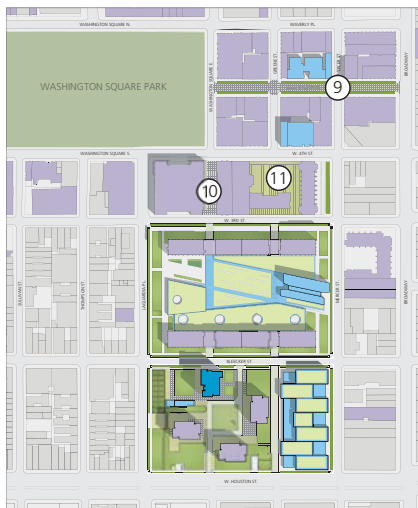


NYU 2031 Possibilities



2031 Sites



LEGEND	
9.	Washington Place
10.	Schwartz Plaza
11.	Gould Plaza

Proposals for development in the NYU Core over the next 25 years focus primarily on adding new academic, residential, and open space to the two superblocks; strengthening connections between the superblocks and the NYU building to the north; and improving the quality of the public realm within the Core.

Public realm improvements could include Schwartz Plaza, Gould Plaza, and Washington Place. Improvements to Schwartz Plaza could make this significant public space more inviting and pedestrian-friendly, and strengthen its role as a connection between Washington Square Park and the superblocks. Landscape, seating, surface paving, and lighting improvements could enhance Gould Plaza to make it a central gathering and event space for the University. Lastly, streetscape improvements and the introduction of transparency and appropriate uses on the ground-level could activate Washington Place.

New development on the superblocks could include a new mixed use building on the Coles Gymnasium site; a fourth tower on the I.M. Pei towers site, whose 1960s towers are being considered by the Landmarks Preservation Commission for landmark designation; and the redevelopment of Washington Square Village with a plinth structure, a pavilion building, and academic tower.

On the Coles Gymnasium site, retail on the ground floor could activate Houston and Mercer Streets, while the upper levels could provide new housing or academic space. A fourth tower on the I.M. Pei Towers site could be complemented by the enhancement of the surrounding open space.

Coles Site

"ZIPPER LOFT"



Corner of Houston and Mercer Streets Looking North



Mercer Street near Bleecker Looking Southeast



Corner of Houston and Mercer Streets Looking North – Today

Existing Conditions



Houston Street near Mercer Looking West

While the "Zipper Loft" form is contextual and reflects the massing and elevations of adjacent buildings, its program could transform the intersection of Mercer and Houston Streets. A base could accommodate both retail and academic programs, whereas the upper levels call for housing or academic uses. The building edge could be aligned with the sidewalk – unlike Coles, which is set back – and ground-floor retail could provide street activity. The orientation of the upper levels could allow for building massing that maximizes southern exposure to light and air. In addition, the building scale could reflect the tall and narrow elevations of the loft buildings across Mercer.

What We Heard:

The athletic facilities at Coles and the adjacent dog run are considered important uses for the area and if any development dislocates them, both uses should be relocated nearby. Additionally there were those that were concerned that a new building would impinge on the pinwheel design of the University Village complex as designed by I.M. Pei.

"Gym and Athletic Facilities are already quite crowded. If Coles closes, this needs to be remedied. Also, gym location should be accessible to encourage student attendance at athletic events which already struggles." – NYU Student

"The permanent elimination of Coles would be a detriment to the faculty, staff, and alumnae who live in the neighborhood. It is a recruiting factor for faculty and staff to have a sports complex near where they live." – NYU Alumna

"Too much development on the Coles site could undermine the elegance of the pinwheel design." – Community Member

Coles Site

"ZIPPER LOFT"



Bird's Eye View of Coles Site Looking Northeast

Existing Conditions



The Coles Gymnasium site provides an opportunity to improve the urban and physical character of the area and add new flexible space to the University. Coles currently presents blank facades along Houston and Mercer Streets. The single entrance on Mercer Street decreases activity along the remaining building edge. In addition, the public spaces and playgrounds outside of Coles are underutilized. The "Zipper Loft" building, named for its zipper form and loft typology, could address the opportunity to correct Coles Gymnasium's negative visual and physical impacts by locating new active uses on the ground-level with building forms above that are programmatically flexible and echo adjacent buildings.

What We Heard:

Nearly all community members, NYU faculty, students and administrators who attended outreach sessions supported the idea of developing on the Coles site. Most felt that the building did not currently contribute to, and in fact detracts from, the street life of the surrounding area and that a new development could draw community members by adding retail uses like a grocery store or more student traffic by adding needed lounge space.

"I like the idea of development near Coles. That is a good spot." – NYU Student

"Coles is an architectural embarrassment...the stretch along Houston should be more pedestrian friendly." – Community Member

"Sports center is too small now. I think we should be building more to provide facilities." – NYU Student

"There is real opportunity at the Coles Site and elsewhere on the South Blocks. This can be transformed to southern gateway to campus." – NYU Faculty

University Village Site

“PINWHEEL TOWER”



View of Fourth Tower on Bleecker Street between LaGuardia Place and Mercer Street

Existing Conditions



A fourth tower at the University Village site could enhance the 1950/1960s “tower in the park” urban design concept, which placed modernist towers within an open, park-like setting. The addition of a new tower, as well as significant landscape and circulation improvements, could help build upon Pei’s pinwheel configuration and create a dialogue with the existing three towers. The existing towers and landscape are being reviewed for landmark designation by the Landmarks Preservation Commission. This concept looks at leaving the Morton Williams site as an open space, whereas other options previously explored by the Design Team looked at development on the supermarket site.

