

Graduate Village: Residents must apply early

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The difference lies in the autonomy and freedom that each resident has over their dormitory counterparts. The similarity lies in the dormitory-style leasing agreement.

The complex currently hosts a waiting list extending into next February, and according to Sheri Donahoe, associate director of residence life, the key to securing a spot is to apply early.

"If you apply late, there are less resources and aid we can give you," she said.

Donahoe said priority is given to applicants based on the order in which they apply. She said prospective students can apply for housing at the same time they apply for admittance to the University, but students are required to pay a \$30, non-refundable housing application fee. As a general rule, Donahoe recommends students apply at least three to six months in advance.

Eli Nadel, 26, was not granted housing when he first came to the University from New Jersey. He used the additional information provided by the housing office to find a place to live.

Now in his third year of law school, Nadel said he doesn't feel like he missed out by not living in graduate housing. When comparing the conditions of Graduate Village to its relatively

high rent, Nadel wasn't impressed.

"I think your dollar goes a lot further in other areas of the community," he said.

Monthly rent averages about \$480 for a studio, \$570 for a one-bedroom apartment. Utilities, such as sewer, water and garbage, are included.

Kendal Richards, a 22-year-old journalism graduate student, moved into Graduate Village last July and feels the higher rent is worth it. "It's on the spendier side, but it's worth being with people you have stuff in common with."

A recent Gonzaga graduate, Richards came to University not knowing anyone, but said the friendly community of Graduate Village makes meeting new people easy.

After years of shared living as an undergraduate, Richards is finally enjoying her own space.

"It's nice to hang with people if you want, because they just live downstairs, but still have you own space," she said.

For those who are not granted housing, Donahoe recommends searching the ASUO data base for campus rental or reviewing local newspapers for possible housing options. For more information, call University Housing at 346-4277.

Local business owners focus on downtown redevelopment

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

There's a resurgence of business in downtown Eugene, and it's not just because some attractive rents can be had amid the vacant storefronts.

Many of these business owners say downtown is at a turning point, and they're willing to stake their business futures on the future of downtown.

They seem almost prescient now, the business owners who set up downtown stores or offices in the past year or so before developers started raising the possibility of major redevelopment in the heart of the city.

But most of them chose their locations long before Whole Foods began eyeing a site on East Broadway for a large, natural foods grocery, and local developers Tom Connor and Don Woolley revealed their intention to team up with a Minneapolis-based developer to transform several blocks of largely vacant space along West Broadway into housing, shops and offices.

Most are hard-core downtowners, willing to link their own livelihoods with a long-suffering part of town that they believe possesses vast potential.

"We're dedicated to being here," said Aimee Allen, co-owner of LetterHead, an eclectic card and gift shop. And that dedication is steadfast, whether redevelopment happens incrementally, or in one, big splashy project, she said.

In recent years, the downtown has seen a constant ebb and flow of business closures and openings.

But this latest group of businesses is larger than usual, and they're consciously deciding to be downtown, said Sue Prichard, a commercial real estate broker who has handled leases or property sales for most of the newcomers.

Among the stores that have opened downtown in the past couple of years are LetterHead, Footloose Massage Center, Freudian Slip, the Oregon Wine Warehouse, Tibet Fine Design, Vintage Home Design & Furnishings, and the Opus6ix art gallery. Business professionals, including the Ulum Group

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Renters: Insurance replaces damaged property

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not be heard, according to Rowlett.

Many renters don't have the time or money to file a suit, leaving many tenants with inhabitable living conditions and no solution.

"Eugene was the largest city in Oregon, prior to the passage of the new housing code, that did not have local protection for renters," said Rowlett. Eugene follows the basic state laws for landlords and tenants, but until recently had no localized program to deal with rental disputes.

With these problems in mind, students at the University started the Eugene Citizens for Housing Standards, a group that researched rental policies in towns of a similar size and demographic and lobbied the City Council for a localized housing code based on their findings.

Eugene passed a new housing code last year modeled after one in Corvallis that has been in effect for two years.

Now if a tenant is dealing with a violation of the habitable living standards, the City of Eugene Planning and Development Department can provide assistance. The program works with tenants and landlords to help solve the matter and takes action against the landlord after several failed attempts at working with the landlord to fix the situation.

Landlords who repeatedly fail to comply with requests for repairs on rental properties can face daily fines until the matter is resolved, without the tenants having to go to court.

Tenants looking for information about the new housing codes and processes can contact Rachelle Nicholas at 682-8282, or visit the Planning and Development Web site, www.eugene-or.gov.

Students renting apartments or houses in the area should also be aware of insurance concerns. Local insurance companies offer coverage for personal property loss because of fire, theft and water damage.

"Renters insurance covers your personal belongings," said Renee Durbin from Allstate Insurance. "If there was a fire or a total loss, all your personal belongings would be covered."

Students can acquire renters insurance for as little as \$85 to \$135 per year, depending on how much they need, Durbin said.

Insurance agents base the coverage off of information about the rental unit and estimate how much coverage is needed. Renters can request more coverage for specific items such as jewelry or firearms.

New renters can also find resources by visiting the OSPiRG of-fices or visiting the group's Web site at www.ospirgstudents.org.

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