

Before a single classroom or office is moved from the present college sites, it must be decided what will happen to the cast-away properties.

Disposing of the buildings in St. George may not be as easy as it seems. There is already an excess of office space in St. George, and more is on the way. To what useful purpose could the old buildings be put?

Then there is the 110-acre Ocean Breeze property. The college's consultant recommends selling it for \$20 million to a developer who could turn it into 1,492 condominiums. That's exactly the kind of fast-buck development that has ruined so much of Staten Island already. Is it really the best use of such a large, government-owned parcel?

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, there is the 42-acre Sunnyside campus. Again, the consultant recommends letting it be turned into 645 condominiums and pocketing the cash. That would be far from compatible with the neighboring, low-density community.

It may well turn out that residential development is the most viable alternative in Sunnyside, but other options must be explored in more detail, with sufficient public discussion.

Several years ago it was suggested that an Island judicial center might be moved there. That's a possibility. Perhaps the campus could house additional facilities for the handicapped. That might be an appropriate part of a college-for-developmental center tradeoff. What about state offices? If the Port Authority finally sells the World Trade Center, as some have suggested, that would not be an unwelcome development.

Clearly many troubling questions remain.

It is not enough to simply move the college to Willowbrook and declare it a success. Any move to consolidate must include a comprehensive plan for the Willowbrook property, the Sunnyside property, the Ocean Breeze property and the St. George properties.

A thriving new college at Willowbrook will be good news ... but not if it comes at the expense of other Staten Island communities left with the abandoned scraps.