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Community Board #2, Manhattan, held a public forum regarding NYU Plan 2031 on August 9, 2010, at 6:30 p.m. at PS 41, 116 West 11th Street, New York City 10014.

1. The Chair of Community Board 2, Jo Hamilton, opened the meeting.

She announced that the Community Board is now beginning the process to prepare for their charter-mandated role in reviewing the complicated land-use changes that NYU will be requesting as part of NYU Plan 2031. CB2 will host as many meetings as it takes for the board and the community to look at every issue that will be part of ULURP (NYC's Uniform Land Use Review Procedure) – zoning, landmarks, parks, schools, traffic, environment, infrastructure and many more. The plan is to schedule regular meetings to focus on specific topics, and then bring all the issues back together in order to respond appropriately to the project as a whole.

The purpose of this first meeting is to address the most important issue: **What does NYU propose to build in the Washington Square neighborhood? Why does it have to be here? Why can't it be located elsewhere?** The chair stated that it is clear from previous forums that the community does want NYU to grow in a way that will overwhelm the historic heart of Greenwich Village.

The University has reaffirmed repeatedly that they share this common goal. They agreed to come to this meeting to justify their proposals, and to be prepared to answer questions from the board and community with details.

To help frame this discussion, CB2 will be guided by the work of Borough President Stringer and the NYU Task Force. They developed a strong set of Planning Principles and Recommendations that clearly state the community's priorities. The first Planning Principle says that it is essential to **develop specific criteria for expansion into the core and neighborhood.** The first Recommendation reiterates this important point when it begins by saying that **"not all of NYU needs can be accommodated in and around the core and its surrounding neighborhood."**

Ms. Hamilton introduced the Co-Chairs of the NYU Task Force Core and Neighborhood Committee, Martin Tessler and David Reck, to talk about how the Planning Principles and Recommendations were developed.

2. Martin Tessler, member of the NYU 2031 Task Force summarized views of the task force.
 - a. The Greenwich Village neighborhood, characterized by John Sexton NYU's President, as a fragile ecosystem, is being asked to absorb three million added square feet in NYU's campus core and the surrounding neighborhoods. This added square footage, the equivalent of four and a half to five Jacob Javits Centers, places too large a burden on the fragile Greenwich Village area. The Task Force urged NYU to re-think their development plans.
3. David Reck Chair of CB2 Land Use Committee described the set of zoning procedures known as ULURP. He noted that it can be long, complicated, and daunting and urged the public to be patient with the ULURP process.
4. Alicia Hurley, NYU Vice-president of Government Affairs and Community Engagement, was introduced and she began the presentation.
 - a. History of planning process starting in 2007. She noted that interacting with the community regarding future planning was new to NYU. She detailed ways in which the community interaction took place such as open houses, hiring a planning office and an outside planning team. She noted the hard work with the community Task Force. Originally planning was focused on Washington Square. It then expanded to satellite areas outside of the village including Governors Island, Brooklyn Polytechnic, and the health corridor on Third Avenue. She emphasized that for the first time NYU is committing now to building half of their 6 million sq feet outside of the core area in Greenwich Village.
 - b. 3.5 million square feet will be used for academic purposes including classrooms, lab space, offices and conference rooms. 500,000 square feet for faculty housing, 500,000 Square feet for student services and 1,500,000 square feet for student housing. NYU is planning to site most of the 3 million square feet sited in Greenwich Village on its own property in the super-block area. The plan will take place over a 25 year process as the university recognizes its needs over time.
 - c. This core area will be used to build classrooms, teaching labs, faculty offices, first year undergraduate housing, and some faculty and visitor housing and improving public amenities. The rationale for looking at the core area is that the restrictions of land marking and zoning work to restrict options for the university except in areas south of union square that don't have such restrictions.
5. Will Hass, Director of Planning, discussed usage of the core superblock area. 5 buildings are in the plans comprising a total range of from 1.5 million to 2 million square feet, 30 percent being below grade.
 - a. A mixed-use building on current Cole's site which is to include a dormitory of up to 1400 beds, and bottom floors of academic space and retail space. Below grade will include space for athletic programs. This building could range from 13-17 stories or 160 to 200 feet tall.
 - b. A 36 story tower occupied with below grade mechanicals and parking adjacent to the present Morton Williams Store. This tower of 275,000 square feet above-grade will be half hotel (240 units) and half residential housing (100 units). New open space will be included.

- c. Two above grade buildings situated in Washington Square Village. One along Mercer Street would be 215 feet tall or 14 stories and one along LaGuardia St would be 8 stories.
- d. One below-grade buildings at Washington Square Village to be used for academic space with publically accessible landscape above.

The plan envisions new public open space and a public school. It will be replacing the current Coles Gym, current retail, and current open space.

