

1 April 2008

Hon. Robert Tierney, Chair  
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission  
1 Centre Street  
New York, New York 10007

Dear Chair Tierney,

On behalf of the AIA New York Chapter, which has over 4,200 architect and affiliate members based in Manhattan, we write to you today to comment upon the proposal to create a new state-of-the-art medical facility for St. Vincent's Hospital.

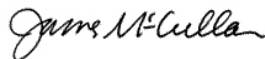
The AIA NY Chapter feels that some version of this project should come to fruition. First, St. Vincent's operates not only as a community resource, but also as one of two trauma centers for all of Lower Manhattan. The state of 21st century medical care has rendered some of the existing St. Vincent's facilities obsolete; the hospital needs to change, to build and to modernize. This must be done through its buildings.

The AIA New York Chapter notes that the development of private housing to be added to the site east of Seventh Avenue will allow for a significant amount of revenue to benefit the new hospital structure west of the Avenue. The concept of building revenue-producing structures to update needed community facilities, should be endorsed when seen in conjunction with appropriate architectural design, urban design and scale. We feel that, at this early stage, the project has potential to create a better streetscape for these Village blocks.

The matter immediately at hand is the demolition of nine buildings in the Greenwich Village Historic District. In our professional opinion, not all of the existing hospital buildings significantly and equally contribute to the character and continuity of the historic neighborhood; however, careful analysis and scrutiny of the possible adaptive reuse of some of the existing hospital buildings for housing or medical uses should be considered and presented to the Commission. At this juncture we would support the demolition of some of the hospital buildings, including the O'Toole Building, so as to allow the project to proceed to the next phase.

In the spirit of PlaNYC, the development of modern healthcare facilities balanced by the preservation of neighborhoods is vital to New York City's sustainability. We look for further study by the design teams to achieve these goals.

Yours sincerely,



James McCullar, FAIA  
Chapter President



Fredric Bell, FAIA  
Executive Director