



Alpha Tau Zeta

F R A T E R N I T Y

T O W N S H E N D

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November 9, 2007

Chad Harris
Executive Director
FarmHouse Fraternity, Inc.

Travis Park
Chairman of Expansion Efforts
FarmHouse International Board of Directors

Bryce Freeman
President
FarmHouse International Board of Directors

Dear Chad, Bryce, Travis and brothers of FarmHouse Fraternity,

I'd like to first thank you all for the time and commitment you have given the Brothers of Alpha Tau Zeta Fraternity since our merger discussion began over a year ago. It has been a pleasure working with all of you. I look forward to our continued discussions throughout the evaluation by both fraternities, to determine if a merger would benefit both organizations.

Over the past year, the idea of merging Alpha Tau Zeta Fraternity (ATZ) with the FarmHouse Fraternity (FH) has been discussed among many of our alumni. This idea dates to casual discussions that took place as far back as the 1940's and 50s. The most recent discussions began a decade ago, but then last year they resurfaced between a few ATZ and FH Alumni.

Our goal is to bring resolution to the idea of combining ATZ and FH. While there are still many ATZ alumni and actives who have concerns about such a merger, several members agree that there are many similarities between the organizations. I've highlighted a few of these similarities below as well as very positive attributes about FH identified by ATZ actives and alumni.

- ATZ and FH have been open to any male student who meets our standards, regardless of major, and both are social fraternities in line with the membership standards of the North American Interfraternity Conference. Both organizations contain aspiring young men with diverse cultural and social origins within all fields of agriculture and beyond the traditional farm setting.
- Both organizations have maintained a high level of academic performance and scholarship within their membership

Mission:

Building a brotherhood that provides support for members, shapes leaders, and promotes
a positive impact upon society

- FH offers several benefits not available to a stand-alone group. Significant among them is liability insurance coverage. FH has negotiated an umbrella package, with a select group of fraternities (combining their cooperative purchasing power) that could reduce the steadily increasing premiums we now must pay.
- FH's Leadership Development program is very impressive. Its annual Leadership Academy (for new chapter officers), your Regional Leadership Conferences (which all brothers are encouraged to attend), and bi-annual Conclave, all are aimed at the further development of qualities of leadership in active chapter men.
- FH is committed to enhancing the qualities needed to succeed. ATZ was formed to serve our college student members – to help them grow into responsible manhood. FH is also organized to do this. Organization is your strong suit – you have the staff and programs to get the job done. Chapter consultation and staff support would greatly assist a transition and be available, going forward as well.
- FH has an Alumni effort second to none. ATZ would be afforded the opportunity to “grandfather” into the FH alumni organization. ALL Townshend alumni (of both ATZ and AZ – since 1897) could take advantage of becoming alumni.
- Our Chapter Alumni will retain their vital role with our Chapter. We will still have ownership (and stewardship) of our Chapter House. We will have our Chapter Alumni Association (as now) and Fraternity operations will continue un-abated.

Throughout our discussions, several alumni have requested that we seek additional clarification from FH on some of the conditions outlined in your proposal. Below are some of those points and suggestions for your consideration in order to respond to concerns from ATZ alumni and actives. While a final vote of the active chapter and alumni will be necessary to formally decide what direction ATZ will go, I believe much of the support or opposition will depend on FH's response to these concerns:

- **Concern #1:** There have been concerns raised about losing the ATZ brand (or name recognition) on The Ohio State University campus. Both actives and alumni have worked diligently over the last decade to build this name. In addition, the ATZ name was developed to symbolize our heritage, dating back more than 100 years to 1897 when our chapter founded the Fraternity of Alpha Zeta. **The FH proposal states** "We would allow your chapter to be recognized as the Alpha Tau Zeta Chapter of FarmHouse, the Ohio State Alpha Tau Zeta Chapter of FarmHouse, or the Townshend Chapter of FarmHouse." Many alumni and actives have stated that they do and will not agree with this proposed name.
- **Suggestion:** Allow Alpha Tau Zeta to maintain its identity while incorporating the FarmHouse name. The suggestion is to allow our chapter to be known as “Alpha Tau Zeta – FarmHouse Fraternity – The Townshend Chapter”. The suggested lettering on the chapter house would be:

ATZ
FarmHouse

ATZ response to FH proposed merger

- **Concern #2:** If ATZ decides to merge with FH many actives and alumni want to ensure from the very beginning that ATZ will be given some type of representation within the FH organization. Without additional ATZ chapters within the FH organization our chapter may never be afforded the ability to be elected to such positions under the current election process. This issue was not discussed in the current FH proposal.
 - **Suggestion:** Provide ATZ with one designated board member position on the FH governing boards (i.e. International, Foundation, etc.). Representation on each board will provide our actives and alumni a direct outlet for concerns and add a new perspective to the FH boards. If our organizations join together our actives and alumni would have a vested interest in contributing to the success of the FH organization. One suggestion would be to request these ATZ designated board member positions for a stated period of time, perhaps 5-10 years. This affords ATZ alumni access to the FH governing boards for the period of “transition”.
- **Concern #3:** It is imperative that our organization maintain our original founding fathers and still teach the history behind ATZ in our new and continuing member education program. We would also view the incorporation of our AZ and ATZ heritage as a significant advantage to FH since our chapter’s origin dates back to the oldest all-male agricultural fraternity in the nation. More than half of the 115,000 individuals initiated into the 73 chapters of the Fraternity of Alpha Zeta provide a platform to help both strengthen existing FH chapters and create interest in starting new chapters where existing AZ alumni reside.
 - **Suggestion:** Many alumni and actives do not want to lose the ATZ identity or heritage. Therefore, many believe that FH should consider incorporating our history into the material given to all FH chapters.
- **Concern #4:** ATZ is a “going concern” – a 110 year-old chapter at Ohio State with the strong alumni base that grows out of that history. The Townshend Chapter has a chapter house, that’s been kept up-to-date, in a great location and with no debt. In addition, the fraternity has an excellent record on campus – good grades and top awards – and in good standing in the OSU Greek community. The ATZ alumni association is also well organized and very supportive of the house and active chapter. Since FH will need to invest very little in “start-up costs” or the “ongoing-maintenance” of such a strong organization will FH divert some of what would need to be invested in a brand new chapter into additional resources for the chapter to utilize in recruiting or active chapter development?
 - **Suggestion:** I think that alumni that had raised this issue want to see the benefits for both organizations if such a merger takes place and the level of support, both human and financial resources that FH is planning to put toward ATZ. Many alumni recognize that if we mutually decide to merge our organizations, FH will not need to expend a significant amount of resources in start-up costs, specifically regarding purchasing property for a chapter house. With this in mind, a suggestion was made that FH could establish a dedicated recruiting and scholarship budget for the ATZ FH – Townshend Chapter.

