

# **Community Alternative to Current St. Vincent's/ Rudin Development Plan**

January, 2008

The Greenwich Village Community Task Force  
The Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation  
Public School Political Action Committee  
Waverly Bank 11 Neighbors  
West 13<sup>th</sup> Street 100 Block Association  
West 13<sup>th</sup> Street Neighborhood Association (200 Block)  
West 12<sup>th</sup> Street Block Association  
Board of 175 West 13<sup>th</sup> Street  
Board of 175 West 12<sup>th</sup> Street  
Board of 125 West 12<sup>th</sup> Street  
Board of 101 West 12<sup>th</sup> Street  
Board of 79 West 12<sup>th</sup> Street  
137, 145, 149 West 12<sup>th</sup> Street Cooperative

## **Summary of Community Concerns/Objections re: current St. Vincent's/Rudin proposal:**

- Rudin 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue building is too large and out-of-scale for neighborhood and historic district
- Hospital building is too large and out-of-scale for neighborhood and historic district
- Demolition of older, in-context hospital structures undermines historic district protections AND increases impact on neighbors with large-scale demolition
- Current plan increases density on these blocks, which already have above-average density for neighborhood (the higher density was allowed solely to accommodate the hospital, a public health community facility, but the majority of space under the proposed plan will be private luxury housing, which carries no such public benefit.)
- Ambulance and garage entrances moved to 12<sup>th</sup> Street will create serious noise and traffic problems
- Lack of a concrete plan for redesign of the Triangle, esp. in light of St. Vincent's past failure to maintain commitments about public space on the site
- Impact of years and years of construction and demolition
- Impact upon local infrastructure, most especially schools, from increase in residential population

## **However, the community recognizes the following:**

- St. Vincent's need to create a new, modern hospital
- St. Vincent's has determined that they need 630,000 sq. ft. of space to provide necessary services
- St. Vincent's seeks to generate significant income from the sale of its properties to help fund the new hospital
- Historic district designation does allow the demolition of some buildings, which by virtue of their relative newness, lack of aesthetic interest, or lack of connection to the character of the district do not warrant preservation

**In light of this, a coalition of community groups and neighbors offer an alternative plan which would allow:**

- St. Vincent's to build all 630,000 sq. ft. of space they say they need for a modern hospital
- St. Vincent's and their development partners to maintain the same total above-ground square footage currently found on these sites (in spite of the fact that most of the sites will shift to private development), **AND BUILD** 150,000 sq. ft. of underground space
- Demolition and redevelopment on 2/3 of the land proposed for demolition and redevelopment in the current plan
- 450,000 sq. ft. of non-hospital development which can be used to generate revenue for construction of a new hospital (70% of what is currently proposed)

**Specifically, the Community Alternative Plan calls for St. Vincent's/Rudin to:**

- **Keep the total *above-ground* square footage of development on all eight sites (east of 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue and O'Toole) to no more than the current total – 930,000 sq. ft.** The current St. Vincent's/Rudin plan envisions 1,130,000 sq. ft. of above-ground development; thus the Community Alternative requires a 200,000 sq. ft. reduction, presumably from the Rudin development. The currently planned 150,000 sq. ft. of below-ground space would not count towards this total, and thus the actual total sq. ft. would be 1,080,000 sq. ft.

	<b>Current Conditions on Hospital and O'Toole sites</b>	<b>St. Vincent's/ Rudin Proposal</b>	<b>Community Alternative Proposal</b>
above ground (St. Vincent's / Rudin )	930,000 sq. ft. ( 930,000 sq. ft. St. Vincent's / 0 sq. ft. Rudin )	1,130,000 sq. ft. ( 480,000 sq. ft. St. Vincent's / 650,000 sq. ft. Rudin )	930,000 sq. ft. ( 480,000 sq. ft. St. Vincent's / 450,000 sq. ft. Rudin )
below ground (hospital)	150,000 sq. ft.	150,000 sq. ft.	150,000 sq. ft.
<b>total sq. ft.</b>	<b>1,080,000 sq. ft.</b>	<b>1,280,000 sq. ft.</b>	<b>1,080,000 sq. ft.</b>

- **Retain the four "historic" buildings for re-use rather than demolition** (Smith-Raskob, Nurses Residence, and Reiss on West 12<sup>th</sup>, and Spellman on West 11<sup>th</sup>). This and the square footage limit effectively eliminates the huge Rudin tower currently planned for 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue.
- **Reduce the height of the new hospital on the O'Toole site to no more than the tallest surrounding buildings** (approx. 190 ft. as opposed to current planned 329), **while maintaining the current design and configuration of the ovoid tower and remaining within the current planned envelope for the proposed building** (i.e. reducing its size and height, rather than changing the distribution of mass). Facilities removed from the hospital building currently planned for the O'Toole site could be located on the east side of 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue, on the current St. Vincent's campus
- **Limit construction on the three large sites east of 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue where demolition would be allowed (Link/Coleman and Cronin) to no taller than the buildings currently located on those sites.** (Given the overall limit of 930,000 sq. ft., this would necessitate that at least some of the new structures be smaller than what is there now, and on the Cronin site it would almost undoubtedly necessitate development of no more than townhouse-scale.)

- **Formulate a specific plan acceptable to the community for redesign of the Triangle as usable green space as a condition for all other approvals.**
- **Keep the ambulance and garage entrances on 7th Avenue, and develop below-ground or indoor entrances and queuing areas for ambulances.**
- **Develop clear and strict construction and demolition protocols, agreed to by neighbors, to minimize impact on surrounding residents.**
- **Account for and accommodate increased demands upon infrastructure, most especially schools, generated by the development**

## **In summary, the Community Alternative Plan would:**

- keep the (above-ground) square footage to what it is now, while allowing St. Vincent's to add 150,000 sq. ft. below ground
- preserve and re-use all the historic buildings
- allow the hospital to build all the space it says it needs
- eliminate the huge Rudin Tower
- bring the new hospital building into line with the biggest of its neighbors
- allow development of 450,000 sq. ft. of non-hospital space, both in converted historic buildings and in new construction, while keeping any new development east of 7th Avenue to no taller than the buildings currently on site.

Please note: Support for the community alternative plan indicates an acceptance of the height, massing, and bulk described herein. It does not address design elements, which are yet to be presented by St. Vincent's and Rudin.