



NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

University Space Priorities Working Group

Interim Report

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<http://www.nyu.edu/about/university-initiatives/space-priorities>



NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

Introduction

NYU President John Sexton established the University Space Priorities Working Group in the fall of 2012 to examine NYU's projected space needs and to give advice on how they can best be met. The Working Group's charge stems most immediately from the New York City Council's approval in July 2012 of NYU's Core project application under the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) for new construction on what are collectively referred to as the "superblocks," the NYU-owned land bounded by West Houston Street to the south, Mercer Street to the east, La Guardia Place to the west, and West 3rd Street to the north. Bleecker Street bisects the area into a "south" block (site of the Silver Towers complex and the Morton Williams supermarket) and "north" block (location of Washington Square Village, or WSV).¹

The **Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP)** is the standardized procedure for public review of applications affecting land use in New York City.

While the City Council did not approve NYU's Core Project proposal in its entirety, it did grant the University permission to develop up to 1.9 million square feet (above and below grade) on the two superblocks. The City's approval reduced the density and height of the buildings from NYU's original proposal, eliminated some proposed uses (the hotel and temporary gym), and required compliance with expanded open space, community use and consultation provisions. In addition, no construction of buildings on the north block can begin until 2022 at the earliest.²

The **Restrictive Declaration of Large-Scale Development for the NYU LGSD** reflects the terms of the City Council's approval of NYU's application for construction in and around the superblocks, date July 24, 2012. (See: <http://www.nyu.edu/nyu2031/nyuinny/>)

The charge to the Working Group was to provide the University with definitive guidance on space, including: principles and priorities that should inform the actual development and use of the superblock zoning envelope; strategies

1 The ULURP application is one component of NYU's original 2031 Plan, which includes recommendations for space needs in the Washington Square Village Core, the neighborhood, and remote locations including the Health Corridor, Downtown Brooklyn, and Governors Island (See www.nyu.edu/nyu2031/nyuinny/).

2 Various community groups and individuals, including some NYU faculty members, have filed a lawsuit against a number of New York City agencies and other governmental bodies, seeking to overturn the City Council's approval of the NYU Core Plan. NYU is named as a "necessary third party." At present, the lawsuit's only consequence is to lengthen the "vesting" period for construction. City approval last July required "substantial construction" of at least one building within 10 years for the "vesting" of the special permit. That 10-year period is tolled pending the outcome of the lawsuit. In other words, substantial construction of one building is required within ten years after completion of the lawsuit.

to improve the efficiency and usage of existing space; advice on the improvement of open space; recommendations for the amelioration of the impact of construction on nearby residents; and specific advice on the construction or acquisition of new space within or near Washington Square, the superblocks, and the closely surrounding area. This area is at once the heart of NYU, the closest thing to a campus for a University without a campus, and an integral piece of a dense and historically rich New York City neighborhood—and constitutes what is referred to as "the Core".

Key Findings and Recommendations

The need for academic space at NYU is urgent and real, and it is the group consensus that a significant portion of this need can only be met by new construction on the south block.

NYU must place a high priority on improving its stewardship of the superblocks and its relationship to the neighboring community now and in the future.

NYU has adopted reasonably conservative and prudent assumptions in its financial planning for capital construction, and unless there are unexpected or unforeseen developments, the proposed Capital Finance and Spending Plan is unlikely to impair the financial status of NYU.

The Working Group submits this Interim Report to the President and the University community. It reflects consensus on a wide range of findings and recommendations. Some committee members arrived at these recommendations with ambivalence because they believe that, although construction on the south block is the only feasible solution that meets the space needs of the University, it is not ideal.

The Working Group represents a cross-section of NYU: 18 faculty representatives appointed by the schools and two faculty representatives from the Faculty Senators Council, as well as two representatives each from the Student Senators Council, the Administrative Management Council, and the senior administration of the University. The faculty representatives included several with relevant professional and scholarly expertise and many group members are also long-time residents in NYU housing on the superblocks.³

3 Senior members of the administration, Robert Berne and Diane Yu, served as active participants throughout the year but they have not voted for or signed onto the interim recommendations.

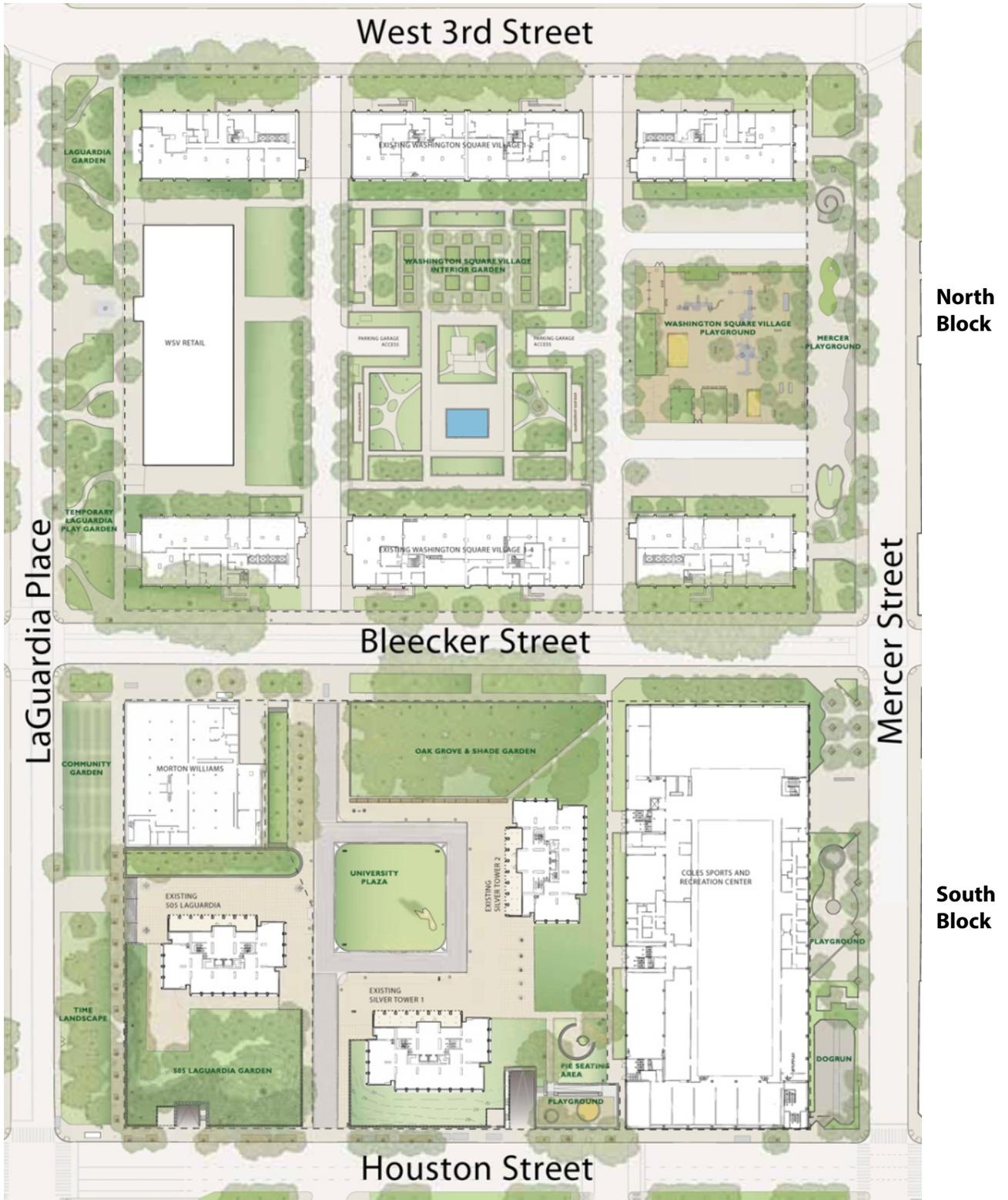


Figure 1.
Map of existing site conditions on the north and south blocks.

All Working Group members care deeply about New York University, the furthering of its academic mission, the well-being of its students, faculty, and staff, the quality of its physical space, and the quality of its relationship with its neighbors. All were united in the conviction that diligent research and rigorous examination of primary source data would be helpful in shedding light on the highly complex set of issues surrounding construction. These issues may not be amenable to answers that will satisfy all members of the NYU or neighboring communities, but all members of the Working Group hope that a transparent process, a serious attempt to explain the data, and an openness to further discussion and re-examination will contribute to continuing civil discourse and a set of intelligent decisions.

To fulfill its charge, the Working Group explored the full range of options available to the University for the development of new space and the renovation of existing space, including the possibility of no new construction on the superblocs. The Working Group reviewed the plans contained in NYU's Core project application for new construction but did not consider itself bound by them. The Working Group assessed space needs, existing facilities, and financial resources *de novo*, independent of the University's representations of them. The USPWG formed three subcommittees to undertake in-depth assessments: the Academic and Non-Academic Space Subcommittee, the Finance Subcommittee, and the Stewardship and Quality of Life Subcommittee. The Working Group arrived at its interim recommendations after extensive data gatherings from presentations, interviews, town halls, and the collection of inventories and supporting documents, which are all available on its website. The Working Group is grateful to all who have taken the time to present their points of view (see the Appendix for a full list).

The Working Group will reconvene in the fall to offer more opportunities for comment and advice, to gather and review responses to this report, and to undertake more analysis. All of the data used in the analysis and recommendations were based on a point in time, and between now and the issuance of the Working Group's Final Report, where possible and appropriate, it will update the data to make sure that its analyses and recommendations are as current as possible.

