

# CSI's costly consolidation

## Renovation price tag twice as much as new campus

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A recent study suggests that replacing the College of Staten Island's two campuses with a consolidated campus comprised of new and renovated buildings at the site of the old Willowbrook State School may cost more than twice as much as building an entirely new college campus elsewhere in the country.

The study, conducted by the Association of Physical Plant Managers (APPM) in Washington, D.C., an organization of college

planning and development officials, maintains college construction costs across the nation currently average \$100 per gross square foot.

Depending on the building, gross square-foot construction costs at CSI range from \$111 per square foot, for renovation of former dormitories into administrative space, to \$263 per square foot for the college's planned theater and performing arts center.

(The term "gross square foot" is used by the construction industry to refer to the space occupied by a

building — not the building's "net square footage," which is its usable space.)

CSI officials now estimate that actual construction costs of the campus will rise to \$310.1 million by the tentative completion date of 1994, and that it will cost nearly \$90 million more to furnish classrooms and offices and purchase specialized equipment.

In case you're adding, that's a \$400.1 million price tag, more than double the original \$200 million estimates made in 1985 when it was announced that the new CSI

campus would be located on the grounds of the Willowbrook site, which in recent years has been known as the Staten Island Developmental Center.

The entire cost of CSI is being underwritten by the sale of state Dormitory Authority bonds, which are to be repaid with taxpayer money.

Last February, CSI president Edmond L. Volpe announced that the cost of the campus had jumped to \$400 million in the five years since the move was first announced. In October, the City

University of New York (CUNY), of which CSI is a part, budgeted \$404.6 million for the project.

CSI officials are aware that the project's costs are higher than had been expected. They blame high labor costs in the New York metropolitan area, delays and unforeseen, unavoidable changes in the project for much of the added expense.

In a statement read by CSI public relations chief Rosemarie Dressler, Volpe said "every effort

(See CSI, Page A 15)