- 6. The meeting was opened for questions from the public. It was emphasized that all questions should focus specifically on the uses in the core. The following is a list of questions posed by members of the public:
 - a. Will the student congestion on the east side of Washington Square Park be reduced?
 - b. What is the total number of bodies that will be added to the area?
 - c. Is there a guarantee that formerly private areas in the superblocs will be opened up to the public?
 - d. Does NYU pay real estate taxes to the city, and if so at what rate relative to the market?
 - e. Is that fact that NYU does not pay taxes the reason it can absorb buildings at the rate it is so doing?
 - f. Where is the money for the expansion coming from?
 - g. Why is there no specific plan for construction except in what is referred to as the Core?
 - h. What will the blocks where building will be occurring look like during the time when construction is actually taking place?
 - i. What is the impulse for the need for NYU to grow and the need for space if it is not being driven by significant future enrollment growth?
 - j. Why is it not possible for NYU to take the 3 million square feet of growth planned for this neighborhood and look to develop it locations like the financial district, where NYU would be welcomed and would be contextual?
 - k. Why does NYU need square feet of space? How did you get to this number?
 - l. Since you have described the 12th Street dormitory project as having been mismanaged, what would NYU have done differently in connection with the project if it had heard from the community?
 - m. What has this dialogue with the community been about if nothing in NYU's plans has changed over the last two years?
 - n. Why does NYU need to run a hotel?
 - o. Has thought been given to rearranging the location of some of NYU's schools?
 - p. Has NYU considered whether the level of growth contemplated could backfire and reduce the desirability of NYU to students considering coming here?
 - q. Is it true that when the superblocs were built NYU promised that the remaining land would be left open in perpetuity?
 - r. What will be the increase in permanent residents and what will be the increase in temporary residents in the third decade of this plan as compared to the present? What kind of increase in infrastructure will be needed to support this increase in population?
 - s. How does the plan intend to deal with the presence of underground streams in the area?

- t. Why is NYU not reporting property purchases being made in the Village besides those purchases NYU is technically required to report?
- u. Is there a reason for the many empty apartments in Washington Square Village?
- v. What is the FAR of the buildings mentioned in NYU's presentation? What the zoning changes are involved in connection with these buildings?
- w. Does the land where the Morton Williams supermarket sits belong to NYU? Did NYU pay to have the former Associated market move?
- x. Considering that a lot of the planned housing construction is to accommodate faculty with families who will further overburden our already crowded schools, why can't NYU faculty be asked to commute into the city like other people?
- y. Can you provide some sort of time frame on when the promised public school will be built? What sort of guarantees will NYU provide that the school and any other amenities for children promised in the past will be ensured and not just be empty promises?
- z. Will there be some sort of negotiation with the city for compensation since a tax-exempt institution is planning to take over what is currently taxed property?
- aa. How does NYU plan on obtaining the LaGuardia Place garden land for construction, land which is DOT-owned? How will the DOT exchange green space for concrete?
- bb. Can you discuss size of the playground space planned which seems smaller than the size of the current playground space? Do you know the difference between the current square footage of the current Coles building with the athletic center planned as its replacement?
- cc. Who will address any problems that arise with the structures that belong to neighboring property owners?

The responses provided by NYU's representatives to these questions were a combination of reiterations of statements made during NYU's presentation, requests to defer answers for later meetings intended to address the specific subject of a question, and acknowledgements that currently they did not possess the information necessary for a reply. There was a high degree of audience dissatisfaction with the level of specificity offered in the responses.

- 7. Jo Hamilton noted that there remain many unanswered questions and that she will ask CB2's Executive Committee to prepare a letter to NYU requesting a point-by-point response to the recommendations and responding to the questions asked at this forum. She stated that this is a long process and there a lot of information that needs to be digested and that there will be many more meetings to specifically address issues such as zoning, landmarks, a new public school, open spaces. She then opened the floor to questions from members of CB2. The following questions were posed by members of CB2:
 - a. What is the anticipated population of the new building planned for the Coles Center site? How many units will there be and how many people are anticipated for each unit?
 - b. Has any thought been given to growth through the use of online teaching services instead of shoehorning growth into a physical space that cannot accommodate it?
 - c. Why has NYU deemed as unacceptable space being offered to it that is within walking distance and/or with two subway stops of the core area?

- d. If NYU is allowed to build the 3 million square feet of space it is planning, will that be the maximum amount it will ever construct in the core area?
 - e. Isn't it inconsistent to talk about needing space in incremental amounts when the actual needs of construction would require NYU to build large amounts of space at one time?
 - f. Is it a fair assumption to make that the 2031 Plan will be fully built by that year?
 - g. Considering the community concerns, isn't it unreasonable to ask that we approve something now that is binding in perpetuity even if it is not built?
8. The audience was reminded to check CB2's online calendar for future meetings. The chair stated that there will be follow-up regarding questions that were not answered during this forum, and that the goal is to ensure that everyone has the information needed to make fully informed decisions.

The forum concluded at approximately 9:00 p.m.