A final report will be delivered to the President and the NYU community by December 2013. President Sexton has indicated that the University will not begin construction on the superblocs until after the Working Group submits its final recommendations.

The Context

NYU's main campus in New York City is packed into a few blocks around Washington Square Park, with satellite buildings and nodes of activity in Brooklyn, Midtown, the Upper East Side, the Woolworth Building, and the Health Corridor along the East River. NYU is thus a large university without a clearly defined "campus," and its history has been in part the history—happy, unhappy, and complex—of its relationship with Greenwich Village and the population and urban geography of New York City. This Core, the area around Washington Square, including the two superblocs, is where the majority of undergraduate teaching and associated student activities takes place, and where approximately 2,600 NYU students live in dormitories and 40% of the faculty live in NYU housing.

The Core is the nucleus of University life. From the perspective of students and faculty, proximity to the Core is a precious and irreplaceable asset. The density of urban life is mirrored in the density of University life: the proximity of home and work, and the chance interactions of neighborhood life give NYU much of its personality. If students and faculty were widely dispersed across the city, rather than concentrated in the Core, NYU would be a very different kind of academic community.

The proposed development of the superblocs has become the flashpoint for an expansive debate over the use of the NYU Core. The Working Group has heard the following general interests expressed: many Schools and units at NYU complain about space compression; students want the Core to contain as many University activities as possible; faculty who live in the Core want to ensure that their quality of life is not impaired; neighboring community groups and faculty raise concerns about preserving the character of the Village; many urge that the University build or expand outside of the superblocs; and others worry about the economic ramifications of a major capital undertaking. The longer list of concerns includes: some faculty express concern about living next to an undergraduate student residence hall because they prefer not to mix their personal life with their professional life; some faculty and neighboring community residents worry about unmanageable risks from construction, including the prospects of a plague of vermin, poor air quality, or sink holes; some faculty worry that without new housing in the Core, recruitment of new faculty will stall, while other faculty fear that construction in the Core will jeopardize faculty recruitment and retention; almost everyone seems concerned about what will happen to the Coles Sports Center; and nearly everyone has concerns about green spaces and public spaces. No one from whom the Working Group

heard is indifferent about construction on the superblocks. Emotions often run high on all sides.

Statement of Principle

The Working Group believes: that the University has an obligation to its students to provide adequate space for their educational purposes, including their interactions with faculty and staff; that the University has an obligation to advance improvements on the superblocks, which directly affect NYU residents, community residents, neighbors, faculty, and students; that any construction project should leave the neighborhood a better place in which to live; and that the University has an obligation to the NYU community to guarantee that the proposed Capital Spending and Financing Plan should be financially responsible and that the processes of planning and budgeting should be transparent.

Detailed Findings And Recommendations

I. Space: Needs & Priorities

Findings

Extensive data were gathered from presentations, interviews, town halls, the collection of inventories, and supporting documents. Interviews with deans confirmed that there has been a steady stream of department and school requests for more space for many years. These requests for space were often deferred, which was reported as affecting the quality of academic and extra curricular experience of students, and the hiring and retention of faculty and staff.

The Working Group's assessment of all this available evidence and discussion led to the conclusion that the need for space is an urgent priority, not because the University needs space to expand, but because there continues to be a serious shortage of space to meet existing academic requirements.

The Working Group framed its task as establishing its priorities for the construction of new space, the renovation of existing space, and identifying those space needs that the Working Group believed should be located at or near the Core and those that can be accommodated farther away.

The Working Group further gathered a great deal of data on the following types of space: a) classroom, studio, production, and performance space; b) student study space; c) student life space; d) academic department space, including faculty offices; e) research space, including labs; f) recreational and athletic space; g) student housing; h) faculty housing; and i) general administrative space.

Academic and student life space should be given first priority in University planning. The need for such space is greater than what was projected in the original ULURP plan for the south block. Many of these academic space needs are mission or logistically driven and cannot be accommodated by the renovation of buildings near the Core. The limited availability of real estate near the Core, the landmarked status of other possible neighborhood buildings and limitations imposed by low ceiling heights, as well as structural columns and divides, all underscore the need for new construction. There is a need for spaces that can accommodate many students in large multi-use classrooms, performance and production spaces, a sports center, and space suitable for major events, as well as for emergency shelter for the University and/or the neighboring community (as happened during 9/11 and Superstorm Sandy).⁴

The Working Group did not undertake a detailed assessment of administrative space, but it concurs with the University's efforts to relocate as many administrative services as possible to space outside the Core, and to dedicate as much of the Core as possible to academic uses, such as classrooms, student study and meeting spaces, research space, and department office space.⁵ The Working Group also concurs with the University's view that leased space is usually more appropriate for administrative uses than for academic programs.⁶

Space Priority Recommendations and the Need for New Construction

The only substantial footprint for the amount of space currently needed in the Core area of NYU is located at NYU's owned property on the south block. The Working Group

4 The superblocks are located immediately adjacent to three historic districts: the NoHo Historic District, located east of Mercer Street; the South Village Historic District, located west of La Guardia Place; and the SoHo Cast-Iron Historic District, located south of West Houston Street. The Greenwich Village Historic District is located north of West 4th Street, and incorporates Washington Square Park and areas to the north and west of the park. Historic districts limit development opportunities in these areas. In most cases, the existing building must remain, limiting development to mainly gut rehabilitations of old buildings (for example, 383 Lafayette's exterior facade must remain). In addition, zoning restrictions exist in areas (i.e., NoHo) proximate to the Core that prohibit university uses such as general classrooms. University Village (i.e. Silver Towers and 505 LaGuardia Place) is a New York City Landmark. The Landmarks Commission must review and approve all modifications to buildings, including the installation of mechanical systems on rooftops (as was the case at 730 Broadway).

5 Administrative relocation at 25 W 4th street, for example, would yield 50,000 square feet of academic space. See Space Opportunities for Academic Expansion in Washington Square Campus Core (at <http://www.nyu.edu/content/dam/nyu/spacePriorities/documents/FACSPWGSspaceopportunities.pdf>).

6 For instance, and contrary to this view, the Wagner Graduate School of Public Service and the Department of Sociology are both currently housed in leased space in the Puck Building, which the University has the right to renew for a limited time in 2019.

agreed that any new construction on the south block should prioritize academic space—especially classroom, studio, production, and performance space—as well as student study space, student life space, and related department space. A new, repurposed center to serve athletic, recreational, and emergency community needs is also a high priority.

The Working Group proposes the following guidelines to establish priorities for new construction. All NYU buildings in the Core should be used to the maximum extent to meet academic space needs. However, the priority for new construction should be given for those spaces that need large footprints for construction. New construction should include student life, student study, and spaces for commuting students, as well as academic programs that require multiple disciplines working in adjacent space.

The Working Group therefore recommends priority for the following:

- Large multi-use classrooms that can change modules (60-200 people);
- Performance, studio, and production-related spaces for teaching purposes;
- Large multi-use student life space, student study space, and spaces for commuter students; and
- Construction of a new Coles Sports Center, to include a multi-use space to accommodate University events, as well as emergency assemblies for the community-at-large.

Pending further deliberation, the Working Group recommends that construction on the south block include approximately:

- 325,000 gross square feet (“GSF”) for classroom/academic needs;
 - 130,000 GSF for large multi-use classrooms;
 - 195,000 GSF for studio, production, and performance space;
- 40,000 GSF for student study and student life spaces;
- 150,000 GSF for a new, multi-purpose replacement for the Coles Sports Center.

The Working Group arrived at these estimates after considering existing space and planned additions such as the Forbes building and 370 Jay Street in Brooklyn. The Working Group is not yet prepared to make recommendations on construction of student and/or faculty housing in new construction, or to make recommendations on the exact allocation of space, either in terms of the total square footage or the precise breakdown of internal use.⁷ The Work-

ing Group is also not yet prepared to make a specific recommendation as to whether another 200,000 GSF of Core academic space should be moved from currently leased to owned facilities in new construction. The Working Group believes these space needs, as well as those above, require further study.

Classroom & Teaching Space

Findings

Classroom and teaching space is the highest priority for new construction. NYU’s current inventory of general purpose classrooms is running at capacity, with utilization rates for peak hours at 90% and above.⁸ Capacity ranges differ from school to school, particularly on Fridays, where classroom and studio space runs at nearly 100% capacity for performing arts and music courses to as low as 35% capacity for Stern and FAS courses. To relieve congestion, the Working Group has investigated starting the regular schedule of instruction earlier than is customary, at 8:00 am, where utilization in Spring 2013 was 30%; holding more Friday classes, especially in the afternoon (average utilization on Fridays was 36% in Spring 2013); and using Saturdays and Sundays as regular teaching days. None of these measures alone or in combination would solve the shortage of classroom space, leaving aside the question of whether the culture of NYU could be transformed to make these times work for students and faculty. Anyone who has ever tried to schedule classes at NYU is familiar with the difficulties of classroom scheduling.⁹ As of last year, classes without room assignments cannot be listed on Albert, thereby hindering registration for courses. The members of the subcommittee who closely examined classroom usage concluded that the monitoring system for classroom use needs to be improved, and restated a now decade-old call for better information on how “proprietary space” (controlled by schools and often consisting of seminar rooms in departments) is allocated. But the bottom line is clear: the University is critically short of classroom space to meet current academic requirements.

The Working Group is also convinced that much of the University’s existing classroom stock needs to be refurbished and upgraded. In addition, to avoid delays from

85,000 GSF, and 50 new faculty apartments would require approximately 70,000 GSF.

