

### **Taskforce Attendees**

- Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer, Chair
- Representative from office of U.S. Representative Jerrold Nadler (Erin Drinkwater)
- Representative from office of NYS Assemblyman Brian Kavanagh (Nily Rozic)
- Representative from office of NYS Assemblywoman Deborah Glick (Gregory Brender)
- Representative from office of NYS Senator Tom Duane (Adam Riff)
- Representatives from office of State Senator Martin Connor (Eva Rippeteau, Martin Algaze)
- Representatives from office of City Council Speaker Christine Quinn (Kate Seely-Kirk, Lee Grodin)
- Representatives from office of City Council Member Alan Gerson (Representative: Sayar Lionel, Paul Nagel)
- City Council Member Rosie Mendez (and representative John Fout)
- Representative from the Mayor’s Office (Lolita Jackson)
- Community Board 3 (David McWater, Chair)
- Community Board 2 (Maria Passanante-Derr, Chair)
- Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation (Andrew Berman)
- NoHo Neighborhood Association (Zella Jones, Jeff Weinstein, Giorgio Bovenzi)
- Greenwich Village Block Association (Martin Tessler)
- SoHo Alliance (Sean Sweeney)
- Cooper Square Committee (Steve Herrick)
- Union Square Community Coalition (Leo Blackman)
- 250 Mercer Street (Myra Martin)

### **Overview of Strategic Plan Preparation presented by Lori Mazor**

After introductions and welcomes by the Borough President, Lori Mazor presented an overview of the planning process that has preceded the commencement of the Strategic Planning Initiative. This included the following information:

- NYU has 5 centers: Washington Square, Medical Center, Midtown, Institute for Fine Arts and Downtown
- NYU has 52,800 students
- NYU has 13,000 housing units
  - Of these units, 20% (2,100) are occupied by tenants not affiliated with NYU
- Washington Square/Union Square campus has 5.4 million GSF in academic and administrative facilities, and large student facilities such as Kimmel, Palladium and Coles Athletic Center

Lori Mazor presented an overview of NYU’s historic growth:

**NYU – Manhattan Borough President’s Community Task Force**  
**Meeting 2: March 29, 2007**

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- 1949: Enrollment peaked at approximately 70,000 students with the addition of 12,400 World War II veterans
- 1963: Medical Center opens
- 1972: Bobst Library opens
- 1973: NYU’s Bronx campus is sold to CUNY
- 1980s: NYU transforms from a commuter to a residential university
- 1993: Skirball and Stern open
- 2000s: Furman, Kimmel and Palladium open
  - There has been significant growth in NYU’s leased space in the past 10 years

The Washington Square/Union Square Campus (boundaries being from 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue to 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and from Houston Street to 16<sup>th</sup> Street) includes 10,820,000 GSF and 3.4 million net usable academic and administrative space.

The following trends in American higher education were highlighted:

1. Science research is the largest driver of physical growth, i.e.: NYU is building a Center for Genomics, a discipline that didn’t even exist 10 years ago.
2. Interdisciplinary education: This is the biggest challenge to the establishment of satellite campuses. Research and learning across disciplines puts a premium on proximity.
3. Clinical and Technical training – this is more space intensive than classrooms and often involves large simulation centers.
4. Focus on improved quality of student life (especially facilities that foster group interaction and team building).

NYU’s approach to growth is as follows:

1. Global (Bringing an American/NYU education to foreign students at NYU campuses abroad)
2. New York City (Enhancing NYU’s current centers and exploring new satellite opportunities).
3. Washington Square (This will always be the heart of NYU’s facilities)

(The Planning Principles Slide was shown on the screen but, due to time constraints, was not reviewed by Lori with the Task Force).

### **Presentation by President John Sexton**

President Sexton introduced himself (he assumed the NYU presidency in 2001) and described his priority to prod NYU into a process of strategic thinking.

NYU is the largest private university in the United States and it developed and grew inductively, taking advantage of opportunities as they arose. As such, its process for interaction with the community has also developed less reflectively than optimal.

- President Sexton acknowledged that NYU’s overall planning process has not been perfect and that the strategic planning initiative is now fully commencing.
- President Sexton reaffirmed that the community is a partner, mentioning the process surrounding the siting of the Co-gen plant and working with City Council Member Alan Gerson and CB #2 Chair Maria Passanante-Derr.
- NYU can achieve academic excellence and be a good neighbor
- There is a relationship between square footage per student and academic excellence:
  - NYU: 96 sf per student
  - Columbia: 230 sf per student
  - U. of Chicago: 600 sf per student
- Universities like NYU and Columbia are critical to the future of New York City and the world. NYC’s economy has traditionally been reliant on FIRE (Finance, Insurance and Real Estate industries) In the future, President Sexton believes the City’s economy will be more reliant on ICE (Intellect, Culture, Education)

Borough President Scott Stringer mentioned that, with 10 million SF in the Village, NYU’s actions have a strong impact and, therefore, NYU needs to have a roadmap as to where its going.

President Sexton indicated that NYU does not yet have a fully formed plan, but The Task Force planning process will help to develop such a roadmap. Sexton indicated that this would take months not weeks.

### **Discussions with Task Force Members**

- Marty Tessler from the Greenwich Village Block Associations asked what directive will be given to the architecture/planning candidate teams and how is the Community Facilities FAR being addressed?

