Too Big To Fit:
How NYU’s Controversial Plan to Add 2.5 Million Square Feet Of New Space In the Village Contradicts How University Growth Needs Are Being Addressed Across the Country
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Executive Summary

New York University is seeking to overturn long-standing neighborhood zoning protections, gut open-space preservation requirements, lift urban renewal deed restrictions, introduce commercial zoning in a residential area, and take over publicly-owned park space in order to facilitate their development of 2.5 million square feet of new facilities – the equivalent of the Empire State Building – in the blocks south of Washington Square Park. The plan has elicited a firestorm of opposition from NYU’s neighbors, faculty, and students. But the university claims that such a plan is not only necessary for it to grow, but the only way for it to do so.

However, NYU’s situation is hardly unique. Universities in other cities have had to confront the tension between their need or desire to expand and the limitations of the urban environment in which they are located and the desires for the preservation of neighborhood character and quality of life by surrounding communities.

What is different, however, is NYU’s approach. Other universities and other cities across the country have handled this challenge very differently, and successfully managed to balance these sometimes competing needs. Instead of seeking to shoehorn more and more facilities into an area with limited capacity to handle that growth, universities and cities have partnered to find nearby locations which can absorb the growth, and where the expansion of a university would be maximally beneficial to the city and leave room for continued growth of the university.

The following case studies are presented for the development of satellite campuses for Emerson College, the Georgia Institute of Technology, Suffolk University, Brown University, Harvard University and Columbia University.

Partnering with local elected leaders, the business community and residents, these institutions are or will be building satellite campuses in areas that were identified as targets for redevelopment or in underutilized, non-residential areas. This type of development for universities is a stark contrast to the approach NYU is advocating of continuing to chip away at or overwhelm an existing, vital neighborhood.
Brown University Satellite Campus Case Study

Summary

Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island, is a leading institution of higher learning noted for its exceptional liberal arts programs. Founded in 1764, the school expanded rapidly from 1938 to 1975 adding new academic programs and buildings to house them. After 1975 Brown University not only continued to construct more facilities but the size of the buildings themselves grew exponentially. In recent years the school has strived to build new science, medical, and research facilities to be more competitive.

Brown University’s 143 acre campus is located in College Hill, a richly historic residential neighborhood defined by its low sale brick and wood buildings that was the first permanent colonial settlement in Rhode Island. Brown University is also located in and surrounded by four historic districts.

More than ten years ago Brown University completed master plan studies to guide its long term campus planning. These studies determined that expansion in College Hill was not viable for the large scale expansion needed to meet Brown University’s needs. The solution was to develop a satellite campus in Providence’s Jewelry District, a formerly robust manufacturing area that had been in decline for decades.

This area was identified by the City for redevelopment to bring knowledge economy industries to Providence to revitalize the underutilized area and the region’s economy. The Jewelry District offered many unimproved lots and former factory buildings with large footprints that were far better suited for the Brown University’s long term growth than continuing to build in College Hill. Brown’s construction and renovation of buildings in the Knowledge District has been well received by its students, faculty, College Hill neighbors and the city of Providence.
Brown University and Its Campus

Brown University is an Ivy League institution founded in 1764 in Providence, Rhode Island that is ranked 15\textsuperscript{th} among the nation’s universities by \textit{U. S. News & World Report}.\textsuperscript{1} It has more than 8,000 students including 6,100 undergraduates and 2,300 graduate and professional students served by 3,600 employees including 700 full time faculty members. Brown’s main campus comprises 236 buildings, totaling approximately 6.8 million square feet, on 143 acres in the College Hill neighborhood. The campus is located within and bounded by four city and/or National Register Historic Districts.

Most of the physical growth of Brown University occurred between 1938 and 1975 when dozens of academic, research and residential buildings were constructed to accommodate a growing student body. After 1975 new construction created larger, specialized buildings for the University’s expanding athletic, science, engineering and medical research programs.\textsuperscript{2}

The City of Providence, Rhode Island

Providence, the capital of Rhode Island, is the state’s most populous city. The Providence metropolitan area has more than 1.5 million residents.\textsuperscript{3} Brown University is the city’s second largest employer and the state’s 7\textsuperscript{th} largest employer.\textsuperscript{4} Other institutions of higher
education in Providence include Johnson & Wales University, Providence College, Rhode Island College and the Rhode Island School of Design. Formerly centered on manufacturing and transportation, today Providence’s economy is driven by the education and health services sectors.5

**Brown University and the College Hill Neighborhood**

The neighborhood Brown University is located in, College Hill, is the city’s most affluent with a median annual household income of more than $100,000.6 As the site of the first permanent colonial settlement in Rhode Island, it is steeped in history and its rich architectural fabric has been recognized with designation as both a local and State/National Register Historic District. Though primarily residential, the neighborhood has vibrant commercial and retail corridors and is home to Brown University and the Rhode Island School of Design.

