



NYU's Filing with the Landmarks Preservation Commission: An Overview of the Fourth Tower

October 7, 2010

NYU 2031: NYU in NYC is a long-term, city-wide strategy for growth that emerged from a multiple-year community discussion which was launched in 2006.

The strategy's three-pronged approach calls for situating half of the projected square footage outside of the Greenwich Village neighborhood, for maximizing capacity on its existing footprint in its Greenwich Village core thus reducing pressure on the surrounding neighborhood, and seeking opportunities in the neighborhood that are aligned with agreed-upon community principles.

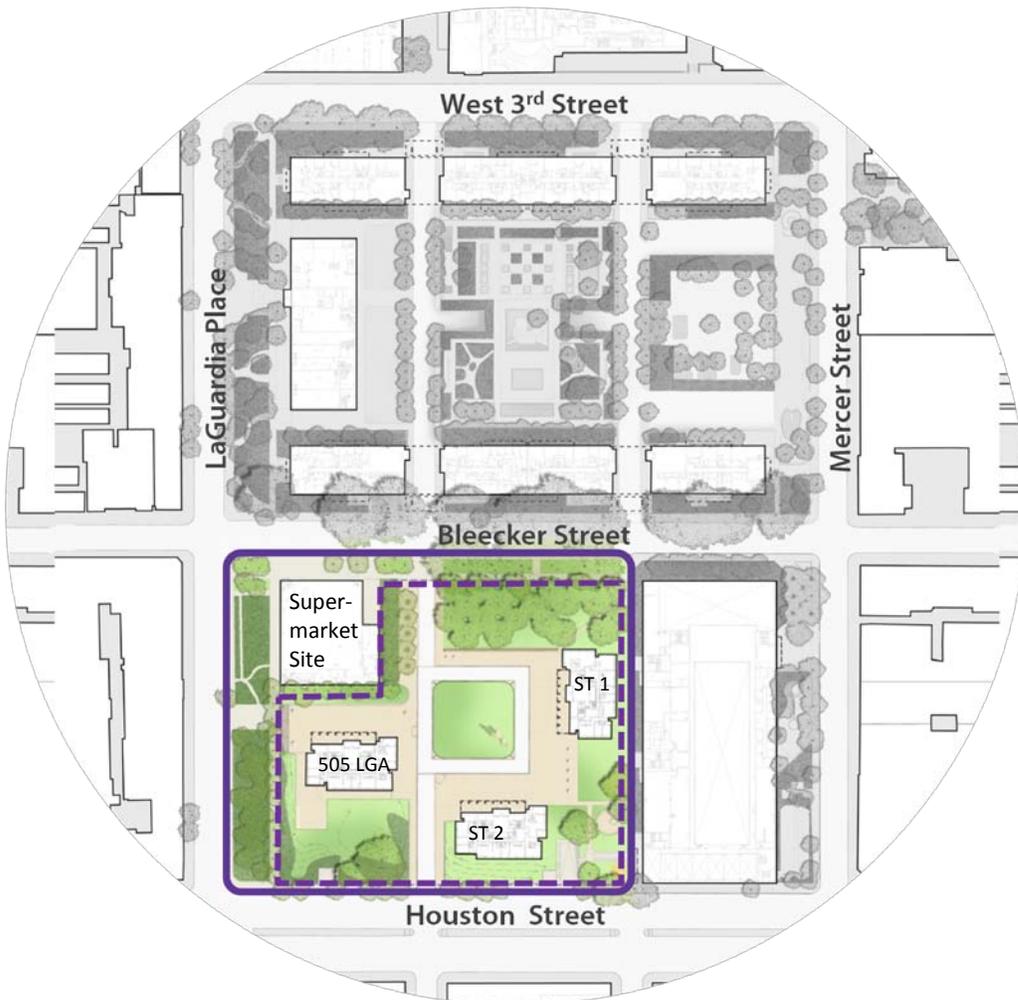
The strategy for the "Core" calls for using the available square footage under existing zoning rules – but no additional square footage – on two "superblocks" owned by NYU (the Washington Square Village block and the University Village (Silver Towers) block) and seeking all necessary City approvals.

On the University Village block, one of NYU's proposals is to build a tower. Originally the University had considered building on the existing supermarket site at the northwest corner of the block, which it owns. However, a far better proposal emerged from the planning process: by shifting the proposed tower eastward, it is possible to better integrate a new building with the existing I.M. Pei design, add to the "dynamic" pinwheel arrangement of the buildings, preserve clear view corridors, frame the bust of Sylvette, and anchor the fourth corner of the site with green space. The proposal also includes a series of site enhancements that call for the restoration and improvement of landscaping, a new play area, a dog run, improved and restored lighting and other elements.

