Meeting Date: October 8, 2013

Members in attendance: Barbara Albrecht, Bob Berne, Corey Blay, Sewin Chan, Angela Kamer, Marty Kurth, Ted Magder (chair), Larry Maslon, Panos Mavromatis, Jalal Shatah, Dennis Smith, David Vintinner, Diane Yu

1. Call to order and announcements

In addition to the members noted above, Michael Patullo attended as staff coordinator for the Group. Martin Dorph, Executive Vice President, Finance and Information Technology, Joseph Juliano, Vice Provost and Associate Vice Chancellor for Strategic Planning, and William Haas, Senior Director of Campus Planning attended to deliver presentations.

2. Presentation: Classroom design and usage

Vice Provost Joe Juliano began by explaining the differences in various definitions of square footage; he specifically highlighted assignable square feet (ASF). He noted that the typical office space is 120 ASF and the general rule is to double the number of ASF needed to calculate gross square footage (GSF).

Juliano explained various layout options for classrooms and indicated that lecture rooms featuring chairs with tablet arms are the most efficient type, while group work rooms typically are the most inefficient. In response to a question, Juliano noted that the space needed for entry and egress make large classrooms more efficient than small ones.

In terms of classroom design, Juliano indicated that there is no national/industry standard. He noted that, in recent classroom renovations, the University has tried to increase the quality of classrooms. New construction, he said, affords the ability to build from scratch and not around structural columns and other obstructions. Haas noted that the pedagogical preferences of instructors have often driven the sizes and configurations of classrooms needed and that the University has now tried to limit classrooms placed more than two floors above ground. He encouraged the Working Group to consider that modularity in the building of classrooms would limit the needs for extensive renovations and improve flexibility as needs change over time.
3. Presentation: Financial planning for dormitory on the south block

[The full text of Martin Dorph’s presentation is available on the Working Group’s website.]

EVP Martin Dorph provided updated information regarding the University’s long-term financial plan for capital expenditures. He noted that the assumptions in the original plan presented to the Working Group in 2012 remain conservative; he specifically mentioned the affirmation of the University’s bond ratings and that interest rates are currently lower than the University’s assumption.

Dorph then moved the discussion to student housing and its relationship to NYU’s transformation from a commuter school to an internationally-recognized research university over time. Dorph indicated that the centrality of freshman dormitories is an important concern from a student life perspective, as well as the style of dormitories in which freshman are housed (i.e., apartments vs. double rooms).

In response to a question from one member, Dorph noted that the reliance on NYU housing decreases as students get older. Freshman, however, are required to live on campus and NYU does provide a four-year housing guarantee. Currently, he said, NYU is oversubscribed and makes use of an arrangement with a nearby hotel to accommodate any overflow. He emphasized that hotels are a short-term solution. Dorph also affirmed that the University leases apartments in Stuyvesant Town, which house graduate students.

With specific focus on housing freshmen on the superblocks, Dorph indicated that the University would want house upperclassmen the 3rd Avenue North dormitory while allowing freshmen the opportunity to live in the Core. This, he said, would relieve overcrowding and potentially allow NYU to shed some of its leased residence halls, which would be of financial benefit.

The financing for the building of dorms, he said, would partly come from New York State Dormitory Authority bonds. Debt is typically structured for a 30-year repayment schedule with a fixed rate. Dorph then explained the savings that NYU has generated from the conversion of dormitories from leased to owned space.

Dorph then explained the possibilities for construction of faculty housing. Working group members inquired as to the non-NYU apartments in Washington Square Village and Silver Towers, and as to the effect of NYU’s global endeavors on the need for faculty housing. Dorph noted that the demand for faculty housing units mainly exists for larger units with 2-3 bedroom capacity.

4. Reply to FSC written questions

The Working Group agreed to limit this issue to an email discussion given time constraints.