The Rhode Island School of Design and Brown University began with small footprints and have grown exponentially into the surrounding residential areas in the post-war era. In the 1950’s Brown demolished or moved nearly 100 houses to construct new residential quadrangles, permanently altering the character of this historic neighborhood.7 These actions drew such outrage from the community that the Providence Preservation Society was founded as a result.8

In charrettes held with members of the College Hill community by the Providence Department of Planning and Development, campus-edge conflicts were a recurring theme. Residents cited displeasure with the density, height and massing of Brown’s buildings, as well as clashes between institutional, commercial and residential uses in the area.9
Brown University and the Development of a Satellite Campus

More than ten years ago Brown University launched a long term planning initiative to guide future campus expansion that included a number of master plan studies to determine the best way forward. As a result of these studies the University decided that construction of new facilities to serve an expanding student body and more academic programs must be guided by a responsible and sustainable approach to the campus’ physical development. Recognizing both the limitations and inappropriateness of planning for new construction within the College Hill neighborhood, two strategies were developed to accommodate the school’s growth plans: 1) consolidation of buildings within the campus core and 2) developing satellite campuses away from College Hill.10

To consolidate the core, campus leadership at Brown University decided to cluster academic departments within existing buildings; explore adaptive reuse of underutilized historic buildings on campus; and to keep low scale historic structures in place at the campus edge to have a more contextually appropriate “face” to the community and serve as a barrier from larger campus buildings.11,12

Collaborating with the city and state governments, Brown University sought out potential satellite campus sites that not only offered a significant amount of developable land and/or underutilized buildings, but were also areas where Brown’s presence would contribute to the economic and development goals of the City of Providence. Several potential long term satellite campus sites were identified throughout Providence and East Providence.13 The first of such campuses to be developed is in a former industrial area known as the Jewelry District.

“I guess that we and the trustees ultimately realized that the neighbors were right – Brown is in a very fragile and beautiful setting … I think that you’ve got to see any entity as part of a larger community and part of a larger environment.”

Frances Halsband of R. M. Kliment and Frances Halsband Architects, developer of Brown University Master Plan
“Once brimming with so many jewelry companies that Rhode Island was called the Jewelry Capital of the World, the district went into a tailspin 20 years ago... Left behind in the jewelry district were blocks of huge red-brick factory buildings. The vacant and deteriorating structures... were a depressing reminder of the industry’s woes. They also posed a challenge to city planners, who wondered what they could do with them.”

Formerly a bustling industrial area along the Providence Harbor, the Jewelry District had declined into a neglected and largely underutilized area marked by a number of vacant parcels and surface parking lots. In the 1960’s part of Interstate 195 was built through the District creating a barrier that cut it off from downtown. More than two decades ago it was announced that Interstate would be realigned opening up a large amount of land and reconnecting the Jewelry District with downtown Providence.

Aligning the development plans for the area with goals to revitalize the regional economy by fostering growth in the knowledge economy, the City identified the Jewelry District as a potential “Knowledge District,” a hub for biotechnology, life sciences, information technology and green technology industries.  

Following other successful planning models of this type, the City determined that a key component to the success of the Knowledge District would be anchoring it with local institutions like Brown University and nearby Johnson & Wales University to help foster new enterprises.  For Brown the Knowledge District was an ideal location for a satellite campus – it offered a number of vacant parcels, large industrial
buildings primed for adaptive reuse, was within a mile and a half of the main campus, and even closer to downtown. It should be noted that many of the buildings are within the Jewelry Manufacturing Historic District and the large buildings with tremendous square footage that constitute the district were well suited for adaptive reuse as institutional buildings.\(^\text{16}\)

In the last decade Brown has acquired several buildings in the Knowledge District and converted them into facilities for its expanding biomedical science, research and related technology programs. The Laboratories for Molecular Medicine are housed in a former Speidel Chain Company factory, facilities for Psychology and Human Behavior Training and Research are in the 1920’s Coro manufacturing building and administrative and support facilities are located in Davol Square, a group of buildings that formed the complex of the former Davol Rubber Company.

