

Staten Island

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CAMPUS SITE OKAYED

By MARY ENGELS

The Willowbrook site for a proposed consolidated campus of The College of Staten Island was unanimously approved by the Facilities and Finance Committee of the City University of New York and is expected to be approved by the full board of City University when it meets on Jan. 28.

Dr. Edmund Volpe, president of the college, made the announcement yesterday at a press conference held at the St. George campus. He said he now felt "fairly comfortable" and that "we can now move forward on getting the funding approved in the state's expense budget to get the architectural planning underway."

Volpe said the college site planners who have been working on site analysis and evaluation were "quite objective in their report."

The lengthy study, which was undertaken by Edward Durell Stone Associates, architects and planners, at a cost of \$500,000, shows "Willowbrook far ahead of the other sites," said Volpe.

The other sites included the present St. George and Sunnyside campuses, and the Ocean Breeze site at South Beach, which is owned by the college.

"Willowbrook more than doubles the size of the two present sites we have. It saves money, some \$70 million, compared to building a new campus at South Beach. It also saves time because many of the existing buildings are in pretty good shape," he said.

When the study began last April, Willowbrook was not even mentioned in the plans.

"At the time we were for consolidation at the Ocean Breeze site," said Volpe.

However, State Sen. John Marchi (R-C-Staten Island) mentioned the possibility of the Willowbrook property, which is presently the site of the Staten Island Developmental Center, to the college president.

In turn, Volpe noted he was approached by the state's Division of the Budget on the subject. It was at that time that Willowbrook came into the picture.

However, Volpe indicated he didn't really visit the site until early November when he found to his amazement that "it didn't have an institutional type

look which I had been afraid of."

"Indeed," Volpe said, "I found an Ivy League quality about the buildings and I found that they had a natural quadrangle that makes a perfect setting for a campus."

"Given the condition of the buildings for rehab and reuse I can see us shortening our college move in time by about four years compared to the other sites."

Volpe noted that planner-architect, Peter Capone had projected a fully operating campus by the year 1989 if all goes well.

"As this Island grows, our educational mission will grow and since our mission is tied to the future of the Island we will be providing a facility which will be doubling the amount of space and provides us with a variable amount of room necessary for expansion."

"I envision this will be a facility that is the finest college campus in the City University system and indeed in the whole college system not only for a decade but hundreds of years to come."

The college is requesting 180 acres from the state, which leaves some 200 acres remaining for a decision by the Willowbrook Task Force as to what will be done with the rest of the land.