8 Over the past ten years, the general classroom pool has remained steady at 170 rooms, while undergraduate enrollment has increased from approximately 15,000 to 22,000 students. See “Response to Inquiries Regarding Classroom Space,” July 25, 2013. (http://www.nyu.edu/content/dam/nyu/spacePriorities/documents/USPWG_ClassroomSpace.Juliano.Response_012513.pdf).

9 As an illustration, the Working Group received a note from the Undergraduate Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences informing it that as of late April 2013, after students had started registering for fall classes, 140 CAS classes were still unassigned, with the only available time slots being 8:00 am.

7 For example, a freshman residence in the Core would require approximately

long elevator lines, classrooms should be accessible by staircase and located on low and below-grade floors. Beyond the evident shortage of large lecture classrooms, some spaces currently used for large lectures but designed more for events, such as Skirball Theatre and Tishman Auditorium, present real challenges as teaching and learning spaces.

Classroom Recommendations

1. Prioritize new classrooms on the south block, even as the University continues to refurbish and upgrade its existing stock.
2. Emphasize large, multi-purpose, flexibly designed and convertible classrooms to accommodate between 60 and 200 students.
3. Create a new all-NYU classroom database and require departments and schools to share proprietary spaces, particularly during non-peak periods for University community and student life needs.
4. Continue the University's current policy to locate classrooms and teaching spaces on lower levels to avoid elevator congestion.
5. Encourage schools, departments, and faculty to schedule more classes at 8:00 am, on Friday afternoons, and on weekends.

Performance Spaces

Findings

For Gallatin, Steinhardt and Tisch students and faculty, performance spaces and studio classrooms—used for courses, rehearsals, and scene shops for the creation of production design materials—are integral to the study of the curriculum of the performing arts. NYU has a world-wide reputation for training students in the performing arts. It must have high-quality facilities to serve its students and faculty, and to maintain its competitive edge. Small studios as well as large performance venues are in critically short supply and are proprietary to schools due to constant usage from 8:00 am-11:00 pm, including weekends. Students and faculty in different departments (such as design, acting, and production) need adjacent spaces in order to work collaboratively on classes and performance curriculum. An inventory list of available performance and community event spaces reveals that alternate space is not readily available. Interviews with deans and faculty confirmed that the Skirball Center is not suitable for pedagogical needs: the theatre lacks fly space (preventing sets to be moved up and down) and wing space (to allow space for cast members waiting to go on stage and storage of props and scenery) needed for student design work, and its large size is not well suited in scale for most student productions. Renting theatre or studio space is expensive. Over time, it is more economical to invest in owned space.

Performance space is a priority for new construction because such space requires large footprints, high ceilings, street loading capabilities, and storage and production facilities that are not easily achieved through renovation due to constraints of older spaces and buildings that are too small, zoned for manufacturing, or landmarked.¹⁰ Given the fact that the Skirball Center was designed and built with limitations, new performance space should incorporate input from experienced theater architects and designers.

Performance, studio, and production spaces need to be near the Core for several reasons: in the performance world, a host of disciplines—notably theater design, stage production, drama, dance, directing, musical performance, and teaching—are done collaboratively and involve hundreds of students. The studio and performance space is the classroom. Moreover, undergraduate and graduate students are in rehearsal and performance schedules until midnight almost daily, arguing in favor of locations within the Core.

Performance Space Recommendations

1. Include performance, studio, and production spaces in any construction on the south block.
2. Design performance and studio spaces to be flexible, and suitable for multiple uses. Make performance spaces available across schools, and in summers and down times for the University, student life needs, and the neighboring community.

Student Study & Student Life Space

Findings

NYU needs more student study space. Bobst Library, with 3,000 study seats, is over-stretched. During the academic semesters, desks are fully occupied, and many students end up sitting in hallways or corners to do their work. Even with an increase of just over 600 library seats since 2004, the occupancy rate has risen to over 80% as of Spring 2011 (In spring 2006, the occupancy rate was 53%). The library estimates that the University would need to double the number of study seats to reach the accepted standard of study spaces to accommodate 25% of full-

¹⁰ Dean Campbell's presentation to the Working Group detailed TSOA's decade-long search for a suitable site for full-scale performance, studio, and production spaces, including the effort to use the building at 383 Lafayette St, where zoning and landmark restrictions ruled out the renovations needed for these kind of spaces. In 1983 the Institute for the Performing Arts had 500 students and 80,000 ASF of program space. In 2012, the IPA has 2050 students and 95,000 ASF of program space. Many full time faculty have no offices, and students have little to no production or classroom spaces, resulting in extensive rentals of outside studios and storage facilities. See http://www.nyu.edu/content/dam/nyu/spacePriorities/documents/Campbell_Tisch_111512.pdf

time enrolled students.¹¹ The Working Group agrees there should be more library-like student study spaces throughout the Core.

NYU also needs more student life space and space for commuter students. The Kimmel Center for University Life is filled to capacity, used day and night by departments for classroom, event, and conference space; by the University administration for campus-wide events, committee meetings, global network meetings, orientation and recruitment events; and by non-NYU organizations for conferences and gatherings. In 2012, Kimmel recorded 11,000 events. These data only reflect events that take place; Kimmel staff reported that currently there is no method to record requests that are turned away. Over 300 student clubs vie for space in Kimmel. While the space is free for students, there are fees for technical support. Student leaders told the Working Group that their requests are sometimes ‘bumped’ to accommodate paid events and Kimmel staff confirms that this sometimes happens. Currently, four rooms in Kimmel serve as general classrooms during peak hours Monday-Thursday, reducing the available space in Kimmel for student functions and meetings.

Commuter students who do have access to Kimmel cannot use study space, or club and gym space located within student residence halls, because NYU’s security policy only allows such use by residents in student housing. In interviews with the USPWG, commuter students emphasized the need for gathering and study space to suit their specific needs.

Student Study and Meeting Space Recommendations

1. Include study space as an integral component in all new construction and renovation, planned in consultation with the Division of Libraries.
2. Expand space options for student meetings and functions, and improve accessibility to Kimmel by reducing its use as classroom space and by reducing or eliminating technical and staff support fees required for student use of Kimmel.

Recreational, Athletic, and Community Space— Coles Sports Center Findings

Now over 30 years old, the Coles Sports Center no longer satisfies the University’s need for athletic training, fitness facilities, and both intramural and competitive sports. It lacks air conditioning and other basic amenities expected of a major university’s sports and recreation center. The Palladium Sports Center, added in 2001, supplements

some needs but is not large enough to function as an adequate replacement. Together, the two facilities serve some 1 million patron visits a year—1,250 undergraduates are members of NYU’s intercollegiate athletic teams and over 9,000 students participate in intramural sports, the majority of which take place in Coles Sports Center. More than 1,000 faculty members, 650 administrators, and some 700 Community Board 2 residents are paying members of Coles. Given this extraordinary usage, the University needs a sports center near the Core.

The “new Coles” must be more than a sports center. The new facility must serve as a multi-purpose venue for large non-athletic gatherings for the University (such as convocations and Commencement ceremonies) and as a resource to the community during emergencies. In its current state, Coles Sports Center can only accommodate up to 1,900 people in its large lower-level gymnasium because of its configuration and the safety constraints related to ingress and egress via stairwells. The same square footage is being allocated in the recommendation, however a new Coles could be designed to accommodate up to 5,000 people and be outfitted to provide emergency temporary shelter for the community-at-large. The new Coles should be fully serviced by NYU’s Cogeneration plant, and be designed to provide some temporary emergency shelter and basic amenities to those affected by extended power outages in the immediate neighborhood.¹²

Coles Sports Center Recommendations

1. Construct a new facility to better serve NYU’s competitive athletic and intramural teams, fitness and training classes, and recreational patrons.
2. Design the new facility as a multi-purpose site to provide temporary shelter and other basic support during emergencies for the NYU and neighboring communities.
3. Find appropriate replacement athletic and recreational facilities during any construction on the Coles site.

Located below-grade at Mercer Street, between West 3rd Street and West 4th Street, **NYU’s Cogeneration facility** provides electricity and hot water to over 50 NYU buildings in the Core. The system significantly reduces CO₂ emissions and reduces energy costs. It proved a reliable source of energy during Superstorm Sandy.

Science Labs Findings

Science laboratories are in critically short supply. The only new dedicated science building NYU has added in the

11 See Division of Libraries: Library-like Space Needs, March 20, 2013

12 NYU has committed to use its Cogeneration facility to provide the energy supply for several of the new buildings planned for the superblocks. See, Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), May 25, 2012, S-7.

last 30 years is the Genomics Building on Waverly Place. Current University planning calls for the dedication of 730 Broadway as a new science space, which will require the relocation of some administrative offices, and the conversion of the upper floors of the Silver Center into science labs.¹³ This will displace some classrooms and further increase the need for new ones. While continued backfilling of existing buildings is a reasonable incremental strategy, it is difficult to be either ambitious or efficient given the constraints of facilities built decades ago for other purposes.

Space for the Sciences Recommendation

Based on these plans, there is no need to locate new science labs on the south block. Nonetheless, the University should be alert for any opportunity to acquire a suitable site for *de novo* science lab construction somewhere in or near the Core, and develop plans for a new flagship science building on such a site, to focus particularly on undergraduate science education.

Housing for Undergraduates

Findings

The transformation of NYU from a commuter school to a world-class university went hand in hand with the development of student residence halls. At present, approximately 10,400 students live in dorms and there has been a positive impact on recruitment, retention, and the overall undergraduate experience in recent years—traced in part to the conscious effort to build community through an extensive suite of residential services and programming for students. Between owned space and leased space, NYU is able to guarantee housing to all admitted freshmen and to guarantee continued housing to all undergraduates who choose to stay in University housing. NYU's size and scale can be overwhelming to some incoming students, and a strong case can be made that undergraduate students, especially freshman, for whom safety is particularly an issue, need to live close to the Core. Therefore, undergraduate student housing should be given priority over graduate student and faculty housing near the Core.