In addition to facilities for Brown University, many of the school’s buildings in the Knowledge District offer space to other institutions creating an environment of synergies and knowledge sharing. The Coro building also houses the Bradley Hasbro Children’s Research Center and the Rhode Island Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship has space in Davol Square.

In 2006 Brown acquired the former Brier Manufacturing Company building to convert the 137,000 square foot structure into a permanent home for its medical school. In the summer of 2011 Brown officially opened the Alpert Medical School its first dedicated building in the school’s history. This new facility will enable Brown to increase its medical school enrollment by 20%. The restoration cost $45 million, a fraction of what the university would have spent on new construction.
To have found a home in this beautiful building which exemplifies the sustainable, vibrant, and historic spirit of this renaissance city of ours is simply icing on a very sweet cake.*

Patrick Worth, M.D. 2011, former president of the Medical Student Senate, Brown University

Today there are about 1,000 Brown University students, faculty and staff working and learning in the Knowledge District and the response has been very positive. The proximity to downtown and other medical and research entities has been a boon.

While still transitioning into the “Knowledge District” from its former identity as the Jewelry District, the area has clearly progressed out of neglect and is on track to lead the city into the Knowledge Economy. Since the development of Brown’s satellite campus there are residential units in the area, restaurants, a myriad of services, a children’s museum, award-winning arts and design firms, as well as pioneering technology and biomedical research entities. In 2009 Bloomberg BusinessWeek listed Providence as one of America’s best small cities for startups.
Emerson College Campus Relocation Case Study

Summary

Boston, Massachusetts’ Emerson College began as a small law school for working students. As it developed into one of the best universities in the northeast, its approach to campus planning was to buy or rent non-purpose built buildings in the Back Bay, a neighborhood that developed in the mid to late 1800’s.

The popularity of its flexible academic programs led to a marked growth in the number of applicants starting in the 1990’s. Emerson College’s facilities were not able to accommodate this growing demand and there were no viable options for large-scale expansion with the Back Bay, which is protected with designation as a local historic district. Emerson considered relocation out of Boston before deciding to move its campus from the Back Bay to Boston’s former red light district.

The campus relocation to former red light district was aligned with the city’s goals to redevelop the area. In 1983 Emerson College purchased a derelict historic theatre and rehabilitated it leading the school to purchase several other buildings in the area. By 2006 Emerson College had officially relocated from the Back Bay to what is now known as the Midtown Theater District. The move has been a success for the school enabling it to double its square footage, increase enrollment and its endowment. It has also been a success for the Midtown Theater District which has become a hotbed of development activity.
Emerson College and Its Campus

What is today known as Emerson College was opened in 1880 as The Boston School of Elocution, Oratory and Dramatic Art with 10 students in rented space in downtown Boston, Massachusetts. Since then the school has been lauded as a top-ranking college in the northeast by *U.S. News and World Report* and *The Princeton Review*, and has expanded to offer degrees in mass communications, theatre arts, literature and publishing to more than 4,000 undergraduate and graduate students.

As Emerson grew, it acquired space for its campus in a piecemeal manner by renting and buying non-purpose built structures in Boston’s Back Bay, a largely residential neighborhood known for its rich collection of 19th century homes. When the student population grew by 66% between the late 1970’s and 1980’s, this approach became unsustainable.

The City of Boston, Massachusetts

Boston, the largest city in New England, is also the capital of the state of Massachusetts. One of the nation’s ten largest metropolitan areas with a population of more than 4.5 million, Boston has a diverse and robust economy fueled by the finance, publishing, tourism, management consulting and technology industries.
To say that Boston is a college town would be an understatement. There are more than 100 colleges and universities in the Greater Boston area including Harvard University, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Northeastern University and Tufts University, and nearly 10% of those employed in Boston work in higher education.

