

Senate Committee on Campus Planning and Physical Development
Annual Report to the Senate 2013-2014
July 2014

The committee reelected Ronald Breslow as chair, and David King as vice chair. We met eight times in the 2013-2014 academic period, and generally had one or more guests from the administration. We also normally reviewed the documents from the Trustees that were to be discussed by the Trustees' committee a few days after our meeting. We made detailed comments on those documents, and the chair of our committee reported them to the Trustees' committee at their open meeting.

The 168th Street Subway Station. In the past our committee had stimulated Columbia plans to renovate the 168th Street 1/A subway station, along with substantial financial support (\$32 million) from the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA). We met with Patrick Burke, Assistant Vice President for Capital Projects Administration of the Columbia University Medical Center, to hear about progress, since he is the Columbia person in charge of coordinating with the MTA. Columbia is contributing \$2 million to the project. The focus is on structural repairs on the 1 train line and upstairs in the station. There will be new flooring, painting, and tile repairs and upgrades to the stairs and handrails. The renovations are being done at night and on weekends, and are scheduled to be finished in the third quarter of 2015. A number of members of our committee use that subway station regularly, and had detailed comments and questions. We will follow the progress of this project, and will raise any issues that still need to be addressed as these first plans are carried out.

Quality of Student Life. We discussed the Student Quality of Life Survey, particularly the parts related to physical development. Currently many students use the Business School library as quiet space for studying, and also as a place to eat and talk. Such space will need to be found when the Business School moves to Manhattanville. The Business School also has a cafeteria that is widely used by students generally, and when it moves some replacement will need to be made.

Manhattanville. Our committee discussed plans and progress of the Mind Brain Behavior Institute in Manhattanville with Thomas Jessell, the Claire Tow Professor of Motor Neuron Disorders in Neuroscience, Professor of Biochemistry and Molecular Biophysics, and Co-director of the Mortimer B. Zuckerman Mind Brain Behavior Institute; he was accompanied by Adrian Hill, Executive Director for Planning and Development. They expect the new campus in Manhattanville to be ready for occupancy in two or three years. We discussed the number of new personnel to be hired, the number who will move from current Columbia space, and the number (60) of new labs being constructed. Sen. Sam Silverstein was a guest of the committee, and suggested that Cold Spring Harbor might want to cooperate with Columbia in its facilities. A major question is the role of the Manhattanville activities in Columbia undergraduate education. Undergraduate research will certainly be possible, and perhaps lectures as well.

We were fortunate that Sen. Kristina Ford, Professor of Professional Practice in the Faculty of International Affairs and Special Advisor for Academic Coordination in Manhattanville, joined our committee. She used to be head of city planning in New Orleans and teaches land use planning at SIPA. With her help we discussed some general questions about Manhattanville in several of our committee meetings. The current plans do not close any of the east-west streets that go through the Manhattanville property, so it is a different type of campus from what we have in Morningside. The open street plan was part of the general presentation to the city, and probably is irreversible. We discussed some of the academic plans involving Manhattanville with Vice Provost Stephen Rittenberg.

Space Planning for the Arts and Sciences. We met with Sen. David Madigan, Executive Vice President for Arts and Sciences, and Sue Mescher, Deputy Vice President, Strategic Planning. We received a document showing the space usage at Columbia, with details for every department. Our total usable space is 4.5 million square feet, of which 51% belongs to the Arts and Sciences. The document was produced by the space planning team in Facilities, led by Joe Mannino and Gene Villalobos. They have coded every room in every building. This raised again for the committee the question of the future of Uris when the Business School moves. Of various suggestions, an intriguing one is to use it for classrooms to replace some of our outmoded classrooms that could then be repurposed.

How to evaluate the needs of various entities is still a challenging problem throughout Columbia. For example, Pupin is being renovated for the office and research needs of the Physics and Astronomy Departments, but the classrooms in Pupin are widely used for undergraduate teaching and have a 19th-century aura. They could and should be renovated independent of the time scale for the rest of Pupin. In their present state they give a negative impression of Columbia to students, faculty, and visitors.

Space Needs of the Engineering School. We had an excellent session with Mary Boyce, the new Dean of the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences at Columbia. She moved to Columbia from MIT, a leading institution in the field, in order to bring Columbia Engineering strongly upward in strength and reputation. We are now number 14 in graduate school rankings, and her expressed mission is to bring SEAS at Columbia up to somewhere in the top ten. She showed us her detailed plans. A big part of what is needed to achieve this concerns facilities. There are now many excellent potential faculty who would move to Columbia from other first-rank schools, or would come to Columbia at the beginning of their careers rather than to other strong institutions, if we could offer them something at least close to what they have and can get elsewhere in terms of lab space and available instrumentation. One attraction of Columbia is the excellent way in which Engineering and Applied Sciences can interact with our strengths in the Earth Institute, the Mind Brain Behavior center, various A&S science departments, and the Business and Medical schools. While a dream might be to move all of SEAS to Manhattanville, the realistic choice is to do what can be done immediately on the Morningside campus. The space and the plans exist, and all that is needed is money. We support her plans and her proposal that significant fundraising be undertaken to permit the plans to be effectuated. A stronger SEAS will add to Columbia's overall reputation and to the reality of scientific strength that is closely related to engineering and applied science.

The 119th Street Entrance to the Campus. We are concerned about improving all aspects of Columbia that convey a negative impression relative to that of our peers. This was one important motivation for urging the renovation of the 168th Street subway station, or of the physics lecture rooms. As a small but real problem, many people come to Columbia through the 119th Street entrance, and it is where the garbage is processed. Anyone coming to park cars in the garage enters that way, and many students and staff use that entrance regularly. Thus we had proposed that a contest be undertaken among architecture students to come up with a feasible way to improve the experience of entering Columbia that way. We will continue to press this idea, which at least has an interesting educational role for our architecture students. We hope a way can be found that meets the requirements of the garbage functions of that entrance while improving the aesthetic experience of those who use it to enter Columbia.

The committee gratefully acknowledges the excellent help we received from Senate staffer Jessica Raimi.

Respectfully submitted,

The Committee on Campus Planning and Physical Development
Ronald Breslow, Chair
David King, Co-chair

Campus Planning and Physical Development Committee 2013-2014

Ten.	Ronald Breslow, CHAIR	A&S/NS
Ten.	Andreas Hielscher	SEAS
Ten.	Frank Lichtenberg	BUS

Nonten.	David King <i>n-s</i> , VICE CHAIR	GSAPP
Nonten.	Kristina Ford	SIPA

Stu.	Victor Kagan	CDM
Stu.	Rashad Palmer	GSAPP
Stu.	Evan Plous	GSAS/SS

Admin. Joseph Ienuso *n-s*

Alum. Dermot Johnson *n-s*

Admin. staff Jerald Boak *n-s* Morningside/Lamont

Lib. staff Aline Locascio *n-s*

Off. Res. Talia Atkin *n-s*

n-s = non-senator