Over the last 10 years, NYU has been able to move many of its student residence halls from leased buildings into buildings that it owns. Over time, University-owned dorms become a positive capital investment (avoiding the cost of leasing and property tax expenses), and after the mortgages are paid off, generate net revenue. They also allow the University more complete control over quality of life issues for resident students.

¹³ 726-730 Broadway (345,000 square feet) was purchased in 2009 for 212 million dollars. Before then, the University leased 195,000 square feet in the building. In 2018, the cost of the borrowing used to purchase this building will be less than the lease costs projected for that year.

Housing for Undergraduates: An area for further discussion

While the economic benefits of owning versus leasing student housing are clear, and while building from scratch has potential advantages in terms of design and efficiency, the Working Group will deliberate further on the need for a student dorm on the south block. If student housing is to be built in the Core, the Working Group is of the opinion that it should be designated for freshman.

Housing for Faculty and Graduate Students Findings

Faculty housing is an essential feature in NYU's recruitment and retention of high-quality teachers, scholars, and practitioners. As of February 2013, the vacancy rate for NYU faculty apartments hovered around 7%, some 122 units in total, of which only 23 units had two or more bedrooms. Given that between 100 and 125 new faculty are housed each year, the vacancy rate of 7% is reasonable; units have to be refurbished from time to time, and new faculty are usually given a choice from between two or three vacant units. Graduate students occupy some 60 studios in Washington Square Village (WSV). Postdoctoral fellows occupy some 200 units (170 of which are studios) overall. While the University does not maintain data on family size, there is a common belief that there are a good number of multi-bedroom units occupied by faculty whose children or other dependents are no longer permanent residents.

A careful review of the data, as well as interviews with those faculty and administrators responsible for recruitment and retention, leads the Working Group to the conclusion that larger faculty apartments—two or three-bedroom units that can accommodate families—are in short supply. This shortfall should be addressed.¹⁴

Housing for Faculty and Graduate Students: An area for further discussion

The Working Group recognizes the need for new faculty housing. Housing is increasingly in demand for new recruits, for existing faculty (especially those with young and growing families), and for visitors. As mentioned above, the need for larger apartments is especially pressing. While the University's application to the city included a proposal to build 90 new apartments in the Core, the Working Group is uncertain about whether all new faculty housing needs to be located in the Core.

¹⁴ In this section the Working Group only addresses the number of units, not their quality or upkeep.

Further study and discussion is warranted to identify a variety of strategies to increase the availability of larger faculty apartments both in and outside of the Core. The University could benefit from a more sustained conversation about faculty housing where a whole set of options should be considered. In the interest of generating such a conversation, the Working Group offers the following suggestions for consideration:

1. Build new faculty housing as part of construction on the south block.
2. Establish a new loan assistance program to support faculty purchase of units elsewhere in the city. Special incentives might be created to encourage certain residents in large apartments, especially “empty-nesters” and faculty close to retirement, to buy property elsewhere.
3. Convert graduate student units in Washington Square Village into larger faculty apartments, and relocate graduate student housing to less expensive neighborhoods within reasonable commuting distance. Post-doctoral housing, especially for those who serve as research staff in nearby science laboratories, needs to be in the immediate Core.
4. Provide incentives to faculty members whose number of eligible dependents in full-time residence is lower than it once was to relocate to smaller sized units. A conversion program could be adopted to encourage faculty to reduce their unit size. For example, a faculty member who voluntarily relocates from a three-bedroom apartment to a two-bedroom apartment for some number of years prior to retirement might be allowed to keep the apartment for the same number of years post retirement.
5. Consider building faculty housing elsewhere in the city (e.g., in nearby neighborhoods of Brooklyn or Queens).

The Morton Williams Site Findings

As a condition of New York City’s approval for the superblock zoning envelope, the School Construction Authority (SCA) has until the end of 2014 to decide if it wants to partner with NYU to construct a building with up to 170,000 square feet of usable space at the corner of Bleecker and La Guardia Place on the site of the current Morton Williams Supermarket. The SCA would be able to use the above grade space (up to 100,000 square feet) for a K-12 public school. NYU would have access to 70,000 square feet of below grade space. If the SCA does not exercise the option, then NYU has the City’s approval to build up to the same density, with the condition that not less than 25,000 square feet of the above grade space be available for community use. A fully owned and operated NYU build-

ing on this site has the potential to accommodate some of NYU’s academic needs.

Recommendation

1. Following the decision of the School Construction Authority, expected by the end of 2014, a new advisory group should make an assessment of priorities and space allocation at this site, including the need and desirability of a replacement supermarket and other retail space, as well as further need for classrooms, study space, and other academic needs.

II. Stewardship and Quality of Life Background and Overview

The Working Group established the Stewardship and Quality of Life subcommittee to review issues related to how the possible construction of a building or buildings on the south block would affect the lives of residents of the superblocks. In addition, the subcommittee took into account how construction might affect the neighboring community and its residents, as well as the stress that ongoing construction might put on the University’s current system of operations and its ability to support the project.

The Stewardship and Quality of Life Subcommittee is composed of five members, four of whom are long-time residents of Washington Square Village. As the subcommittee progressed through five months of meetings and deliberations, the definition of its task expanded: to research and inquire into NYU’s ability to be a responsible steward of the two superblocks (and beyond), with or without any construction. Stewardship, in short, became the primary concern. This concept of stewardship includes concerns about mitigation during construction, environmental sustainability and enhancement, architectural design, efficient and timely responses to construction issues, and, perhaps above all, a charge to clarify and improve the University’s ongoing relationship with NYU residents and neighbors.

The Working Group believes that the full cost of effective stewardship should be factored into the University’s Capital Spending and Financing Plan. Certain items, such as housing mitigation, Cogeneration connection, and public improvements already appear in the University’s Capital Spending and Financing Plan. Others remain to be estimated.¹⁵

The Working Group has encouraged the University to initiate some interim improvements to enhance the super-

¹⁵ NYU Core Project Financial Planning Information (November 2012), included \$26 million for Faculty Housing Mitigation at Silver Towers and Washington Square Village, \$22 million for Demolition and Cogeneration connection, and \$16 million for Public Improvements and City fees.

blocks, provided they are undertaken in consultation with residents. Examples of such improvements include noise-reducing windows in all WSV and Silver Towers apartments and restoration of the Sasaki Fountain.

Principles

NYU must place a priority on improving its stewardship of the superblocks and its relationship to both the NYU and neighboring community, now and in the future.

The superblocks and the neighborhood surrounding them should be better places in which to live—better in terms of their physical environment and better in terms of the relationship between NYU and the community.

Because NYU does not plan to build on the north block until 2022 at the very earliest, the Working Group has concentrated its recommendation for construction on the south block. However, because the nature of the construction of the south block will involve extensive noise, traffic, and other disruptions to the Core, as well as demanding a great deal of attention from the University's Division of Operations, the University must be diligent in managing the upkeep of and improvements to the north superblock as well, independent of the timetable for possible construction there.

Findings

- The superblocks have been a source of strain between NYU and the community for the past 50 years. There have clearly been difficulties on both sides. Members of the community see NYU as repeatedly breaking promises and ignoring community needs. For their part, some NYU administrators feel NYU cannot make even minor improvements without being attacked as destroying the neighborhood. Partly this is a matter of clumsy public relations. Partly this is due to an intractable history, laden with misperceptions and suspicion.
- Several projects on both superblocks have been stalled, either because of decisions not to prioritize renovation or to allocate funds, or because of unresolved questions about the proper jurisdiction over the affected property. As an example, the sinkhole next to Coles Sports Center has remained unattended since the mid-1990s.
- The Division of Operations, in compliance with the Restrictive Declaration of July 2012, has initiated a series of open houses and distributed informational material regarding ongoing mitigation for windows and air conditioners on both superblocks, independent of the Core construction plans.
- The commercial strip on La Guardia Place, from West

3rd Street to Bleecker Street, which is owned and leased by the University, has lost three of its tenants within the last five years; as of summer 2013, some of those commercial spaces have remained untenanted, leaving the middle of the block unused, dark, and unappealing.

- Communal acceptance has historically been difficult to command over building projects. Some of this is due to shifting demographics, lack of representative volunteerism, conflicting needs, and jurisdictional uncertainty.
- There is a lack of clarity and chain of accountability within the Division of Operations, including maintenance of the apartments and open spaces on the superblocks.
- There is significant desire to ensure that the University can respond more efficiently to needs of the residents of the superblocks, as well as residents of the neighborhood, in an emergency, such as Superstorm Sandy.¹⁶

Recommendations

1. Convene a broad-based advisory committee to serve as the point of contact for relevant concerns, and to provide regular reports to the University, the Open Space Oversight Organization (OSOO), and the neighborhood regarding superblock and construction-related activities in the Core.

The **Open Space Oversight Organization** (OSOO) is a non-profit, legally distinct entity to advise NYU on the use and design of the open spaces in and around the superblocks. The OSOO is comprised of five directors appointed by each of the following: the Manhattan Borough President; the New York City Council Member representing the superblocks; the Manhattan Borough Commissioner of the NYC Parks Department; the Chair of Community Board 2, and NYU. The OSOO will both review and comment on landscape improvements and design, and will also comment on third-party assessments of NYU's compliance with the Restrictive Declaration.

