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Chapel Hill Herald (NC)

September 24, 2008

Section: CHH

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Lousy Landlord

Coffee shop drops suit against landlord

3Cups owner had complained about Courtyard parking

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Feuds With Everyone

Article Text:

HILLSBOROUGH -- 3Cups, a coffee shop that had been located in The Courtyard on West Franklin Street, dismissed a lawsuit Monday it had filed against its landlord, Spencer Young.

The lawsuit was filed in Orange County Civil Superior Court in May during a skirmish between 3Cups owner Lex Alexander and Young over the parking situation at The Courtyard.

Young was also battling with P.H. Craig, who owned a parking lot next to The Courtyard. Before Young bought the downtown Chapel Hill shopping center in 2005, The Courtyard owners paid Craig for the use of the lot for the customers of their businesses.

Young, however, refused to pay, which caused Craig to put a barricade to prevent Courtyard customers from using it.

Without parking for its customers, Alexander believed Young had violated the lease agreement, so instead of paying Young his monthly rent for the 3Cups space, Alexander put his rent in a holding account.

Young eventually came up with a plan for a parking valet service for customers of The Courtyard shops but told Alexander that his customers would have to pay \$10 for the service.

Alexander went to court, and a judge issued an order to Young that he had to provide the same parking to Alexander as he did to his other tenants. Although he prevailed in court, that still did not solve the parking problem for Alexander since he didn't expect his customers would want to use a valet service just to go in his shop and buy a cup of coffee.

Alexander's attorney, Joseph Marion, declined to say much Tuesday about why Alexander dropped the lawsuit against Young.

"It was about allocation of resources," Marion said.

Alexander could not be reached for comment.

Feuds With Everyone

Another legal battle

Young and The Courtyard are also facing another legal battle.

Fiscally Irresponsible

Wachovia Bank is trying to foreclose on the shopping center and sell it. The bank filed a request late last month for a foreclosure hearing in Orange County Superior Court, saying Spencer C. Young Investments wasn't making payments on \$2.63 million it had borrowed in 2005 to buy the property.

Alexander closed 3Cups on June 1 and vacated the space at The Courtyard. He is working on opening a new shop at 227 Elliott Road in Chapel Hill.

At the old location, the focus was on coffee, but 3Cups also sold tea and wine. The new store, however, will have a focus on wine, and is changing its name to Three Cups ... Wine, Coffee, Tea.

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Record Number: 0572972365

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