

CITY

34th Street wall gets a reprieve

□ A newly proposed ban on graffiti excludes the 34th Street wall.

By Jeremy Rottgen

The Gator Times staff

Gainesville will soon make property owners responsible for removing graffiti on their property, excluding the 34th Street wall in the proposed ordinance.

An ordinance being prepared by the city will likely ban graffiti, making property owners responsible for its removal.

Commissioners say the ordinance is necessary to ensure the continued beautification of the city, but will not inhibit the use of the wall. The wall is owned by the Florida Department of Transportation.

Commissioner Warren Nielsen said the wall will not be included because of the tradition it has become for the university and city alike.

"It seems it has been adopted as a tradition for most of the community," he said. "We are trying to critique the ordinance to make it more clearly state its intended purpose and allow the community to continue to enjoy the wall."

Student Body President Marc Adler greatly supports the saving of the wall and relishes in its availability to students and city residents as a public forum.

"I think the wall is a valid place for students and the community to express themselves in an artistic fashion," Adler said.

Student Government is planning on sponsoring the wall since it is a part of tradition at UF and to make sure that it

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Photo: Jason Braverman

A new ordinance requires property owners to remove graffiti from their property at their expense. The 34th Street wall is the only area excluded from this because of its well-known tradition.

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continues to be so.

Student Lobby Director Natalie Manan said SG will help with the policies being drawn up by commissioners.

"The compromise between SG and the city will involve SG sponsorship of the 34th Street wall, education campaigns concerning safety and respect while painting the wall and other agreements between SG and the city," she said. "I am certain that as these discussions progress and a compromise is

reached that the students will be happy with the results."

Other recommendations, including the installation of a chain-link fence and a set time where painting would be allowed, are still in consideration.

UF student Hunter Beiderman said the wall is important to UF and Gainesville.

"The 34th Street wall serves as an outlet for many and a source of inspiration for others. Personally, I am a mural artist who uses the wall," Beiderman said. "Whatever the motivation, the wall is enjoyed by countless individuals throughout

our community."

Some new rules may apply to make the area better suited for wall painters and the community as a whole.

Possible changes include more lighting, parking in appropriate areas and an improved sidewalk. More trashcans could be installed due to citizen complaints concerning the significant amount of trash found on-site.

FDOF could not be reached for comment.

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