2. Engage an independent consultant with expertise in community impacts of construction projects before any construction begins in order to assess whether the procedures outlined in the Restrictive Declaration are adequate, and to examine any construction plans for both short- and long-term effects on the neighboring community. This consultant will work closely with the advisory committee on Core project construction to ensure transparency in mitigation choices and ac-

¹⁶ The Division of Operations has completed and circulated a full post-Sandy report with its own substantive recommendations. See Hurricane Sandy: Preparation and Response, Performance Review, April 26, 2013 at <http://www.nyu.edu/content/dam/nyu/publicAffairs/documents/PDF/HurricaneSandyReport-totheCommunityApril262013.pdf>

countability of the environmental effects of construction.¹⁷

3. Proceed immediately with currently suspended maintenance and improvement projects on both the south and north blocks. Projects which have been allowed to lapse now should be restored or renovated, such as the Coles sinkhole, the rocketship playground, the Mercer dog-run, the greenspace behind CitiBank, the pavement throughout WSV, and the broken and redundant fencing on both blocks.
4. Identify and implement the best possible window, air-conditioning, and façade improvements on the superblocks in consultation with residents, with or without any construction in the near future.
5. Connect Washington Square Village to the Cogeneration facility, if feasible, or if connection is not possible, continue efforts to ensure that the Washington Square Village residents have reliable power sources in emergency situations.
6. Provide high-quality mitigation measures. Reserve relocation for those NYU residents and families with exceptional health or mobility needs.
7. Set high standards for architectural and design excellence, and meet high environmental standards of sustainability, demonstrating leadership and innovation in terms of design and sustainability by ensuring that University buildings enhance the neighborhood. Establish an architectural advisory group to support these objectives.
8. Create a large, multifunctional space in the Core to serve the community-at-large during emergencies.
9. Ensure that the superblocks remain ADA-compliant throughout any construction process.
10. Clarify the chain of responsibility within the Division of Operations and communicate it to residents of the superblocks so that, before and during construction, residents and neighbors know exactly which office and/or individual is responsible for their concern, and from whom to expect a response.
11. Keep the La Guardia commercial strip tenanted, well lit, functional, and attractive, and explore options to utilize the space for University needs, if commercial tenants cannot be found and sustained.
12. Establish a “work study center” located beyond the construction center, for faculty who currently work at home and who have no other office options.

¹⁷ Such independent consultants are called “industrial hygienists.” OSHA routinely sets guidelines for their assessments. http://www.osha.gov/dte/library/industrial_hygiene/industrial_hygiene.pdf. Although the Restrictive Declaration calls for a consultant, that consultant is hired by the City of New York and paid for by New York University and, thus, has no accountability to any of the residents of superblocks. An independent industrial hygienist would be available to answer questions of residents and take any concerns forward to the advisory committee referred to in the preceding recommendation.

III. Financing

Overview and Background

The information reported here was provided by the NYU Office of Finance and Budget, and includes data on NYU’s capital spending and financing for the period 2012 through 2021, of which construction in the Core is one component. Most of the data were prepared in June 2012, to support discussion of the “2031 Core Project” with the NYU Board of Trustees and others prior to the certification of the plan by the City of New York. However, the University Space Priorities Work Group and its Finance Subcommittee made numerous requests for additional information and modeling, and all requested data and modeling were provided.

The Working Group’s consideration of the proposed Capital Spending and Financing Plan was governed by the general principle that the Plan should be financially responsible and the process transparent.

Information Provided to the USPWG

Summary of Proposed Capital Spending and Financing

1. NYU’s Capital Spending and Financing Plan for 2012 through 2021 involves \$2.975 billion of spending. The details of the specific projects, their costs, and their additional square feet (which apply to new buildings, as compared to renovations of existing buildings) as projected in June 2012 are contained in Table 1
2. The proposed \$2.975 billion in projected capital spending for these 10 years is almost identical to the \$2.95 billion on capital improvements that NYU spent in the preceding 10 years.
3. Of the buildings for which NYU received zoning approval from the City of New York on the south and north blocks, only the Coles site is listed in Table 1. Although the Coles site is the largest by cost and by square footage of any single component of the Capital Spending and Financing Plan, its cost constitutes only 25% of the overall proposed capital spending for the 2012-2021 period.
4. The University proposes to finance the \$2.975 billion in capital spending for 2012-2021 as follows:
 - Long-term borrowing: \$1.4 billion;
 - Short-term borrowing that will be repaid before 2021: \$360 million¹⁸;
 - Fundraising: \$174 million;
 - Drawdown of cash: \$ 104 million;
 - Reinvestment of annual operating surpluses during the period: \$937 million.

¹⁸ It is important to note that all debt servicing costs, including any repayment of principal, is included as a cost in NYU’s annual operating budgets and thus are subtracted from operating revenues before the annual budget operating surplus (or deficit) is calculated.

5. Although the Plan calls for \$174 million in capital fundraising for the period 2012-2021, already for 2012 and 2013 (through early June) NYU has raised \$49.9 million for capital purposes, including \$36.7 million that has been raised by the Tisch School of the Arts. Also, for comparison purposes, during the previous 10 years 2002-2011, NYU raised \$753 million for capital purposes.
 6. The \$1.4 billion in borrowing will result in an increase of \$100 million in annual debt service costs.
 7. Building on the Morton Williams site on the south block is not included in the 2012-2021 Capital Spending and Financing Plan. If the New York City School Construction Authority (SCA) exercises its option to partner with NYU and build a school on that site, NYU would be able to use the below-ground space of 70,000 GSF at a cost to NYU of \$91 million. If the SCA declines its option, NYU could construct a 135,000 GSF building on that site at a cost of \$201 million.¹⁹
 8. The information provided here is for south block construction only. North block construction, which will not begin before 2022 in any event, is not included in the Capital Spending and Financing Plan, and no financial information about these buildings was provided to the Finance Subcommittee.
- consistent with maintaining market competitiveness.
 - Energy costs are expected to rise somewhat more than in recent history.
 - Other non-personnel costs are expected to rise at an annual rate of 2.5%.
 - Cost contingency factors: 10% for design contingencies and 10% for construction contingencies have been included in the cost estimates for all capital sites, including the Coles site.²¹
 - A separate cost escalation factor of \$105 million, to account for possible delays in construction on the Coles site, is included.
 - The debt service costs in the projections use a 6% interest rate for the additional \$1.4 billion debt (which will be in the form of 30-year fixed-rate bonds) for the capital expenditures. This can be compared to NYU's current ability to borrow for long-term purposes at 4%.
 - Building on land the University owns is less financially costly than building on land it must first buy.
10. NYU has adopted a long-run goal of maintaining a debt service level that does not exceed 7% of annual operating expenses. In the period 2003-2012 the level ranged from 3.6% to 6.9%. During the proposed capital construction and improvement period 2013-2021, the rate would range from 5.8% to 7.7%, before settling at a level of 7.0% for 2020 and 2021. (See Table 2)

Assumptions Included in the Proposed Capital Spending and Financing

9. Revenue and cost assumptions
 - Undergraduate enrollments at Washington Square will increase at an annual rate of 0.27%; undergraduate enrollments at NYU Abu Dhabi (NYUAD) will increase more rapidly as NYUAD expands to its full planned size; graduate enrollments will rise at an annual rate of 0.21%.²⁰
 - Undergraduate tuition will increase at an annual rate somewhat above the general rate of inflation, but not as sharply as in recent years. Graduate tuition increases will be consistent with recent history. Increases in fees and room and board will be consistent with recent history.
 - Faculty salaries are expected to increase slightly less than the rate of tuition increases, but be con-

¹⁹ Both of these cost estimates assume that the Coles-site building will be built and that the costs of mitigation and the costs of public improvements (which together total \$42 million) are included in the costs of the Coles-site building. If the Morton-Williams-site building were the only one to be built, then this \$42 million should be added to the cost estimates of the alternative versions of the building. As noted previously, if the SCA does not partner with NYU, then 25,000 GSF of the above-grade space must be allocated for community use. According to the Restrictive Declaration, the maximum density of the Morton Williams building is 170,000 GSF.

²⁰ Tuition from NYU Shanghai is not included in the projections because NYU Shanghai is expected to operate on a "breakeven basis." The absence of this information is unlikely to have a significant impact on revenues.

NYU's Current and Future Financial Status

11. NYU has been able to achieve annual operating surpluses (margins) over the past 10 years; these actual operating surpluses have exceeded the planned/budgeted surpluses by an average of approximately \$120 million annually. (See Table 2)
12. NYU's financial position has been judged by two major credit rating agencies to be favorable. Standard & Poor's (S&P) rates NYU as AA-, which puts it in the category of "Very strong capacity to meet financial commitments."²² Similarly, Moody's rates NYU as Aa3, which puts it in the category of "Rated as high quality and very low credit risk."²³
13. However, Moody's has characterized NYU's balance sheet as "highly leveraged," citing NYU's 0.51 ratio of "expendable financial resources to direct debt" as "thin." Because a large portion of the proposed capi-

²¹ The total value of these contingencies included in the final 10-year capital budget of \$2.975 billion is over \$500 million.

²² S&P's slightly higher ratings of AA+ and AA are also in the category of "Very strong capacity to meet financial commitments." S&P's highest category is AAA: "Extremely strong capacity to meet financial commitments."

²³ Moody's slightly higher ratings of Aa1 and Aa2 are also in the category of "Rated as high quality and very low credit risk." Moody's highest category is Aaa: "Rated as the highest quality and lowest credit risk."

tal expenditures will be funded by drawdown of cash reserves (\$104 million) and revenue from operating surpluses (\$937 million), this ratio will decline to as low as 0.31. However, if actual operating margins exceed the budgeted operating margin, as has been the historic experience, the decline in the ratio will not be as significant.

