

**Committee on Campus Planning and Physical Development  
Annual Report 2017-2018**

The Committee has begun to repurpose itself, although progress has been slow. Although the title of the Committee emphasizes “Planning,” it has historically received reports of campus building and facilities projects after they have already been implemented, without the Committee having had the opportunity to offer its collective wisdom in advance. Accordingly, the Committee has been attempting to prepare ourselves to adopt a more proactive role. Since the needs of the Morningside, Manhattanville and CUMC campuses are vast, and vastly diverse, we recognize the need to focus on a few major issues.

With this in mind, we invited the following persons to bring us up to date in regard to needs and opportunities for the present and future use of our campus facilities: Barry Kane, Associate Vice President and University Registrar; Scott Wright, Vice President, Campus Services; Colleen Lewis, Executive Director of Columbia Health; David Greenberg, Executive Vice President, University Facilities and Operations; and Jessica Prata, Vice President for Sustainable Development at Columbia. Our protocol has been to send our guests a list of questions we would like them to answer and discuss. As a format for our meetings, it has worked well. While many of these questions have dealt with specific immediate challenges to the existing campus infrastructure, others have attempted to elicit information concerning the present structure of decision-making at the University (who makes the decisions) and how the Committee might be made more aware of impending initiatives so that it could offer its own comments and recommendations prior to any final decision. The point here is that the Committee would like in advance to be helpful, rather than offering criticism or questions after the fact. As a stand-in for the faculty and staff, and representative of the Senate as a whole, the Committee would like at least to be aware of the important initiatives under consideration, and to be able to publicize them when appropriate. It recognizes that it must therefore focus on a limited set of concerns.

At its March meeting, the Committee decided to focus on five specific issues. Broadly defined, they are as follows: (1) access to and from the Manhattanville and Morningside campuses, (2) the inadequacy of Columbia’s classrooms both in number and operational excellence (e.g., suitable wifi), (3) the adequacy of existing HVAC systems, especially at the CUMC campus and especially as regards the cold storage of tissue samples, (4) quality of life issues in Morningside Heights and Manhattanville (e.g., dogs on campus, the planting, naming and care of campus and street trees), and (5) advocacy for a new campus health-care center. Many of our guests were asked to comment on the above five items, and their responses will guide us in the year ahead. Short summaries of our interviews are below.

(1) October 3, 2017, Barry Kane. Mr. Kane presented a detailed analysis of the need for additional classrooms as well as the unimproved state of many existing ones. He noted that movie production

companies like to rent Columbia classrooms because they closely resemble early 20<sup>th</sup> century ones!! As became apparent, Mr. Kane and the Registrar's Office do not control many of the classrooms on campus but this proportion is gradually increasing. He also emphasized the strong preference faculty often have for specific classroom features such as multi-layer blackboards, and that some new renovations and classrooms (the Northwest Corner Building in particular) lacking these features were disliked by faculty. Later in the meeting, the discussion focused on evolving teaching methods and the need for classrooms to "keep up." The issue of Manhattanville access as classes change was discussed as well.

(2) October 31, 2017, visit of Scott Wright. Mr. Wright outlined the challenges facing his operation. He emphasized the goal of less dense housing (in some dorm suites, the common room must be used as a bedroom), but acknowledged that there are at present no plans for a new dormitory. While progress is being made on revamping Lerner to make it more student-usable, he also recognized the need for a new health center. For instance, the number of counselors on the Morningside Campus has risen to 51. He also discussed the desirability of having a dining facility on the north part of the Morningside Campus, but no location has presented itself. His remarks concluded with a discussion of the challenges of tying the campuses together in light of the fact that currently only 10 minutes is allocated for students to change classes.

(3) November 28, 2017, visit of Colleen Lewis. Ms. Lewis discussed at length the need for suitable testing space of students with various disabilities and the fact that Chandler renovations would shortly be providing two such rooms. The Committee was informed that her shop administers over 200 exams per weekday. Recent improvements in ADA accessibility were also discussed, as well as the residual need for greater accessibility in the Mathematics building. The meeting concluded with her informing the Committee as to the extent of emotional support animals on campus, the restrictions placed on their conduct and, in general, the "dogs-on-campus" policy.

(4) February 6, 2018, visit of David Greenberg. Mr. Greenberg's discussion was wide-ranging, from the need for simple campus maintenance to plans for Manhattanville access and the progress of Columbia's ADA-accessible compliance efforts. He encouraged the use of the special facilities telephone extension (42222) to report minor needs on the Morningside Campus. He acknowledged that his department had had its budget cut 5% for the 2017-2018 academic year. Sen. David Bickers took the opportunity to detail a number of problems on the CUMC Campus but this lay outside Mr. Greenberg's purview. On several minor matters, such as the naming of trees on the Morningside Campus, he expressed openness and invited written requests from the Committee.

(5) April 17, 2018, Jessica Prata. Ms. Prata informed the Committee as to Columbia's progress in its sustainable environment initiatives. These range from reduced energy use, particularly in residential buildings, to cooperation with New York City on the composting of vegetable wastes from University dining facilities. Members of the Committee emphasized the need for further investment to encourage bicycle use such as the acute lack of protected bike racks, especially on the Manhattanville campus. She also detailed the need to tie the campuses together in a sustainable way and noted that electric buses had been purchased for the intercampus shuttle service.

Among the regular responsibilities of the Committee is reviewing a large number of capital improvement projects prior to their presentation to the Trustees. Committee member James Wang, Vice President, Facilities, always provided a careful description of the projects and their rationale. On a few occasions, specific members of the Committee expressed the view that anticipated costs were likely to be severely understated.

The Committee met on six occasions, in addition to a joint meeting with the Housing Committee. One meeting was cancelled due to the last-minute unavailability of the speaker. We are exploring the possibility of holding one additional meeting in early May.

A number of general themes became clear during these meetings. First, decision-making is diffuse in the University, so it will be a challenge for the Committee to have a long-term impact on policy. The only way to deal with this problem may be to try to be “way out in front” on specific issues. Second, it is clear that additional long-term planning is needed, especially as regards Manhattanville. Frequently the Committee was told of the enormous expense of retrofitting existing buildings for new purposes, especially the engineering facilities and science-related spaces in general. We are confronted with the possibility that building entirely new facilities for these areas of the University may be less expensive in the long run than continued improvements to the existing spaces. Old engineering buildings might serve less capital-intensive areas of the University extremely well.

Respectfully submitted,

John Donaldson, chair  
Patrice Derrington, and Teresa Zhao, vice chairs

### Campus Planning and Physical Development Committee 2017-2018

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Ten.	John B. Donaldson, CHAIR	BUS	sen
Ten.	Andreas Hielscher	SEAS	sen
Nonten.	Patrice Derrington, VICE CHAIR	GSAPP	sen
Nonten.	Lisa K. Northrop	BAR	sen
Stu.	Omar Khan	CC	sen
Stu.	Aidan Quinn	GSAS/NS	sen
Stu.	Teresa (Hanzhi) Zhao, VICE CHAIR	SEAS	sen

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Admin. Staff	Barbara Han	Admin.	nonsen
Research Officers	Stefaan Van Liefferinge	Research Officers - Professional	sen
Admin.	Janet Horan	Adm	nonsen
Admin.	James Wang	Adm	nonsen
Alum.	Julia Lewis	Alum.	nonsen