President Sexton explained that the planning principles presented today are the same marching orders being given to the design teams. He said that the

Community Facilities Bonus will not be an axiom for NYU to maximize its Zoning Square Footage. However each project will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and those projects will be contextual.

- Andrew Berman of GVSHP mentioned that 4 ½ years ago, NYU committed to a South Village Historic District and committed to supporting specific boundaries. Now NYU has gone on record with Landmarks opposing such a district, stating that it only supported a study for a district.

Lynne Brown responded that NYU does support a South Village Historic District and wants to continue to be in conversation. Scott Stringer’s office will follow up to clarify NYU’s position.

- Jeff Weinstein from the Noho Neighborhood Association asked whether NYU would consider a moratorium on growth until the study is completed. He also asked whether NYU had established goals for academic growth.

President Sexton responded that NYU will not consider a moratorium but wishes for community interaction when there are initiatives moving forward (i.e., the Co-Gen Facility) and wishes to engage in dialogue in partnership with the community, more than in the past.

It is important to note that there are different kinds of growth. There is the size of the NYU population and then there is growth of physical space. NYU needs to plan what facilities are going to go into its core and what can be located outside the core. Undergraduate student growth will not grow as dramatically as it has in the past. However NYU plans to increase the number of students participating in semester abroad programs, but this will not put a strain on the Washington Square area. The faculty population will grow, but this may be able to be absorbed outside the Washington Square core.

- NYU will commit to presenting “live projects” to the Task Force with ample time for input.
- Recap of current projects is as follows:
  - Co-Gen Plant – planning completed
  - E. 12<sup>th</sup> Street Dorm – Successful meeting was held with the St. Ann’s Committee
  - Genomics Building (12-16 Waverly) – NYU has drawings and welcomes community input but the planning process is already far along

- 383 Lafayette/Tower Video (Tisch School) –preliminary study conducted but there is no architect selected yet.
  - NYU will brief CB-2 re: Genomics Bldg and eventually the Task Force
  - NYU will bring the Institute for the Performing Arts/Tower Video Building to the Task Force
- The Task Force cares about leased space that is being used by students and cares about the removal of SROs and stabilized apartments
- The Architect/Planning/Design Team will be on board by early May and will attend the next Community Task Force meeting

### **Task Force Concerns about NYU Planning Principles**

Speaker Quinn’s representative stated that NYU must realize that student gathering space and open space will be constrained by NYU’s urban environment. She suggested adding the following principle “respect limitations of the urban environment”. President Sexton agreed.

There is concern about NYU’s commitment to house freshmen around Washington Square; however this is important for NYU in order to build a sense of NYU community.

Alan Gerson’s office expressed concern about retiring faculty and their strain on the housing stock. He asked if NYU could add the principle of “community sustainability” (i.e., mixed income and mixed use). President Sexton agreed.

Leo Blackman of Union Square Community Coalition raised concern that NYU focus on developing more of its own open space (in contradiction to Speaker Quinn’s representative’s concern) so that there is less strain placed on Washington and Union Square Parks. He suggested that NYU needs a principle to address green space. President Sexton agreed that this would be examined.

David McWater of CB-3 expressed his concerns about NYU’s academic “elitism” and the impact it has on housing in the community (more students from outside NYC attending NYU). What will NYU do if there is a real estate downturn?

### **Other Discussion Points:**

- The strategy of the Global Branch Campuses is to capture international talent that is not coming to the United States and to drive applicants towards NYU’s graduate and professional schools. (The global strategy

also takes the physical pressures off the Washington Square campus as these students will not be enrolled in New York).

- NYU is now the No. 1 choice among U.S. high school students and has the largest percentage of students who are Pell Grant eligible, the most needy financially (17% vs. 9% at Harvard). NYU is proud of the economic diversity of its students.
- NYU is thinly endowed but is not highly leveraged.
- NYU is in the midst of a \$2.5 billion capital campaign; President Sexton is committed to raising \$1 million per day, for six years. 20% of this is for capital investments, the remainder for financial aid and faculty recruitments.
- The Board of Trustees will be involved in the Strategic Planning process; the chairs of its Real Estate and Government Affairs committees could come to a Task Force meeting, if so desired.
- Andrew Berman wished that NYU speak to maximizing efficiency in its existing buildings and increasing density; President Sexton stated that NYU cannot yet get to the tactical level re: its existing buildings as that is what this strategic planning process is for. Re: planning for 600 – 800 additional beds in the core campus area, NYU will keep the Community Task Force abreast of any and all plans.
- Assembly Member Deborah Glick’s representative stated that NYU should always identify and address all alternatives to its plans as was done on the cogeneration planning (reiterating that would have been very helpful re: the E. 12<sup>th</sup> Street dorm project).

### **Next Steps**

- The next Community Task Force Meeting will be in May; NYU’s selected Design Team will attend.
- Planning principles will become operationalized
- NYU has committed to a St. Ann’s construction meeting with the Task Force and the developer of 12<sup>th</sup> Street dorm, Hudson Companies
- NYU will initiate a meeting re: the Genomics Building after CB-2 has met
- Regarding the Institute for Performing Arts/Tower Video Building, NYU will facilitate public input through the Community Board [in this case CB2]. But the immediate NOHO neighbors have and will continue to be most closely involved in the planning.