

Willowbrook center formally closing down

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The State Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities is expected to formally close the Staten Island Developmental Center in Willowbrook next week. The move will conclude a court-ordered phasing out process that began more than a decade ago at the controversial facility for the mentally retarded.

Nine buildings at the developmental center will be demolished in mid-1988 and the major part of a 10th building will be torn down as part of plans for the College of Staten Island to move into much of SIDC's present campus.

The college will inherit 216 acres of SIDC's 346-acre site when the mental institution finally closes its doors and relocates its remaining 100 clients to nearby group homes. Lou Gaam, a spokesman for OMRDD, said the agency will retain 140 acres to run the group home operation and support services for mentally retarded clients.

Following next week's

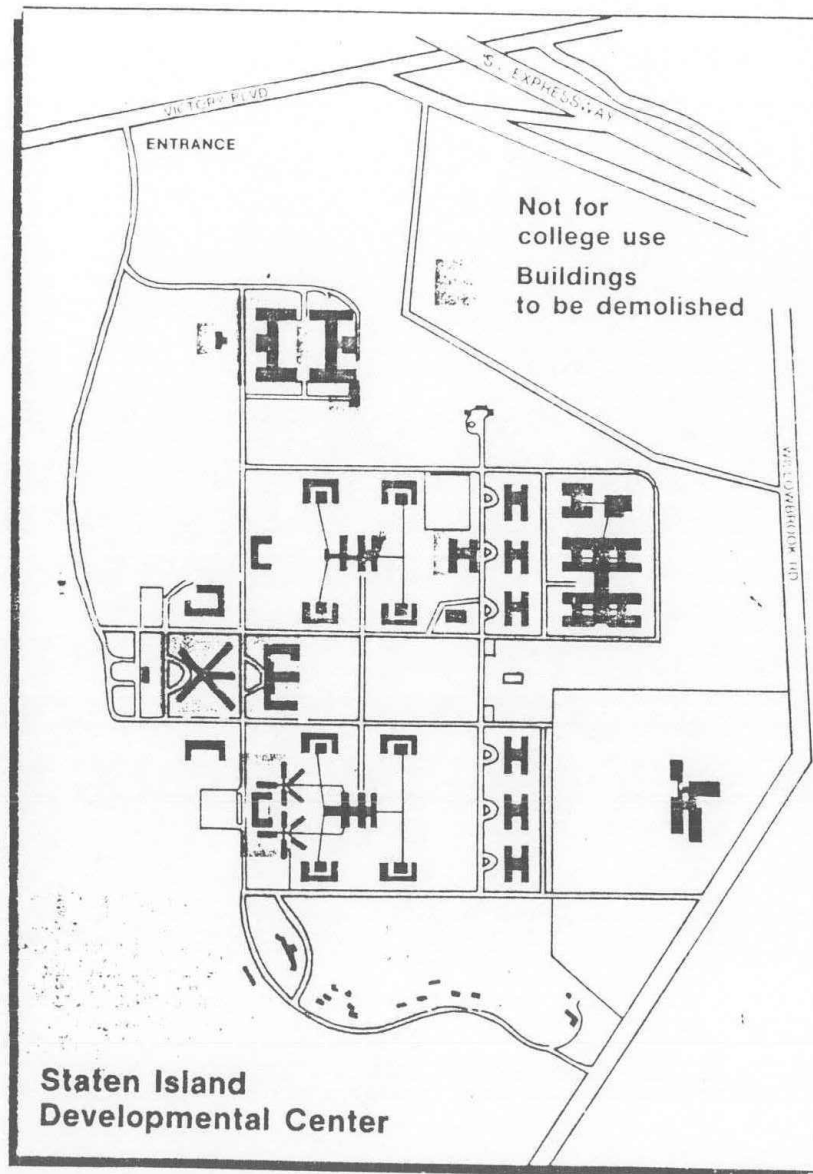
shuttering of the main facilities, there will be a formal transfer of land from OMRDD to the state Dormitory Authority later this month.

College spokeswoman Liz Seder said the transfer of title between state agencies must be completed before any construction planning or demolition can begin. The Dormitory Authority is responsible for campus construction for the City University of New York.

For its part, CSI plans to consolidate its Sunnyside and St. George campuses in a move that will take four years and cost \$235.2 million. When completed in the early 1990s, the campus will be a showpiece within CUNY and offer numerous educational opportunities to Islanders, CUNY officials say.

The master plan for the college's relocation calls for 16 buildings to be renovated. Demolition of the nine buildings will cost \$3.1 million.