14. Budgeted surpluses during the 2013-2021 period total \$972 million, with \$937 going to the capital plan (although if actual margins exceed budget margins in amounts in line with historic experience, actual surpluses during the period may be close to an additional \$1 billion).
15. The approximately \$1.2 billion in damages and need for mitigation at the NYU Langone Medical Center

(the School of Medicine and the Hospitals) caused by Superstorm Sandy is not expected to have a substantial adverse effect on University finances. These expenses should be covered by Medical Center resources such as proceeds from insurance, payments from Federal Emergency Management Agency, the National Institute of Health, Medical Center reserves, and borrowing. Furthermore, the Medical Center is expected to remain insurable following post-Sandy reconstruction, renovation, and new construction.

Modeling Alternative Assumptions and Scenarios Favorable

16. Additional fundraising for capital purposes, above the \$174 million that is the fundraising component of

Table 1.

NYU Capital Spending and Financing Plan 2012-2021, as of April 2013

(Data provided by Martin Dorph, Executive Vice-President, Finance and Information Technology, on April 17, 2013)

Project/Purpose	Cost (\$ million)	Additional Square Feet
New & Lease Replacement:		
Coles site (including Tisch IPA)	\$725	670,000
Forbes Renovation	21	110,000
First Avenue: Dental/Nursing/Bioengineering	152	70,000
370 Jay Street (CUSP) + tbd	413	460,000
383 Lafayette Acquisition and Renovations	90	70,000
Center for Academic and Spiritual Life	94	79,000
MetroTech Center (lease)	19	30,000
Washington, DC site	26	
Subtotal	\$1,540	1,589,000
Renovations, Capital Maintenance, Upgrades:		
Capital Maintenance	654	
Silver Chemistry Renovations / FAS	72	
730 Broadway Physics Renovations / FAS	81	
Meyer Brain Science Renovations / FAS	85	
Steinhardt Renovations	89	
NYU Poly Renovations	44	
Schwarz and Witkin / Dental Clinics and Labs	37	
Miscellaneous School Projects	108	
Faculty Housing Renovations	104	
IT Infrastructure and Equipment	112	
Miscellaneous	49	
Subtotal	\$1,435	
Total Cost	\$2,975	

Table 2.

NYU Annual Financial Data: Actual (2003-2012) and Proposed (2013-2021) (\$ millions)

(Data provided by Martin Dorph, Executive Vice-President, Finance and Information Technology, April 22, 2013 and November 29, 2012)

Year	Actual Operating Margin	Budgeted Operating Margin	Actual – Budget	Expendable Financial Resources / Direct Debt	Annual Debt Service as % of Operating Expense Budget	Cash and Unrestricted Investments	Outstanding Long-term Debt
Actual:							
2003	\$30	\$36	\$-6	0.64	3.8%	\$718	\$998
2004	103	-14	117	0.70	4.4	829	983
2005	119	29	90	0.70	4.1	1,033	1,105
2006	141	47	94	0.85	4.4	1,246	1,063
2007	196	70	126	1.54	3.6	1,502	1,156
2008	133	108	125	0.93	3.8	1,482	1,640
2009	136	-24	180	0.65	4.9	1,273	1,636
2010	187	-3	190	0.51	5.5	1,369	2,128
2011	190	77	123	0.56	6.9	1,720	2,161
2012	237	64	173	0.52	5.0	1,691	2,195
Proposed:							
2013		73		0.47	5.8	1,655	2,449
2014		53		0.48	6.2	1,777	2,486
2015		59		0.38	6.6	1,627	2,861
2016		101		0.40	6.1	1,909	2,826
2017		84		0.31	7.7	1,615	3,305
2018		105		0.35	7.4	1,790	3,255
2019		131		0.38	7.3	1,716	3,247
2020		159		0.41	7.0	1,770	3,193
2021		207		0.46	7.0	1,889	3,137

the overall financing plan for 2012-2021, would allow less borrowing and improve the financial position of NYU. For example, if an aggregate of \$600 million were raised instead of the \$174 million (recall that \$753 million was raised during 2002-2011) and borrowing were reduced commensurately, NYU's annual debt service would be reduced by \$31 million, and the ratio of annual debt service to operating expense budget would fall to 6% (instead of 7%) by 2021; in addition, the ratio of "expendable resources to direct debt" would rise to approximately 0.7 (instead of 0.46) in 2021.

17. If the recent pattern of actual annual budget surpluses exceeding planned budget surpluses by approximately \$100 million continue, this would mean an additional \$1 billion in net revenues over the 2012-2021 period, which could be used to reduce borrowing and/or build

up financial reserves.

18. If the cost contingency factors that aggregate to \$500 million over all of the NYU capital projects for 2012-2021 are unused, this would mean an additional \$500 million in net revenues that could be used to reduce borrowing and/or build up financial reserves.
19. If NYU actually borrows at a 4% interest cost rather than at the 6% that is assumed in the Plan, the saving would be \$28 million per year.

Unfavorable

20. If undergraduate enrollments (including NYUAD) do not increase after 2013 (through 2021), budgeted operating surpluses will decline, with the shortfalls growing larger over time; operating surpluses would become negative for the years 2017-2020. These shortfalls would substantially reduce the reinvestment

component of the financing of the capital spending program. To cover these shortfalls from NYU's liquid resources (cash and unrestricted investments) would cause the level of these resources to be at \$1.037 billion in 2021 (instead of \$1.889 billion, as projected) or some components of the capital plan would have to be delayed.

21. If NYU's non-personnel costs were to increase at an annual rate of 6% (instead of 2.5%) after 2013, but the rate of tuition increase does not change commensurately, then annual operating surpluses would shrink and turn negative starting in 2017; the annual deficits would continue to grow in subsequent years. Again, these shortfalls would substantially reduce the reinvestment component of the financing of the capital spending program. To cover these shortfalls from NYU's liquid resources would cause the level of these resources in 2021 to be at \$0.566 billion (or even more of the capital plan components would have to be delayed).
22. If long-term interest rates were at 8% (instead of 6%) on the \$1.4 billion in borrowing, there would be a \$28 million annual reduction in the operating surplus (and a commensurate reduction in liquid resources would be needed). If long-term interest rates jumped to 10%, the annual reductions in the operating surplus would be \$56 million.
23. If massive open online courses (MOOCs) and online education become major disruptive forces to the standard tuition-based business model of NYU, a more protective strategy—less capital spending, less debt, and a commitment of any near-term operating surpluses to additions to NYU's liquid assets—would put NYU in a better financial position for transition to an appropriate business model for a MOOC/online-oriented environment.

Findings

1. NYU has adopted reasonably conservative and prudent assumptions in its financial planning for capital construction.
2. Unless there are unexpected or unforeseen developments, the proposed Capital Spending and Financing Plan is unlikely to impair the financial status of NYU.
3. Since the interim space recommendations of the Working Group differ somewhat from the Capital Spending and Financing Plan detailed in Table 1 (including planned use and square footage of the Coles site), further analysis is required to fully assess the financial implications of these recommendations.
4. The impact of borrowing for damages and mitigation at the NYU Langone Medical Center (the School of Medicine and the Hospitals) caused by Superstorm

Sandy are also not included in the Capital Spending and Financing Plan and further analysis is required to fully assess the financial implications of the borrowing on the goal of maintaining a level of debt service that does not exceed 7% of annual operating expenses and on the ratio of expendable financial resources to direct debt.

5. Construction on the Morton Williams (MW) site is not included in the 2012-2021 Capital Spending and Financing Plan. Regardless of whether the New York City School Construction Authority does or does not exercise its option, further analysis will be required to assess the impact of any MW site construction on the overall Plan or explore elimination of other construction or renovation projects in the Plan.
6. Construction on the north block is also not included in the 2012-2021 Capital Spending and Financing Plan and requires substantial further analysis to assess its impact on NYU finances.

Recommendations

1. Schedule construction or renovation for the non-Coles site capital projects in a manner that maximizes the flexibility to scale back the initiatives if there are unforeseen or unexpected developments.
2. Preserve current tuition and salary assumptions even in the event of unforeseen or unexpected financial shocks. Address these shocks as much as possible by delaying capital projects and/or reducing cash reserve targets.
3. Commit to an increase in fundraising for capital purposes, replacing the current target of \$174 million with a substantially higher target—such as \$600 million.
4. Provide the University Senate on a regular basis with the same detailed financial information reviewed by the Working Group.

Conclusion

Ongoing Consultations: Life After the Working Group

In keeping with the broad effort to enhance the mechanisms of governance, consultation, and communication at NYU, the Working Group encourages the University to adopt measures to ensure the on-going participation of NYU faculty, students, and administrators in the decision-making about meeting the University's need for space.

Recommendation: Advisory Committee On Core Project Construction

NYU should establish an advisory committee on Core Project construction consisting of NYU representatives,

technical experts, administrators, and neighboring community members. The composition of the committee and the process by which its members will be selected will be outlined in the Working Group's final report. This advisory group should be created in advance of any construction and may form subcommittees to address a host of issues, and should:

- Meet regularly with appropriate University administrators and committees, such as the Provost's Space Priorities and Planning Committee, to review and assess on-going priorities and needs for space;
- Work closely with the independent consultant before construction begins to review the adequacy of the specific standards and expectations regarding construction mitigation as outlined in the restrictive declaration—including air emission reductions, fugitive dust control, construction noise reduction, construction vibration reduction, construction dewatering plan, construction pest management, hazardous materials remediation and protection measures, historical and cultural protection measures, and a traffic plan;
- Adopt an effective communication strategy to provide information and opportunities for comment;
- Ensure that new buildings meet high standards for architecture and design, as well as environmental sustainability; and
- Review and assess the University's capital and financial spending plan on a regular basis.

