



NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

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Government and Community Engagement

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Alicia D. Hurley, Ph.D. *Vice President*

November 3, 2011

Mr. Brad Hoylman
Chairman
Manhattan Community Board #2
3 Washington Square Village
New York, NY 10012

Dear Brad:

As you have requested, I am attaching the answers to the questions that were submitted by CB2 a few months back. I am making available the information that we can, at this point; and you will see that some information will be forthcoming when the ULURP application and draft EIS are completed and filed.

Also, as per your request, the University has agreed to postpone our filing of the ULURP application until the first of the year (2012), so the Board's review time will not start until January.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

Alicia D. Hurley, Ph.D.
Vice President

NYU Response to Request for Information to Manhattan Community Board #2

CB2

1. Approximate dates and durations of construction need to be added to the slides presented with the timeline for each project on the appropriate slide, and the revised slides be sent to CB2 as soon as possible for posting on our website.
2. A Critical Path or Construction Flow chart is also requested showing all the proposed elements and their time lines.

Response 1, 2:

Available information is on the attached (Att. 1) drawings and available to the Board and broader public at the NYU Open House space at 528 LaGuardia.

Additional details will be provided in the draft EIS and ULURP application. .

CB2

3. Please provide footprint dimensions of all existing as well as proposed temporary and permanent buildings and amenities on the superblocks so that proposed, temporary and existing conditions can be easily compared. Total square footage of proposed buildings is also requested, along with the dimensions of all open spaces.

Response 3:

Attachment 2 provides the square footage of buildings and open space. Footprint dimensions will be provided in the ULURP application.

CB2

4. In the meeting you stated "...no tear-up of the Washington Square Village Key Park and Sasaki Garden before ULURP has been completed." In addition, the message on a flyer posted by NYU outside the playgrounds states that the earliest NYU would demolish any of these spaces would be 2014. Can you confirm both statements?
5. Will NYU further pledge to not modify any green spaces before NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation also approves the use of state funds?
6. Further, please inform us whether NYU will pledge to leave everything that is part of the ULURP and Scoping application "as is" until the ULURP process is completed, and not attempt any pre-ULURP actions?

Responses 4 - 6

There are no plans to demolish or destroy the garden and play area located between the WSV buildings prior to the completion of the approvals process; and certainly there is not a cynical effort to destroy the garden in an effort to pre-empt designation or review by the city or state agencies.

In February of this year, the University sought out an opinion from the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) – which has consultative authority – to understand whether they would determine the Washington Square Village site to be eligible for the State Historic Registry. As a response to our inquiry, they issued to us a letter that the site was, in their opinion, eligible for listing. A copy of this letter is attached for your reference (Att. 3).

We are undertaking the approvals process, including the preparation of an environmental impact statement and we intend to mitigate adverse impacts to the extent practicable and to consult with SHPO as we proceed in the process just as we have on past projects.

CB2

7. In each instance, will the temporary proposed Washington Square Village Key Park replacement, its permanent proposed replacement, and the Silver Towers proposed replacement playground be access-controlled? If so, how?

8. The current Washington Square Village Key Park is buffered by buildings, private paved areas and parkland, and has a high fence to protect the children that use it. How will the proposed replacements, both temporary and permanent, provide similar protection?

9. The Sasaki Garden currently offers seating so residents and the community can sit and view the lush greenery, a fountain, and birds. The proposed new seating areas look at either Bleecker Street or buildings. Will NYU replace the peaceful relaxation areas with equivalent substitutes?

Responses 7 – 9

The redesigned spaces on the two superblocks have been carefully planned to integrate and carry forward the careful balance of quiet sitting space and active play areas for children. Active children play areas will be protected by fences – working in coordination with the Parks Department and common standards for safety.

The existing and interim playgrounds on NYU property will be keyed; future conditions of playgrounds on NYU property and on parkland will have safety measures, including appropriate fencing, but will not have restricted key access.

CB2

10. How many and which trees will be removed or relocated during each phase of the proposed project and between project inception and completion?

11. If mature trees and greenery are removed from the area, how will NYU mitigate the loss of shade, carbon dioxide reduction and other benefits the plants provide?

Responses 10 – 11

To the extent tree removal and replacement information is available, it will be provided in the draft EIS. NYU will coordinate with DPR on the replacement of street trees that are lost due to construction, if any.

CB2

12. Will NYU consider requiring all of their new structures to meet LEED Gold certifications or higher, rather than the minimal standard of LEED Silver?

Response 12

This is a long-term project to be developed over time. LEED standards will invariably change and be modified over that period. Our commitment is to LEED Silver, a commitment that may be exceeded as was the case in our recent Gallatin on Broadway renovation (GOLD), our new 133 - 139 MacDougal, Wilf Hall project (PLATINUM), and the restoration of 22 Washington Square North (GOLD).

CB2

13. What will be done to monitor and protect residents from noise, dirt, vermin, and other environmental aspects of construction?

14. What plans are being made for families and individuals who have health conditions that render them susceptible to toxins and noise?

Responses 13 - 14

Answers will be informed by the draft EIS.