Michael Winstanley, an associate architect with the Manhattan firm Edward Durrell Stone

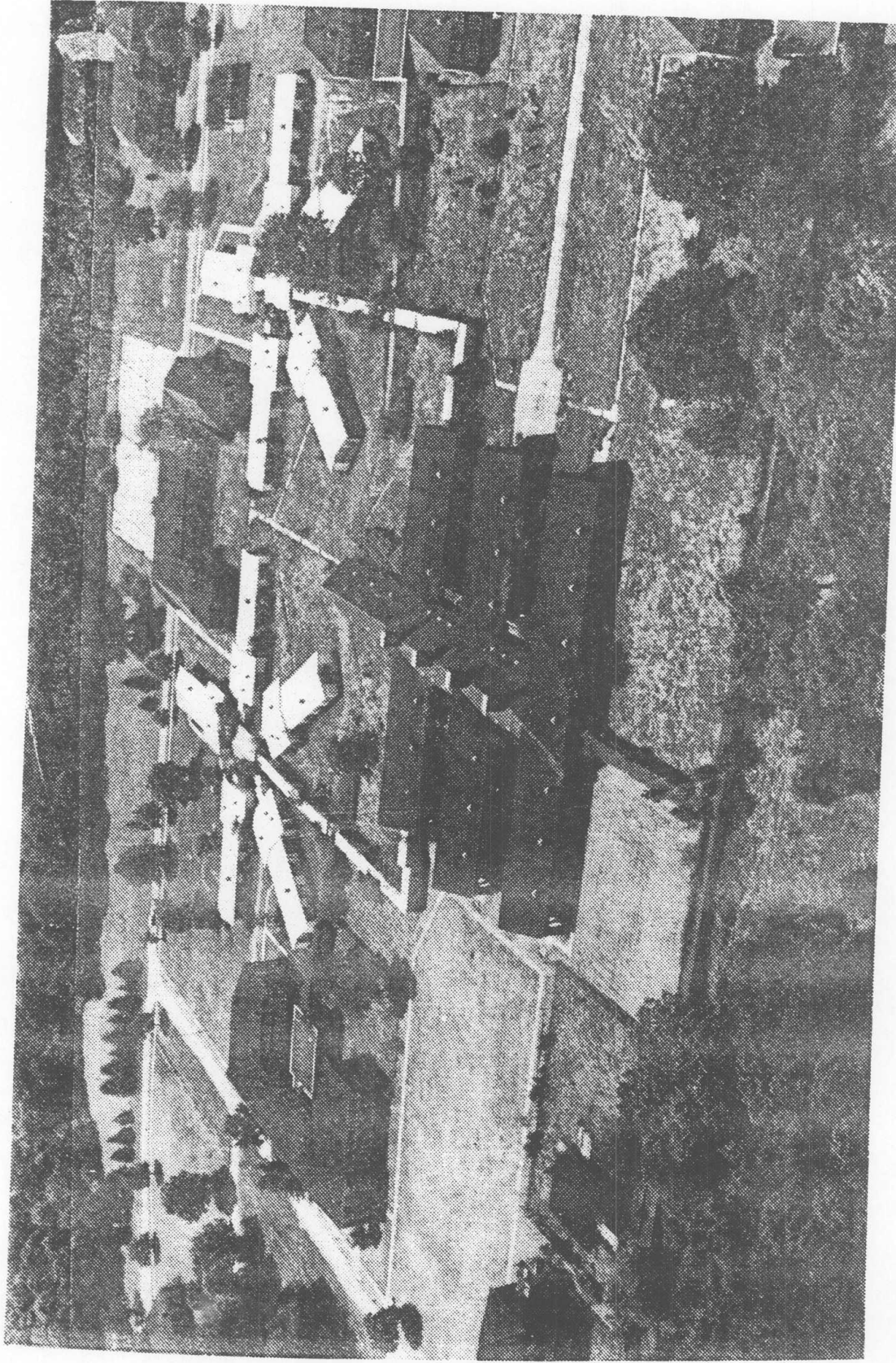


Associates, which designed the master plan, said some of the buildings are being destroyed because they are inefficient for academic use. Some are temporary

structures, such as trailers.

Winstanley said the 16 buildings are being marked for renovation because of their architectural

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ADVANCE PHOTO/STEVE ZAFFARANO

These white buildings and the major part of another are among those slated to be demolished at the developmental center in mid-1988 as part of plans for the College of Staten Island to move into much of SIDC's present campus.

Demolish

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character and ability to be adapted for classroom space and other academic purposes.

The plan calls for five design packages including a theater and auditorium, two brick academic quadrangles, a student center and library, a gymnasium and power plant.

The library will be situated in one academic quadrangle, while the student center will be located in another. In between the two quadrangles will be the theater, the visitor's center, administration building and gymnasium. The quadrangles will be surrounded by perimeter parking, access roads, paths and woods to give the campus a "traditional feeling."

Ms. Seder said.

Winstanley said the campus will receive a total of 520,000 square feet of new space and 465,000 square feet of renovated construction.

CSI plans to leave St. George in 1991 and Sunnyside in 1992. That schedule reflects a delay of a year; in 1985, the state discovered it could not sell bonds to finance

the construction and the Assembly and Senate could not agree on legislation to create a new bonding mechanism.

More than a year later, that problem was resolved when a bill was passed last summer, allowing the Dormitory Authority to sell \$1.3 billion in bonds, a portion of which will be used for the CSI project.