Concluding Remarks

The Working Group has spent the past academic year gathering a whole new set of documents and data related to its charge, urging the administration to undertake further analysis and new reports, and consulting with faculty, students, administrators, as well as community residents, before it came to any conclusions.

Those consultations and the many comments the Working Group received on its work—some running many pages in length—were of enormous value. The Working Group wishes to thank everyone who took the time to write and offer comments at its Town Halls, and in scheduled sessions with schools and departments. The appendix contains a full summary of the Working Group's consultations. The consultations were restorative and informative: restorative in revealing a broad range of constructive interlocutors who care deeply about the community; informative in helping to better understand the issues and refine the Working Group's own thinking.

The Working Group will reconvene in the fall to hear and review comments on the Interim Report, to gather more information, and to deliver its final recommendations. ■

University Space Priorities Working Group Interim Report

Appendix

List of Appendices

- A. Charge to the Working Group
- B. Plenary meeting schedule
- C. Subcommittee meeting schedule
- D. Summary of consultations with the community
- E. Messages sent by the Working Group to the community
- F. Comments and letters received

For More Information

All relevant documents examined by the Working Group over the course of its deliberations thus far, as well as meeting agendas and summaries, messages to the University community, video of the town hall meetings, and answers to frequently-asked questions are available for download on the Group's website:

<http://www.nyu.edu/about/university-initiatives/space-priorities.html>

For further details about the NYU Core Plan, including for the full text of NYU's submission to New York City's Uniform Land Use Review Process (ULURP) and the Restrictive Declaration of July 24, 2012, please visit:

<http://www.nyu.edu/nyu2031/nyuinny/>

Appendix A

University Space Priorities Working Group Charge (October 5, 2012)

The University Space Priorities Working Group—first announced at the May 2012 meeting of the University Senate, made up of faculty representatives appointed by the schools and the Faculty Senators Council, as well as representatives from the Student Senators Council and the Administrative Management Council—has been formed to solicit meaningful input from our community. With the zoning envelope now defined, the Working Group will take up the task of giving definitive guidance to the University Administration on implementation; of taking account of the existing, pressing space needs of academic units and programs; and of listening to the implications of the NYU Core Project for members of the University community. The charge to the working group includes:

- identifying ways to continue to increase the efficiency and usage of existing space;
- submitting criteria and key principles to apply to the development of the spatial endowment we have been granted under the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP), including providing a crucial voice on plans for the initial building on the southern block;
- establishing the criteria to consider in the selection of an architect and on a process to receive comments on designs as the project proceeds;
- specifying which future academic programs are most important to locate close to the core NYU neighborhood;
- providing specific advice on NYU's proposals to improve open space; and
- using the resources allocated to minimize the inconvenience of construction, and determine the elements of the University proposals to provide amenities or accommodations.

Its work will be transparent, and it will include solicitation of opinion and sentiment from the NYU community. The Working Group will maintain a website with regular reports of meetings, documents under review, and the capacity to receive advice and comments from faculty, students, administrators, and staff. The Working Group will also develop its own strategy for consultation with the NYU community. Moreover, the University will not undertake any construction authorized by the NYU Core Project, beyond routine maintenance or any required grounds improvement projects, before the receipt of the Working Group's report in May 2013.

To access the NYU Framework 2031, please see:

<http://www.nyu.edu/content/dam/shared/documents/NYU.Framework2031.Final.pdf>

Appendix B

University Space Priorities Working Group Plenary Meeting Schedule

All meeting agendas and summaries are available on the Working Group's website:
<http://www.nyu.edu/about/university-initiatives/space-priorities/meeting-schedule.html>

#	Date	Time	Location
1	Friday, October 5, 2012	12:00pm – 2:00pm	Kimmel Center (60 WSS) Rm. 905/907
2	Friday, November 9, 2012	10:00am – 12:00pm	Kimmel Center (60 WSS) Rm. 905/907
3	Thursday, November 15, 2012	4:00pm – 6:00pm	Kimmel Center (60 WSS) Rm. 914
4	Thursday, November 29, 2012	12:30pm – 2:00pm	Faculty Club (108 W. 3rd St.) Ground Floor
5	Tuesday, December 11, 2012	4:00pm – 6:00pm	Faculty Club (108 W. 3rd St.) Ground Floor
6	Thursday, December 13, 2012	5:30pm – 9:00pm	Presidential Penthouse 37 Wash. Sq. W., 18th Floor
7	Tuesday, January 22, 2013	3:00pm – 4:30pm	Lipton Hall (108 W. 3rd St.) Ground Floor
8	Wednesday, February 13, 2013	12:30pm – 2:00pm	Lipton Hall (108 W. 3rd St.) Ground Floor
9	Tuesday, March 5, 2013	3:00pm – 4:30pm	Lipton Hall (108 W. 3rd St.) Ground Floor
10	Thursday, March 14, 2013	3:00 - 4:30pm	Kimmel Center (60 WSS) Rm. 914
11	Thursday, April 4, 2013	3:00pm – 4:30pm	Kimmel Center (60 WSS) Rm. 914
12	Friday, April 12, 2013	2:00pm – 4:00pm	Kimmel Center (60 WSS) Rm. 914
13	Wednesday, April 17, 2013	1:00pm – 2:30pm	Lipton Hall (108 W. 3rd St.) Ground Floor
14	Friday, May 3, 2013	11:00am – 1:00pm	Lipton Hall (108 W. 3rd St.) Ground Floor
15	Monday, May 6, 2013	1:00pm – 2:30pm	Lipton Hall (108 W. 3rd St.) Ground Floor
16	Wednesday, May 22, 2013	4:00pm – 5:30pm	Kimmel Center (60 WSS) Rm. 914
17	Friday, June 14, 2013	10:45am – 12:45pm	Lipton Hall (108 W. 3rd St.) Ground Floor

Appendix C

University Space Priorities Working Group Subcommittee Meeting Schedule

Academic and non-Academic Space

#	Date
1	Friday, February 22, 2013
2	Tuesday, February 26, 2013
3	Tuesday, March 26, 2013
4	Wednesday, April 10, 2013
5	Tuesday, April 16, 2013
6	Tuesday, April 30, 2013

Stewardship and Quality of Life

#	Date
1	Tuesday, February 26, 2013
2	Tuesday, March 5, 2013
3	Friday, March 22, 2013
4	Wednesday, April 3, 2013
5	Wednesday, May 8, 2013
6	Friday, May 17, 2013

Finance

#	Date
1	Monday, March 4, 2013
2	Tuesday, March 26, 2013
3	Monday, April 29, 2013

Appendix D

University Space Priorities Working Group Summary of consultation with the Community

Town Hall Meetings:

- Space Subcommittee: March 27, 2013
- Finance Subcommittee: March 28, 2013
- Stewardship and Quality of Life Subcommittee: April 10, 2013

The Working Group met with the following individuals/groups as part of their consultative process. This list includes individuals who gave presentations at meetings of the Working Group.

Departments and Faculty¹:

- Humanities and Social Sciences, Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development
- Politics, Faculty of Arts and Science
- Anthropology, Faculty of Arts and Science
- Economics, Faculty of Arts and Science
- Courant Institute of Mathematical Sciences
- Psychology, Faculty of Arts and Science

Members of the University Leadership Team:

- Lynne Brown, Senior Vice President, University Relations and Public Affairs
- Martin Dorph, Executive Vice President, Finance and Information Technology
- Alicia Hurley, Vice President, Government Affairs and Community Relations
- Joseph Juliano, Associate Vice Chancellor for Strategic Planning
- Alison Leary, Executive Vice President, Operations
- David W. McLaughlin, Provost
- John Sexton, President

Deans and Directors:

- Charles Bertolami, College of Dentistry
- Mary Brabeck, Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development
- Mary Schmidt Campbell, Tisch School of the Arts
- Tom Carew, Faculty of Arts and Science
- Scott Fritzen and Tyra Liebman (co-interim deans), Wagner School of Public Service
- Peter Blair Henry, Stern School of Business
- Carol Mandel, Division of Libraries
- Eileen Sullivan-Marx, College of Nursing
- Lynn Videka, Silver School of Social Work
- Suzanne Wofford, Gallatin School of Individualized Study

Other University faculty, students, and administrators:

- Jonathan N. Ross, Director of Operations, Kimmel Center
- Christopher Bledsoe, Director of Athletics, Coles Sports Center
- Karen Gulino, Assistant Vice President, Faculty Housing & Residential Services
- Eve Klein, Assistant Vice President, Strategic Assessment and Design
- Beth Morningstar, Assistant Vice President & Deputy to the EVP for Operations
- Roger Printup, University Registrar

¹ The Working Group extended an offer to meet with faculty from each of the 37 departments that passed resolutions of opposition to or concern with NYU2031. The list here reflects the meetings that took place.

Other internal and external constituents or consultants²:

- Tom Hier, Principal, Biddison Hier, Ltd.
- Washington Square Village Tenants' Association
- Silver Towers Tenants' Association
- Community Board #2

² The Working Group extended an offer to faculty from the Faculty Against the Sexton Plan (FASP) group to make a presentation. FASP declined to present to the Working Group.