Colleges and universities in the Boston Metropolitan area

*Emerson College and the Back Bay Neighborhood*

The Back Bay neighborhood is one of the most affluent and historic neighborhoods in Boston. Once a bay between Boston and Cambridge, its creation from fill as a high-end residential district was the brainchild of architect Arthur Gilman. A planned neighborhood that developed in phases from the 1850’s to the 1890’s, the area’s streetscapes are highly uniform while also representing the diverse architectural styles popular during the era of construction, including Italianate, Gothic, Queen Anne, and Beaux Arts. The Back Bay is designated as both a local and National Register Historic District.23
In no small part due to Gilman’s master plan for the neighborhood which established mandatory building setbacks, limited building heights and restricted building materials to stone and brick, the Back Bay looks much the same today as it did in the 19th century.24

After 60 years of functioning by renting space, Emerson College made the eastern section of the Back Bay its home in the 1930’s when it made its first real estate purchases starting with an apartment building at 373 Commonwealth Avenue for student housing and two brownstones at 128 and 130 Beacon Street to house administrative offices and the school’s first theater in the carriage house behind them.25 In the 1960’s, a post-war boom in enrollment led to the acquisition of apartment buildings in the western section of the Back Bay for student housing.

While a good steward for its buildings in the Back Bay, Emerson College was aware of the limitations on its physical growth posed by the building size, scale and historic fabric of the neighborhood. Recognizing that staying in the Back Bay was no longer viable to meet the future needs of the College, its leadership explored a number of options including relocation to suburbs outside of Boston.26
Emerson College and the Decision to Relocate Its Campus

The 1980s were a critical period for Emerson. It was seeing a tremendous rise in applicants while its ability to admit more students and expand its programs was severely hindered by its facilities in the Back Bay. Knowing that its buildings were inadequate, Emerson spent most of the decade, and a great deal of resources, attempting to move its campus to various suburbs of Boston - Bedford, Lexington, Beverly and Lawrence, Massachusetts where it ultimately failed in 1989.27

At the same time as the College was exploring its options outside of Boston, it also evaluated financially feasible relocation options within Boston. Among the sites that were included in these discussions was a downtrodden neighborhood known as the “Combat Zone” in downtown Boston.

The Combat Zone had once been a fashionable commercial and entertainment district with large movie houses, theaters, office buildings, stores and restaurants. Like so many of America’s cities in the 1960’s, areas of downtown Boston, including the Combat Zone, fell into decline through a combination of urban renewal projects and flight to the suburbs. The Combat Zone’s deterioration was accelerated when an urban renewal project to create a new government center demolished Scollay Square, the heart of the vice zone at that time, pushing the red light district into the Combat Zone. The city of Boston put its stamp of approval on this degradation when it zoned the area an adult entertainment district in an attempt to contain

“Once upon a time, there was a slice of Boston called the Combat Zone… What it was, was a rodeo. On any given night from the ’60s into the ’80s, you’d find scores of prostitutes on parade. They worked the sidewalks like they owned them, which they did.”

“We knew we had to do something different. Emerson was in a lot of financial trouble and ordinary solutions wouldn’t have worked.”

Robert Silverman, Vice President of Administration and Finance, Emerson College (1992-2006)
vice activity. 28

By the 1980s the city had a change of heart and identified the Combat Zone as a target for redevelopment citing both its numerous surface parking lots and “handsome but underutilized” buildings.29,30 The Combat Zone, rebranded as the Midtown Cultural District/Theater District, had also come to the attention of Emerson College for similar reasons.

In 1983 while still struggling with its suburban relocation plans, Emerson purchased a derelict 1903 movie house on Tremont Street in the Combat Zone with the intent to restore it to its former glory and utilize it as a performance space. The renovation of the Cutler Majestic Theatre was a resounding success and continues to be a beacon of progress for the university and the neighborhood.

Under the leadership of new President Jacqueline Weiss Liebergott and Vice President of Administration and Finance Robert Silverman, Emerson took a closer look at the Theatre District as a site for expansion and ultimately relocation. The area offered a number of large historic office buildings and theatres that were ripe for renovation and in many ways ideal for the types of academic programs offered at Emerson.

Following the tremendous expenses incurred from the failed moves, Emerson’s financial resources were limited but real estate prices in the “Combat Zone” were quite low. Emerson had a history of owning and renovating historic buildings so the older (often landmark protected) building stock in the area was viewed positively. And unlike the spread out campus in Back Bay, Emerson would be able to acquire adjacent properties to create a more campus-like experience.

In 1992 Emerson acquired a 14-story building that was once the Boston Edison Co. at $25 a square foot, considered a phenomenal deal. Emerson purchased and restored several more
historic buildings in the Midtown Theater District financed by the sale of its assets in the Back Bay. By 2006 Emerson had officially relocated its campus to the Theatre District.