The ATZ alumni plan to communicate with the full membership over the coming months to continue answering questions – providing them every opportunity to discuss the FH proposal. I have attached a brief outline of the process ATZ and FH have gone through over the past year and included a few upcoming events that we have discussed looking ahead to next year. I

believe many ATZ alumni and actives are eager to hear your responses to the major concerns expressed over the FH proposal before making that decision.

An additional issue that has been raised by some alumni is a recommendation that if an agreement can be reached between ATZ and FH, we engage in a two-year transition period. During this transition period, FarmHouse staff would be encouraged to fully interact with our students and alumni members to build the FarmHouse component within our existing organizational structure. At the end of the 2 year transition period, if all parties are happy with all other terms of the agreement, a full transition of ATZ into FH would take place by the 2010 FH International Conclave to be held in Columbus, Ohio.

Thank you again for all of your efforts throughout the proposed merger discussions between FH and ATZ actives and alumni. I look forward to our continued dialogue, as we work toward a final decision whether to merger ATZ with FH.

Fraternally,



Anthonio C. Fiore, Esq.
President
National ATZ Board

ATZ/FH Proposed Merger Discussion Timeline (as of November 8, 2007)

ATZ response to FH proposed merger

The following timeline outlines some of the organized discussions and contacts that made between both of our organizations.

- **August of 2006** with a discussion between John C. Foltz and a FH alum regarding the organizations intent to establish a new chapter on the Ohio State University campus.
- FH followed up on this conversation with a letter, dated **October 18, 2006**. This letter from the FH International organization offered to engage in conversation with ATZ about the opportunity of combining both fraternities and provided a lot of insight into how FH would propose doing so.
- **November 11, 2006** - In response to the FH letter, both ATZ alumni boards met on for about four hours to discuss the proposal. At the conclusion of this meeting both boards decided that we should send a letter inviting a small FH delegation to Columbus to discuss their proposal with a few representatives of the local and national ATZ boards.
- **January 13, 2007** - In response to this letter, five ATZ Brothers met with three FH members (representing their International Executive Board), to engage in an informational session regarding the proposal. Prior to our meeting we submitted several questions developed with input from both alumni boards.
- **February 2007** - Our ATZ delegation felt that it was important for both alumni boards to have the opportunity to hear from the FH representatives and invited them to make a presentation at a joint board meeting of the local and national ATZ boards the night before Winterfest. The FH representative spoke to both boards for a few hours after dinner. After the FH representative departed, both boards continued our discussion of this proposal. The FH representative followed up in an e-mail regarding a few additional questions that were raised during this meeting. A discussion was led by Tony Fiore, National ATZ Board President, to present and facilitate discussion of the FH proposal after the ATZ Winterfest Annual Meeting.
- **April 2007** – The Spring Townshend Tidings mailing included a summary of the FH proposal with a feedback section that included an initial poll of our members and a section to provide feedback both pro and con.
- **May through September** - Both local and national alumni boards encouraged discussions to occur at summer reunion gatherings. In particular, Chad Harris made a presentation and facilitated discussion with ATZ alumni at our summer reunion in August at Deer Creek State Park.
- **October 2007**: A group of ATZ alumni traveled to Purdue to visit with FH alumni and actives during the OSU/Purdue football game. FH representative Bryce Freeman traveled to Ohio State to visit with ATZ actives and alumni during the OSU Homecoming weekend. Several ATZ and FH representatives also had conversations at the FFA National Convention.
- **November 4, 2007**: Chad Harris was in Columbus for the OSU/Wisconsin football game and met with ATZ actives and alumni to continue discussions.

The following timeline has been discussed as additional discussion points for both ATZ and FH representatives to continue discussions of the proposed merger of our organizations.

- **November 9 and 10, 2007**: Presentation of the contents of this letter to the FH International Board.
- **December 2007/January 2008**: The ATZ National Board and Townshend Alumni Board will communicate the FH response to all ATZ alumni.
- **January 3-6, 2008**: ATZ active chapter leaders invited to attend the FH Leadership Academy in Kansas City.
- **February 2008**: ATZ will continue discussions of the FH proposal and responses at our Annual Mtg.
- **February 8-10, 2008**: Representatives of the ATZ active chapter invited to attend the Eastern Regional Leadership Conference of FH to be held in Lexington, Kentucky.
- FH has also offered to provide a “consultation” visit by one of the Fraternity’s Educational Leadership Consultant staff members, the executive director or an alumni volunteer.

In addition to the events captured above, several actives and alumni from both organizations have been discussing the FH proposal during this timeframe.