shops and services a small town offers—the essentials.

There's even a Village Green, a kind of park in the middle of town, where you can picnic and see concerts and late-night films.

Southern Village can thank Andres Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk for that. Duany is known as the founder of New Urbanism; his projects have been built all over the country and the world; his flagship development, Seaside, Florida, served as the too-quaint-to-be-real set for *The Truman Show*. Duany and Zyberk actually came to Chapel Hill and spoke to the Town Council about the future of New Urbanism here, and their oration had a profound effect on D.R. Bryan. Bryan even took a trip to Pienza, Italy, to understand his concepts by visiting the source of them. He came back with his own vision, one he had the means to fulfill: Bryan became the architect and developer of Southern Village.

By all measures the project has been an unqualified success. The neighborhood has won design awards and has been recognized as a premiere example of traditional neighborhood design. Today Southern Village's Market Street is 100% occupied. "We want the Village Center to be the best place to work in the Triangle. In seeking tenants, scheduling entertainment events, and even selecting bushes and benches, we are always keeping this goal in mind," Bryan says.

Consider the impressive economic performance:

- There are 1,150 Households in Southern Village
- Some 7,800 grocery shoppers weekly
- 17,000 people enjoy the Southern Community Park each year
- 550 students and 106 staff at Scroggs Elementary

Growth, change, stability. In so many ways that's what Chapel Hill represents: an ability to grow with a well-balanced economic future in mind, while tipping our hat fondly, warmly, toward Mayberry.

For more information about Chapel Hill, NC, visit the Chapel Hill/Orange County Visitors Bureau website at www.visitchapelhill.org.

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Market Street in Southern Village