

NYU plan a done deal

University can expand campus in Greenwich Village

By **MARINA E. CUEVAS**
Special to amNewYork

The state's highest court gave the green light yesterday for NYU's plan to expand by nearly 2 million square feet in Greenwich Village.

After a battle between the school and opponents that lasted years, the New York State Court of Appeals upheld a lower-court ruling, rejecting a suit by opponents that claimed four pieces of park land were off limits for development.

The judges said that the four greenspaces — Mercer Playground, LaGuardia Park, LaGuardia Corner Gardens and Mercer-Houston Dog Run — were owned by the city and to be used



The \$6 billion expansion plan, expected to be complete in 2031, has long been a source of contention in the city.

temporarily as public space, and are not "implied parks," according to the decision.

Activist groups, like the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation, were furious that the courts didn't take action to

stop the development.

"This will not only have a devastating impact upon the Village, but weakens the legal protections that all New Yorkers have enjoyed for public park space," said Andrew Berman, executive director

'This could have been a win-win, but instead was a lose-lose.'

— **ANDREW BERMAN**, executive director of Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation, on the NYU expansion plan

space in an area bounded by West Third and Houston streets and LaGuardia Place and Mercer Street.

NYU officials praised the court's decision and said the school would move forward with the expansion.

NYU spokesman John Beckman reassured that there will be public green spaces included.

"The project will produce jobs and economic benefits, create public open spaces — including playgrounds and planted seating areas — that will be mapped as park land and maintained by NYU, and enable NYU to contribute to the city's idea economy and highly educated workforce by recruiting top scholars and top students," he said in a statement.

Berman said he wasn't buying it and said the school's plan will turn "one of New York's most beloved neighborhoods into something akin to a company town."

Learn all about the secrets of NYU:
amny.com/secrets

amNY.com

of a historic preservation society. "This could have been a win-win, but instead was a lose-lose."

The \$6 billion expansion plan, set to be complete in 2031, includes new academic buildings, faculty housing and community