Appendix E

University Space Priorities Working Group Communications sent by the Working Group to the University Community

1. “Update on the University Space Priorities Working Group”
January 30, 2013
Link: http://www.nyu.edu/content/dam/nyu/spacePriorities/documents/USPWG_UpdateMemo_01.30.13.pdf
2. “USPWG Schedules Town Hall Meetings”
March 20, 2013
Link: http://www.nyu.edu/content/dam/nyu/spacePriorities/documents/USPWG.3.20.13update_FINAL.pdf
3. “FAQs, and Videos of Recent Town Hall Meetings”
April 17, 2013
Full text:

TO: THE NYU COMMUNITY

FROM: Ted Magder, Chair, University Space Priorities Working Group

RE: FAQs, and Videos of Recent Town Hall Meetings

The University Space Priorities Working Group, which has been charged with making recommendations regarding the implementation of the NYU Core Plan, has posted answers to a number of frequently-asked questions on its website. Many of these questions have been derived from meetings with University constituents, including deans, faculty members, and students. In addition, the Working Group has posted video of its three recent town hall meetings on its website.

Appendix F

University Space Priorities Working Group Comments and letters submitted to the Working Group's website

I. Comments

Comments were submitted digitally via a form on the Working Group's website. Anyone, whether a member of the NYU community or not, could submit feedback. All of the comments submitted appear below; they have been de-attributed, as they were intended as private communications to the Working Group and not messages for the public at large.

October 5, 2012

For what it's worth, I'd share the following with your colleagues: The debate at NYU has focused more on the idea of a 'superblock' and less with the practical execution of the idea. In principle superblocks can work, provided they follow a couple of rules. They need, first, to be easily penetrated, which means lots of ways in and out of the over-all assemblage of buildings. Second, the ground plane of the solid structures needs to be porous, which usually means lots small offices and shops at street level, each with its own entrance. Penetration and porosity actually increase the security of superblocks, since there are lots of people, so more "eyes on the street." Washington Square Village was built at a time when isolation of the block from its urban fabric was the ideal, but today that old way of designing has proved deadening. Superblocks built the old way can be converted, though, following the two more modern guidelines; my team, for instance, worked on such a conversion in London at the Brunswick Centre. The key in conversion is puncturing the solid wall mass that existed before, and adding informal activities out in open space -- the latter requires imagination more than a construction budget. I wasn't asked to work on the NYU project, so can only judge from its published drawings and plans. Some of the architects involved are good designers, but the urbanism looks like a throwback to an earlier era. If more discussion of this proposal takes place, I'd strongly suggest exploring the relation of the block to LaGuardia Place: here is a broad boulevard, it forms a nice "T" with Washington Square, it should be full of activity, but all the NYU buildings along it are dead at street level. I also worry -- again just looking a published plans -- about the handling of the edges on Mercer St. and Bleeker and West Houston. With small streets like Mercer set in a grid, the principle of good urban design is to intensify activity at the corners, but the proposed plan seems indifferent to this best-practice principle. I hope these comments are useful.

I have worked with many NYU students, faculty, staff and community members for 13 years in the Coles Sports Center. Will I be able to have any input on the future pool design?

November 14, 2012

NYU's lack of public space can be greatly improved if most of NYU's buildings turn its ground floors into public spaces (no more classrooms at ground level). Second, the public spaces of NYU can be more readily identified if all the pavements around NYU buildings has a distinctive design (e.g., red brick pavements).

January 22, 2013

I have been asked by members of the Administrative Management Council to propose to our Working Group that a child care center dedicated to the needs of the NYU community be considered with alongside the other space needs of the institution. Many of our peer universities are able to provide child care solutions, making this issue a potentially strong contributor to recruitment and retention at all levels. This issue was comprehensively examined and rejected in prior decades due to the complexities of NYU space and NYC regulation, but the recent approval for development of the south blocks removes many of the previously articulated obstacles. Thanks for your consideration, and see you all soon.

January 30, 2013

| Have you considered building up on the existing buildings instead of building new?

| Hello, I just had a comment. It would be great if in addition to academic and administrative space, event space was

|also taken into consideration. We have a lack of spaces on campus that can accommodate a large dinner. Thanks!

|Of what value is it to NYU to build a public school on the Morton-Williams site? How does this contribute to NYU's space needs?

January 31, 2013

|you must be aware of the need for faculty housing. This is particularly acute for the Medical School, where it is usually a key part of recruiting. What priority is this being given?

February 5, 2013

|Another suggestion from the AMC membership: When (and if) Coles is offline, many university athletics needs could be addressed by increasing the existing university relationships with area facilities. I trust that in addition to expanding our relationship with Chelsea Piers and Poly athletics, we could also expand on the existing discounted gym membership benefits offered to faculty and administrators. The gap can probably be addressed at a more reasonable cost than attempting to offer a quality transitional gym space.

March 20, 2013

|I submit this comment with some trepidation. I don't want to legitimize this committee. As someone who has actively opposed the 2031 expansion, I allowed my name to be put forth for this committee just to see if I would be selected. Of course I was not. While this is an N of one, it would be naive not to think that you are a hand picked committee being used strategically by the NYU administration which has no intention of reversing course, in spite of committee and faculty opposition. I would ask just one thing. That you consider that NYU many years ago gained permission to build the 30-story Silver Towers in exchange for leaving the space around the buildings alone. That includes air space. The trade off was tall buildings, but a lovely open space amidst the crowded buildings of Manhattan. Now years later, NYU is back, breaking the agreement that allowed the buildings to be built in the first place. This should give the space committee pause on an ethical level. Do you really want to collude in this? More specifically, what is the plan for those people who will have an ugly zipper building (freshman dorm) a few feet in front of their living room window, blocking the sun and the view? Clearly, the reason that the Cole Center was built underground was to protect the esthetic and practical integrity of Silver Towers. I would encourage you on ethical grounds to protect the integrity of the Silver Towers block. NYU has had success in obtaining and rehabbing existing buildings in the area. NYU should fit into the already existing buildings rather than build more (frankly ugly) buildings in the village area. Wouldn't it be great if this space committee took an ethical stance and instead of being a tool of the administration took a principled position on this?

March 26, 2013

|The "Rocketship" park closed for repairs June 2012. Is it still closed! The UPNS kids (especially the 2 year old ones) have to cross the street to reach a playground. Also, why is the playground in front of Coles always closed? What is the purpose of having a park that no-one uses for years?

|Could this space be provided for issue facing the LGBT youth community?

March 29, 2013

|To whom it may concern: I appreciate the move towards transparency, but I do have a few questions. The two most prevalent questions are: 1) Why is there such a need to fund new buildings all over the city? It seems like an encroachment onto the other boroughs is happening. Why not just update the buildings that are currently in use? 2) I understand the school is admitting more and more students, and therefore there is a "need" (need because surely not every room is used in every present building at every hour there is a class), but why not spend some of that funding for financial aid? There are plenty of students who could use the help through a university grant instead of taking out thousands in loans each year. I for one am one of those students. While there are students who qualify for certain tuition assistance programs (such as HEOP), there are a sizeable number who fall right over the qualifications for such programs and as a result end up taking out nearly \$30,000 every year. Should the priorities of the university really be space? Thank you for your time and willingness to listen to my opinion

I'm interested at how NYU is planning to expand its partnership with neighboring businesses (local stores, nearby restaurants, partnerships with spaces that hire students, art studios, theaters, museums, etc). That kind of planned integration as we continue to expand alongside NYU-proximate and NYU-friendly organizations is what I mean by 'soft expansion' as opposed to physically building more real estate which is "hard expansion." A major determining factor, for example, for a Tisch Student or a Stern Student to come to NYU versus another university is our proximity to the bevy of organization that can lead them to successful careers and teach them useful skills alongside their school work. Most students go to NYU for the amenities our surrounding neighborhoods. PlaNYC is a great example of equal parts hard and soft development plans for example. I've been to several town halls on 2031 and, in each instance, I've asked what plans are being made to expand our accessibility for students to take advantage of the many advantages our city has available. The response had been consistently that there is no group currently working on such plans for the long term in tandem with our plans for physical expansion. The last town hall I was able to attend however was several months ago and I'm hoping something has developed since that time. Please let me know if there is a subcommittee group working on increased integration with organizations on campus which students frequently utilize. If there are no groups working on this please let me know if it would be prudent to start a group like this as NYU plans its next several decades.

April 24, 2013

This is a continuation of a question I asked at the QoL Subcommittee Town Hall: The windows in Silver Towers have been problematic for over a decade. They leak air. They rattle. They are difficult to clean. I won't recount the history, but requests to have them replaced or updated have been numerous since I've lived here (1996), and as I understand, have been rejected because of cost or (more recently) landmarking. I was pleased to learn at the QoL Town Hall that 2031 planning and a separate budget for mitigation have allowed the University to move forward with a solution to this longstanding issue. But by the same token, I am concerned that the focus on mitigation has forced a rapid decision based solely on sound-reduction capabilities. Since the tenants of these buildings will live with these windows for the next 30+ years, I'd like to understand how this solution compares to other options in terms of other important criteria: energy efficiency, maintenance/cleaning, safety, ease of opening/closing, aesthetics. I'm sure many of us would trade of a few dB of sound-proofing in exchange for improvements in these other categories. Thanks for your hard work in helping to advise the University in these tough decisions.

II. Letters

Some University stakeholders, including faculty members from various departments, submitted letters directly to the chair or to members of the Working Group. On other occasions, messages sent to deans or department chairs were shared with the Working Group. A list of these items appears below. Full text of these letters is available upon request.

- Letter from chair and faculty of NYU Game Center
- Letter from staff members of Theatrical Production at NYU Tisch School of the Arts
- Letter from chair and faculty of Undergraduate Production and Design Studio at NYU Tisch School of the Arts
- Letter from chair and faculty of Graduate Acting Program, NYU Tisch School of the Arts
- Message from G. Gabrielle Starr, Dean of NYU College of Arts and Science, to CAS chairs and directors regarding classroom space
- Message from chair and faculty of Music Department at NYU Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development



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