

CSI presents Willowbrook campus plan

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College of Staten Island (CSI) officials last night formally presented their supporters with plans for a new Willowbrook campus encompassing 187 acres of red-brick buildings, tiled courtyards and lush green lawns and forests.

The architects said the site, planned for the former Staten Island Developmental Center property, would deliver 8,000 students from the asphalt of St. George and Sunnyside to the City University system's first "rural" campus.

"We are moving away from what is called the urban campus, and moving toward true campus life," said Peter Capone, president of Edward Durell Stone Associates, which drafted the master plan.

Edmond L. Volpe, CSI president, formally unveiled the design before more than 100 educators, alumni and public officials at the college's St. George campus, telling the audience that the master plan capped his 11-year search for a new campus.

"Eleven years later and at least we have a model," Volpe said. "I've discovered that when you work with the city and the state, things move a little bit slow."

Volpe said afterward the master plan has been approved by the City University Board of Trustees and that construction can begin in 1987 after the fulfillment of a \$7 million bond issue. The work is due to be completed by 1990.

In the meantime, he said, the land will be transferred from the state Department of Mental Retardation to the state Dormitories Authority, which technically owns the property of public universities.

The audience gathered in College Hall yesterday appeared to receive the proposal warmly, restricting their questions to small details about the diagrams and model displayed on the floor.

But Borough President Ralph Lamberti, in a statement before the group, warned that college officials should not allow the unification to become a loss for St. George and Sunnyside.

"What will become of the St. George and Sunnyside campuses?" he said. "The college's departure leaves a void, a void that can only be filled by another good neighbor."

The borough president also called on college officials to see to it that the new campus is a "good neighbor" to Willowbrook residents.

According to the master plan, which was released to the press in June, the new campus will use the shells of 15 red-brick buildings that made up more than half of the developmental center's infrastructure.

The new buildings will include a 1,000-seat theater, a library and several health facilities — with none of the new structures exceeding two stories and all representing what Capone described as "quiet" architecture.

"We're talking about quiet and unspectacular architecture with a certain timelessness about it," he said.

The 2,000 parking spaces will be placed on the perimeter of the campus, leaving the interior completely oriented toward pedestrians. Each campus facility will be within five minutes of a parking lot, Capone said.

In addition, he said, a Transit Authority bus line will make stops around the campus's perimeter.