City approvals for this site include both the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) and approvals from the Landmarks Preservation Commission (the University Village site was landmarked with the University's support in 2008). The City rules dictate that the Landmarks issue be resolved prior to entering into the ULURP. The LPC review will provide clarity on whether the University's ULURP application includes a building on the Morton Williams site or a building on the Landmarked University Village Site.

EXISTING CONDITIONS ON SUPERBLOCKS (AREA OF DISCUSSION HIGHLIGHTED)

NYU's strategic framework calls for new buildings on both superblocks, the current proposal focuses on the University Village/Pei-designed towers and site (outlined in solid purple line below). The dotted purple line shows the landmark boundary.



NYU's Proposal: To build not on the supermarket site, but instead to shift the building to the east onto the Landmarked Site

In 2001, when NYU purchased the supermarket, the intention was to have the option to develop it over time. There exists an "as-of-right" option for the site that allows adding bulk/square footage to that corner at a future date (2021), even absent a larger ULURP.

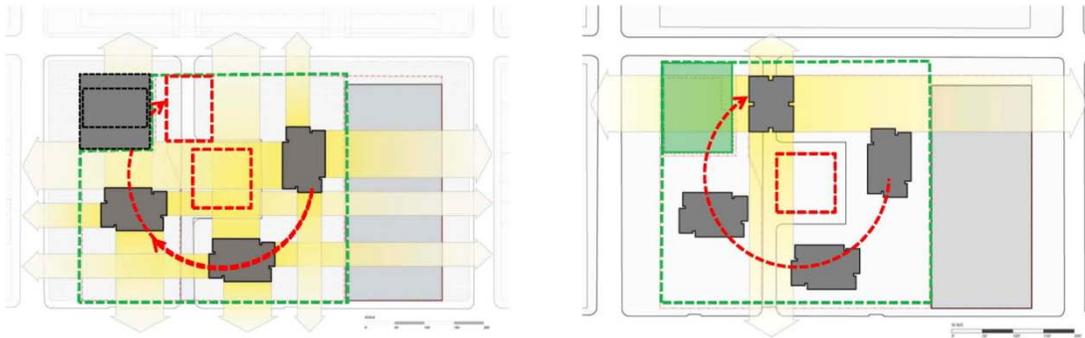
However, through the 2031 planning effort, a group of designers (including landscape architects) helped the University approach the “superblocks” more strategically and holistically. This led to a proposal to build instead a tower to the east of the supermarket site that would be integrated into the landmarked site, though this would require approvals from the LPC.

The proposed tower design complements the existing Pei design by adding to the dynamic pinwheel arrangement of the buildings, maintaining the view corridors for the tower arrangement, framing the bust of Sylvette, and building on the asymmetrical facades of the Pei structures to provide a rhythm and counter balance. This design also, importantly, allows a new green space to be created on the northwest corner of the site – truly completing, in a sense, the “tower in the park” concept. The supermarket would be replaced within one of the new development sites (most likely integrated into a new mixed use facility slated for the existing gym site).

PROPOSED SITE PLAN WITH PREFERRED OPTION – FOURTH TOWER AND NEW OPEN SPACE
(Requires Landmarks Preservation Commission Approval)



RESPECTING AND ADHERING TO THE PEI CONCEPT



Pei Design Concept

- "Towers in the Park" typology
- "Pinwheel" arrangement around a central lawn
- Preserves clear view corridors from each tower

Proposed Fourth Tower Design Concept

- Continues Pinwheel arrangement
- Maintains view corridors
- Frees up corner for open space
- Strengthens "Towers in the Park" concept

Fourth Tower Facts

- The proposed building would sit on the landmarked site and therefore requires Landmarks Preservation Commission approval.
- The footprint of the building is relatively small and would best accommodate residential uses.
- The ultimate program for the building will be decided during the ULURP process; the design allows flexibility and could accommodate residential (faculty and/or student) and a university-affiliated hotel.
- Building to the east (on the landmarked site) allows a half acre new public green space to be added on the northwest corner (on the existing supermarket site). The supermarket would be relocated to nearby space on the superblocks.
- The tower best preserves the view corridors for the existing Silver Towers buildings and particularly 505 LaGuardia.
- The tower is proposed at 37 stories (399 feet), including all mechanicals and cooling tower.
- The proposed square footage is 225,000 GSF.