What We Heard:

There were those that felt that the University Village’s grounds are currently uninviting and should be improved. The LaGuardia Place Community Garden on the corner of LaGuardia Place and Bleecker Street was seen as community asset and many opposed any plans that involved building on that location.

“Please keep the open space inviting to the residents of the neighborhood unlike they are now (i.e. key for playground, ugly chain, link fences and steps up to plazas). Feel free to not just replace open space but increase it.” – Community Member

“Please keep low rise spaces such as the community gardens on LaGuardia and Bleecker. The community garden is an important asset to the neighborhood.” – Community Member

University Village Site

“PINWHEEL TOWER”



Bird's Eye View of University Village Site Looking Southeast

Existing Conditions



A key feature of the existing University Village site plan, designed by I.M. Pei in the early 1960s, is that no view from one tower is obstructed by one of the other towers. By aligning the footprint of a fourth tower along the Wooster Street axis, the new building would not obstruct views. Taller than the existing three towers, the fourth tower could complete the pinwheel geometry of the site, forming a backdrop to the I.M. Pei Towers, which in turn visually frame the new tower.

What We Heard:

If NYU develops a new building on this site, the residents of the three towers voiced concern regarding blocking the views of their apartments. Additionally no new development should be placed within close proximity to maintain the open feel of the I.M. Pei design. Many people were also opposed to development on the Morton Williams site due to the close proximity to 505 LaGuardia Place and the need of a supermarket in the area.*

“Strongly opposed to hi-rise buildings on Morton Williams site. Would completely block all views from north side tenants of 505 LaGuardia Place – buildings would only be feet apart!” – Community Member

“I like the idea of not taking away existing views. And idea of open space.” – Feedback from January Open House Boards

* The University has already agreed to always keep a supermarket in operation in that area.

Washington Square Village

“PLINTH AND TOWER”



LaGuardia Place between West 3rd and Bleecker Streets Looking East

Existing Conditions



The Plinth and Tower scheme would provide a significant amount of new above- and below-ground academic space in addition to new public open spaces and reinvigorated streetscapes along LaGuardia Place and Mercer Street. New development would include a pavilion on LaGuardia Place; academic space in a one- to two-story plinth constructed between the two Washington Square Village buildings; and an academic tower on Mercer Street. An open space on the plinth roof would be accessible to the public via a through-site ramp, which would create a new east-west connection across Washington Square Village.

A key focus of the scheme would be the improvement of the Washington Square Village public realm and the quality of adjacent streets. Improvements to the public realm would help to better integrate the superblock with the surrounding neighborhood and provide essential open space amenities. A public plaza on LaGuardia Place would offer a new gathering place for neighborhood residents, visitors as well as the NYU Community and serve as an entrance to the plinth open space. Improvements to surface materials, lighting, landscaping and trees, and street furniture would enhance the public realm of LaGuardia Place, making it an inviting place to walk along, sit, and socialize. Any playground or open space that would be developed upon would be replaced elsewhere square foot for square foot on the superblock. A new pavilion would also activate LaGuardia Place, its airy and transparent façade creating interactions between the indoor program and the life of the street. Lastly, similar streetscape improvements as well as ground-level retail on Mercer Street would attract pedestrians and activity.

“Green space is essential.” – Feedback from January Open House Boards

“Minimize disruption to current WSV residents is crucial.” – Feedback from January Open House Boards

Washington Square Village

“PLINTH AND TOWER”



Birds Eye View of Washington Square Village Looking East

Existing Conditions



The Plinth and Tower option could anchor Washington Square Village with a new public open space, which includes playgrounds, plazas, and recreation areas. The option could also add a significant amount of new academic space, but with limited tall development. This could be achieved with a one-to-two-level plinth between the two Washington Square Village buildings and new underground space. The open space could be “book-ended” by a pavilion building on LaGuardia Place and a tower on Mercer Street. The open space could also provide NYU with a large-scale outdoor event space.

Open space on the plinth’s roof could be publicly accessible from gently sloping ramps off LaGuardia and Mercer. Circulation routes could create a new east-west connection across Washington Square Village. Wooster and Greene Streets could be improved as enclosed arcades that provide through-block circulation.

What We Heard:

Many people expressed a desire that if any new structure was placed between the two existing buildings, it was important that air, light and open space be maintained. There were some who expressed concern over any infill building that blocked views. In general, students thought the site could accommodate athletic facilities, especially if the current Coles site is redeveloped, or classroom space. For some, the open space in the Plinth option could be an opportunity to create an NYU quadrangle; while others felt they wanted a more urban green space.

“I like Plinth and Tower if development is to be made. It maintains openness to some degree and is more accessible than the others. I am a student and have never entered this area as it is because it does not seem open.” – NYU Student

“Do not block sun and air from existing buildings.” – Feedback from January Open House Boards

“Live in and love Washington Square Village, but faculty housing doesn’t have to be at the Square.” – NYU Faculty