

**By MARY ENGELS**  
Daily News Staff Writer

**M**ORE THAN FOUR YEARS AGO, officials of the College of Staten Island announced plans for the consolidation of its two existing campuses into one at the site of the former Staten Island Developmental Center in Willowbrook.

At the time, the initial phase of construction was scheduled to begin in mid-1986, with the school scheduled to open by late this year.

Unfortunately, it didn't work out that way.

Edmond Volpe, the college president, said almost three years was lost because of factors "beyond our control."

Declaring that it was "rough dealing with unknown territory," Volpe said, "Some buildings were in good condition, others were not."

### New library

Volpe said that an entirely new library building has to be built because the floors in the existing buildings were not able to support the weight of the books.

"Two years ago we had to revise the schedule because of delays in getting money from the State Legislature," Volpe said.

Originally targeted to cost about \$200 million, the new price tag is just under \$400 million. "Every delay costs us several million," Volpe said, adding that the most recent expense was about \$18 million for asbestos removal — work which is still going on.

"We will be going to the Legislature for more monies this fall, and I feel

confident we will get it," he said. "I couldn't stop now if I wanted to. It has to go forward."

Volpe said that the use of the Willowbrook site still represents a savings over the cost of building an entirely new campus from the ground up.

Plans for the merged campus were 10 years in the making.

### 10,000 students a year

With enrollment of more than 10,000 students a year at the St. George and Sunnyside campuses, the college was "bursting at the seams," Volpe said.

"It had to consolidate in order to achieve operational efficiencies, eliminate duplication of facilities and accommodate any expected future growth in enrollment, faculty and staff," he said.

The campus, to be located on 205 acres, will consist of 14 renovated buildings and four new ones.

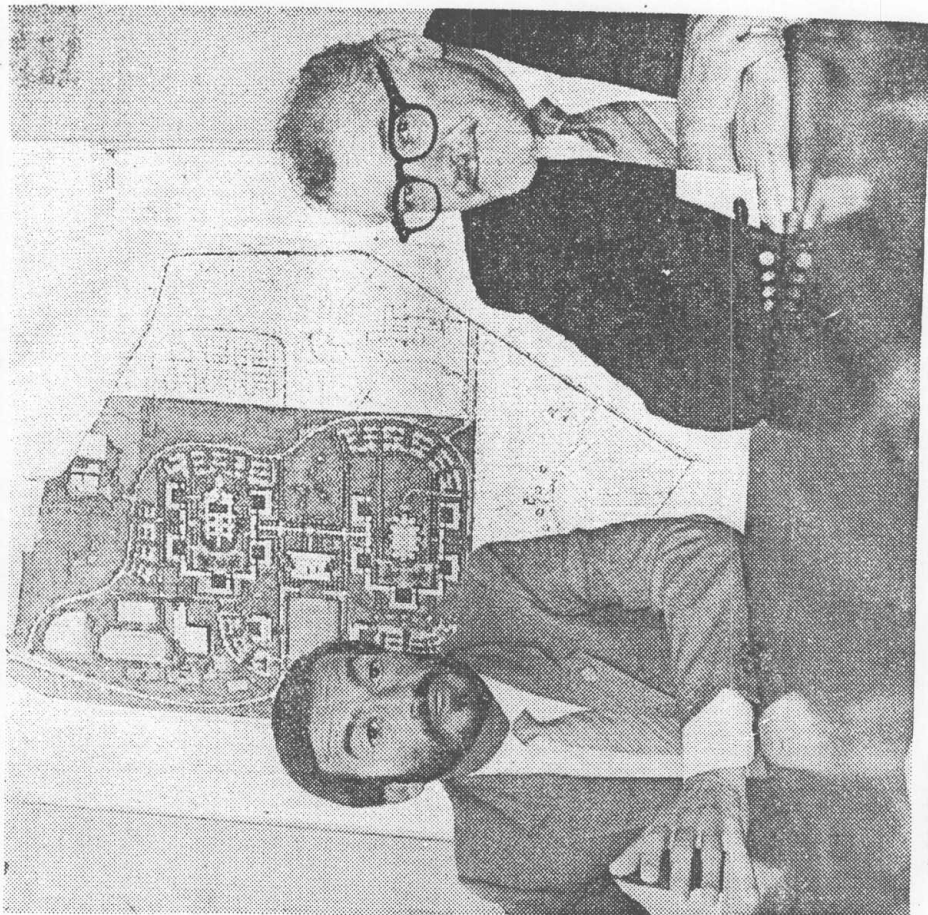
"When we had the money problem, we had to cut about 20,000 square feet from the original plans to reduce the cost," said Volpe. He said that this resulted in the reduction of the original theater of 900 seats to one of 450, the loss of part of a gym, and a cutback in the student dining room from 700 to 500 seats.

"We chopped here and there, and also lost a lot of administrative space as well as some labs," Volpe said. "We'll be tight when we open, but there is always room for expansion down the road."

Despite the extended delay, however, the college will finally have its

See **CAMPUS** Page 3

# Willowbrook campus consolidation is moving toward completion in 1992



**COLLEGE** president Edmond Volpe (r.) discusses campus plans with Peter Capone, president of Edward Duyrell Stone Associates.