RENDERING OF PROPOSED FOURTH TOWER ON LANDMARKED SITE
(View Looking Northwest from Houston and Mercer Streets)



RENDERING OF PROPOSED FOURTH TOWER ON LANDMARKED SITE
(View Looking North up Wooster St.)



Alternative Option – Build on Supermarket Site (Corner Building)

As noted above, NYU purchased the Morton Williams supermarket site in expectation of eventually developing it. The intention was to secure the site and have the option to develop it over time.

An “as-of-right” option exists for the site that would allow adding bulk/square footage to that corner in 2021 that would not require full ULURP approval. The site has a floor plate that is larger than the proposed tower and would therefore offer more flexibility in uses. A future building on this corner could include academic and/or residential (faculty or student) uses. The supermarket would be replaced within one of the new development sites (most likely integrated into a new mixed use facility slated for the existing gym).

In the University's judgment, from an urban design and planning perspective, a building on the corner site is less desirable than building a tower on the landmarked site; however, the University will include a new building on the corner site in the ULURP application if the proposal for the tower is not successful before the LPC.

SITE PLAN WITH ALTERNATIVE CORNER BUILDING



MASSING DIAGRAM OF WHAT IS FEASIBLE ON THE CORNER SITE WITH NO ZONING ACTIONS



The NYU 2031 strategy contemplates using the available square footage on the block to meet its needs. Thus, if the Landmarks application for the tower were unsuccessful, the proposal that would be submitted via ULURP for the corner site would be in the 225,000 square foot range (larger than the above massing diagram).

Corner Building/Supermarket Site Facts

- The building does not require Landmarks Commission approval.
- The footprint would allow a mixed-use building (academic and/or residential), which offers the University flexibility.
- A building on the site would not maintain the view corridors of the Pei composition, particularly those of 505 LaGuardia Place.
- The requested square footage for the site, if pursued in the ULURP application, would be approximately 225,000 square feet.

History of the Superblocks and University Village

The "superblocks" are a result of the 1950s Urban Renewal, slum clearance project led by the City and Robert Moses. Ultimately, nine city blocks to the southeast of Washington Square Park were cleared to make way for new development.

The northernmost block (bound by West 3rd and 4th Streets; LaGuardia Place to Mercer Street) was sold by the City to NYU in 1955 for its academic needs, and the two southern blocks were sold to a private developer.

The developer built only part of its full plan – the two of what was supposed to be three Washington Square Village buildings, the retail on LaGuardia and the supermarket – before confronting financial challenges. The City then sold the southernmost block to NYU (excluding the supermarket) and ultimately NYU also purchased the Washington Square Village buildings and the LaGuardia retail area as well.

In the early 1960s, the University commissioned I.M. Pei to design the University Village residential complex. Two of the three towers were designed for NYU faculty (Silver Towers 1 and 2) and a third as an independent moderate-income residential tower (505 LaGuardia).

The University purchased the supermarket in 2001.

The University Village site was landmarked, with the support of the University, in 2008.

NYU 2031: NYU in NYC

After many years of calls by its local community to provide a more transparent and long-range plan, in 2006 the University set out to create its first ever long-range plan for space growth. After more than three years of planning, numerous meetings and open houses, interactions with thousands of members of the public including a special Task Force convened by the Borough President, the University set forth a strategy for how it will seek to grow over the next two to three decades.

The strategy acknowledges that not all of the University's projected square footage needs can be met in and around Greenwich Village; fully half of the growth will take place outside of the area in locations such as the health corridor along First Avenue in the 20s and 30s, Downtown Brooklyn, and Governors Island.

The strategy also calls for seeking City approvals—via a Uniform Land Use Review Procedure—to allow the University, over time, to build on the superblocs. Building on the existing NYU-owned footprint is a strategic use of underutilized space, permits the creation of new public spaces, relieves pressure to develop space in the surrounding neighborhood. And where the University will continue to take advantage of opportunities in the neighborhood, it will do so adhering to principles agreed to with the community.

A ULURP application will be filed in 2011. However, because the University has decided that the preferred solution for introducing a building near the Pei towers is to build a complementary tower on the landmarked site, the first step is to take the tower through an official LPC application. The outcome of those deliberations will dictate whether the University's ULURP application is filed with a tower on the landmarked site or a building on the corner supermarket site.

For more information about NYU Plans 2031: NYU in NYC, visit: www.nyu.edu/NYUinNYC.