

CB 2 blasts report on CSI consolidation

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College of Staten Island (CSI) officials have some new ammunition to support a proposal to move the college's campus to Willowbrook, but that doesn't mean some proponents of another site in Ocean Breeze are lying down and playing dead.

Community Board 2 last night blasted a CSI consultant's final report, released last week, which argues for consolidating CSI's Sunnyside and St. George campuses at the Staten Island Developmental Center (SIDC), Willowbrook.

At the monthly meeting at Sea View Hospital and Home, board members voted unanimously to conduct a public hearing on the consolidation proposal sometime after Chairman Edmund Murphy has a chance to discuss the matter with Borough President Ralph Lamberti.

Discussion of the college's proposal and of problems associated with the Fresh Kills landfill dominated the meeting. Turmoil resulting from the ongoing move of community board offices from one Sea View building to another prevented most committees from meeting in the past month, so last night's agenda was unusually light.

Both proposed CSI sites are in the Mid-Island board's area. The board had voted several months ago to support establishing the combined campus at the Ocean Breeze site, and board members expressed anger that the consultant's final report made no mention of community feelings. They voted 29-2 for a motion to ask the college for an explanation of that omission.

"This is an incomplete report," Ray Watson, first vice chairman, told the board. "There is no community input whatsoever."

The report, prepared by Edward Durrell Stone Associates, a Manhattan engineering consulting firm, concluded that using a combination of existing and new buildings at SIDC would be far superior to starting from scratch at Ocean Breeze. It said moving to Willowbrook would cost the state about \$70 million less than going to Ocean Breeze.

Trevor Mills, chairman of the board's ad hoc committee on a consolidated CSI campus, said that when his committee was formed last May it was in order to gain a voice in the consolidation proceedings. "We didn't realize it was about finished and any participation would be nil," he said.

Mills said he was unaware that the report was anywhere near completion until the board's district manager received a copy of it Jan. 7. He and member Philip Scampas asserted incorrectly that the Advance had received a copy prior to its release.

The Ocean Breeze site, near the South Beach Psychiatric Center on Seaview Avenue, was purchased several years ago by the state Dormitory Authority with the intention that CSI would eventually consolidate there. It was the favored choice for consolidation until last spring, when the state began exploring possible uses for the 390-acre SIDC complex once its disabled residents are relocated to group homes in the community. The college now wants 187 acres at SIDC, which would leave 113 acres for proposed facilities for the handicapped and recreational activities.

The consultants also recommend that the 110-acre Ocean Breeze site be sold for \$20 million to developers who could build 1,492 condominiums there, a proposal which irked many board members.

As often occurs when the board has a light agenda, members also engaged in an extended discussion of problems associated with the expansion of Fresh Kills, slated to become the city's only active landfill at the end of the year. The hourlong discussion left the board no closer to proposing a solution or policy other than restating its commitment to resource recovery, or garbage incineration.

The board did vote 33-0, with two abstentions, to ask the Island's Borough Board to convene a special meeting on the Sanitation Department's plan to begin dumping garbage Feb. 1 in a section of the landfill that borders a residential area in Greenridge.

In the same resolution, members directed the board's district manager to ask the city's corporation counsel what actions a community board may take to oppose the actions of another city agency, in this case the Sanitation Department.