CB2

15. What are the normally required perimeters of each proposed construction site? For example, how much of Mercer Street, Bleecker Street, W. 3rd Street, LaGuardia Place and Houston Street are likely to be blocked off, for how long, and when?

Response 15

The draft EIS will include conceptual construction logistics; however, ultimate construction staging and all of the variables that coincide with construction will be decided upon filing for construction permits with the DOT and DOB.

CB2

16. If the driveways that represent Greene and Wooster Streets between Bleecker and West 3rd Streets will be lost, how can emergency and other vehicles get in and out quickly and without having to back out onto busy streets? How will mobility-impaired residents get to and from their doorways to taxis, the garage or other transportation?

Response 16

Former driveways will be turned into building entryways which will be examined and updated to ensure access for ease and safety. The proposal identifies drop off areas in front of the existing buildings for loading/unloading for residents.

CB2

17. You stated that NYU has searched, without success, for alternate sites for the temporary gym and other temporary entities. Please provide a list of all sites that were considered by NYU, and the reason they were rejected.
18. Would NYU consider buying or leasing another location for the temporary gym, as it seems that this temporary building raises many concerns for the community?
19. You stated that the temporary gym will be placed in the open space area that is needed to meet the OSR requirements for your rezoning. It seems that that the gym will take 18 months to build and might be in place for 6-8 years. How will this affect the OSR requirement if NYU does or does not get the rezoning sought?
20. How does erecting a temporary structure such as the gym comply with NYU's stated commitment to sustainability and environmental responsibility?
21. Will NYU provide replacement gym amenities to those in the community who will lose the use of the Coles Gym pools, workout machines, etc.?
22. What mechanicals will be on top of the proposed temporary gym? How will nearby buildings be protected from the noise and other operational issues of these mechanicals?
23. How will buses be dealt with on Mercer Street if the temporary gym is constructed? How many parking spaces will be lost? How will bus idling be controlled?

Responses 17 - 23

The University has and will continue to make the case for a temporary gym facility to be built on the northern superblock. The temporary facility will hold a critical core of functions that need to be sustained in order to manage through having our main athletic facility off-line. The facility will cater to the activities that are linked to NYU's status and membership in the UAA (University Athletic Association), in this regard the temporary gym will mainly be for our team/competitive sport programs. The temporary facility will not have a swimming pool and the gym will mostly operate in support of the competitive requirements. Other day-to-day gym uses by the University community and the broader community who currently access Coles will need to be addressed outside of this facility.

The question regarding parking and buses will be reviewed in the draft EIS.

CB2

24. When will the land be available for building a school, since NYU is constructing Belowground before the footprint can be released for construction by the City? How long a window of construction opportunity will be available to the City?
25. Will NYU work with CB2 based on the results of the upcoming planned school needs assessment? Will at least 100,000 square feet be made available to the community for a school or other community need?
26. If the proposed "space for a school" cannot be built by the Department of Education and School Construction Authority by 2031, will NYU consider turning it over to the community?
27. Would NYU consider building out the core and shell of the school structure as other developers have agreed to do?

Responses 24 - 27

As you are aware, the proposal by the University does not trigger the requirement for a public school in the area - we are not adding enough new school age children to trigger the requirement, as has been the case in other projects in the City. However, dating back to 2008 the University has said it would, first, explore and then we committed to integrating space for a public school into the superblocs as we have undertaken the best planning scenarios for the two blocks. We have designated the site of the current Morton Williams supermarket to be the location of the future public school which is to be built and run by NYC's DOE/SCA on their schedule. We will enter into an agreement with the SCA to manage the co-construction of the site.

CB2

28. Can the 2031 Plan be implemented without using any of the City-owned land?

Response 28

The draft EIS will show an alternative to developing without using any of the City-owned land (the "No Demapping Alternative"). As you know, we have made significant alterations to create a mutually beneficial plan which allows the University to still grow on its footprint and takes steps to preserve in perpetuity and add to the open space on the site.

CB2

29. If as stated, the Fiorello LaGuardia statue needs protection and will be moved during construction, we must assume that the plantings and trees tended by the community for decades are also in jeopardy and will not go undisturbed. Please tell us exactly what NYU is proposing for the whole of the LaGuardia Corner Garden, LaGuardia Park and Adrienne's Playground, Mercer Playground and the other City-owned green spaces in terms of disturbing the existing infrastructure and planting during construction and underground excavation.

30. Will the current City-owned parkland strips on the superblocs be used as staging areas and construction equipment storage and/or passageways? Please provide detailed information on how these strips might be used if they are not conveyed to NYU.

Responses 29 - 30

Information about the plans for the strips was provided in September. We look forward to continuing this conversation, throughout the approvals process.

CB2

31. What is the difference in size between the current Mercer/Houston Dog Run and the proposed replacement? How will the users of the Dog Run be protected during construction? What are the potential adverse wind tunnel effects for the new location?

32. What provisions are there in your proposals to meet the recreational needs of children aged 6-12, currently served only by Mercer Playground/LMNO(P)?

Responses 31 - 32

All sizes of existing versus new sizes of play and active spaces are equal or larger. Programming conversations will continue between the University and stakeholders/users in the coming months.