

THE AS

or

FAMINI

ACROSS THE CAMPUS: Dobbins or Bruno's: Do we really have a choice?

by Shannon Weber
news editor

Okay so your organization is thinking about having a party for its anniversary, but the organization would like to make it a pizza party with pizza from Papa John's. With the new campus-wide policy you can, provided that the caterer adheres to the qualifications set by the University (i.e. has the proper insurance, does not serve products in competition with Pepsi, etc.). Now wait a minute, Housing and Food still has exclusive rights to the lodging facilities, conference facilities, Dobbins and Bruno's. Meaning if your hall council wanted to have a football party in your dorm, the caterer must be approved by Housing and Food Services. So how do you know if your caterer has been approved by the University? As of right now, the University doesn't have an approved catering list. So your organization cannot run out and get a cake from the Cake Carriage to have a Bruno's for a meet-the-organization party just yet. However, the format in which to approve caterers and other restaurants is in place.

"This new policy will provide students with more choices for catering," said Ed Mulfinger, manager of Housing and Food Services. "Diners at the Logan House and other such events sponsored by Student Activities will still use Housing and Food Services for catering."

The Council of Commonwealth Student Governments, which is in affiliation with the Student Government Association, helped push for adapting this new policy. The CCSG meets once a month to work on University-wide issues such as this.

Now, the question is why do we only have Bruno's and Dobbins to choose from when our stomachs growl? Okay let's start with having a fast food restaurant on campus like Taco Bell. First of all there is the issue of following the policy set by the University. It states that the sale of food and/or beverages by other than authorized University departments such as Housing and Food Services, Penn State Hospitality Services, University Creamery, or by a commercial food service company contracting for food and beverage services, is prohibited. That answers that.

"Aside from the policy issues there's a basic economic issue. Behrend is still too small a market to attract vendors to campus. Most food industry businesses aren't interested in what is essentially a 10-month business (August-May) with a peak population of 4,000. There are also legal issues with regard to 'territories' that franchises have. For instance, if we were to try and establish a Taco Bell on campus, the Taco Bell franchise in Wesleyville would have to authorize it. Since we are part of their territory, that would likely mean buying the rights (they are

very unlikely to give us the rights)," said Ken Miller, acting Dean of Student Affairs. "The franchise fee, operating costs, etc. would make the deal cost-prohibitive, assuming we could even get the rights."

So if no restaurants on campus, how about across the street on Station Road? According to Mulfinger, the area across from the campus was not able to be developed because there were no water and sewer lines running up Station Road up until recently. Now that this has changed, companies may look at the property again.

Another possibility according to Mulfinger is having a franchise located near Knowledge Park and the new sports complex.

"I am aware of two potential restaurants who are interested in developing the land immediately across from the main entrance to the College," said Miller.

With the new construction of the Bayfront Highway that will start in the Spring of 2001, Mulfinger said that it will open up the potential of having restaurants across from the campus.

The land immediately across from the main entrance to the College still has the possibility of being developed for restaurants according to John Ream, Director of Operations.

It looks like it is going to be a while before all of the this takes place.