Richard Freeland, Massachusetts Commissioner of Higher Education, former President Northeastern University (1996-2006)

“The result is an urban college that is rapidly distinguishing itself as a hip place where students can sharpen performing arts skills, get the kind of training that Hollywood or New York demands, and, most importantly interact with leaders of the entertainment industry, thanks to a growing list of successful alumni getting involved.”

The relocation of the Emerson College campus to the Theater District was unquestionably a success for the school and the city of Boston. Emerson doubled the square footage of its buildings; has been able to increase its national reputation (today 4/5 of its students are from out of state compared to 2/3 before the move); increased enrollment from 2,600 to 4,000 students while raising its admission standards; and has increased its endowment from $4 million in 1992 to $87 million in 2005. 31, 32, 33 The streets are now populated with a vibrant community of students and theater goers and a number of other new developments have also been completed.

The Theater District has been restored to its former glory and Emerson was recognized with a number of awards for its work to revitalize the area including the National Preservation Honor Award (2004) from the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Massachusetts Historical Commission Preservation Award (2003), the Historic

Richard Freeland, Massachusetts Commissioner of Higher Education, former President Northeastern University (1996-2006)

“I’ve watched Emerson from a distance with admiration. A number of things have come together. The move to downtown was absolutely brilliant, both for the city in terms of revitalizing the area and for Emerson.”
Preservation Award by the Boston Society of Architects and twice recognized as the Best of Boston (1989, 1992) by *Boston Magazine*. 
Georgia Institute of Technology Satellite Campus Case Study

Summary

Founded in 1888, the Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta has a 400 acre campus to accommodate its 20,000 students. It is a top 50 university and consistently highly ranked for its engineering programs. Like many other universities, the post-war baby boom led to expansive physical growth for Georgia Tech to meet higher student enrollment. In this era Georgia Tech expanded into adjacent historic residential and commercial enclaves, wantonly demolishing structures.

By the late 1990’s the school realized that its facilities were suffering from deferred maintenance and were not up to the standard of its academic reputation. Additionally, master plan studies identified the need for an additional 3 million square feet of facilities. Neighborhood groups mobilized when Georgia Tech announced more development in these historic areas. At the same time a business improvement district in a distressed, underutilized area known as Midtown began seeking the school’s support for its redevelopment plans.

What began as a small construction project for Georgia Tech in Midtown blossomed into a 3 million square foot, four block mixed-use development known as Technology Square and Centergy. These facilities included academic, research, business development, conference, retail and office space and became the key to fostering additional development in the area. Georgia Tech’s expansion into Midtown was a success for the area and the University, whose endowment has grown tremendously along with its research funding since the development was completed.
The Georgia Institute of Technology and Its Campus

The Georgia Institute of Technology was founded in 1885 in Atlanta as the Georgia School of Technology to help the post-Reconstruction South move into the Industrial era. Georgia Tech has grown from a regionally focused trade school to one the nation's top 10 public universities with a top five ranked school of engineering. It has a large 400 acre campus in central Atlanta totaling more than 7 million gross square feet to accommodate more than 20,000 undergraduate and graduate students and 4,000 faculty and staff members.

While a leader in its academic programs, Tech struggled for many years to accommodate its large student body and felt hindered by facilities that did not meet the state of the art needs of an institution focused on science and technology-based fields. A master plan study completed in 1996, the first in 25 years, found that the University needed more than 3 million additional square feet of facilities and that 75% of its academic space was in poor condition and/or obsolete. In addition, prior to the construction of facilities and housing at the campus for the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta, Georgia Tech was only able to provide housing for 35% of its students.
Atlanta, Georgia, one of the largest cities in the South, has a population of more than 5 million people in the metropolitan area. Unlike other cities of the South that developed around the shipping industry like Charleston and Savannah, Atlanta was a hub for railroad transport and had a number of manufacturing concerns helping to sustain its economic viability beyond that of its peers. Today, its economy is robust in so small part due to it being the home of Fortune 100 companies including United Parcel Service, The Coca Cola Company and The Home Depot.

While other cities have been experiencing population decline, the metropolitan Atlanta area has gained more than a million residents from 2000 to 2008. The city boasts a highly educated population; 43% of adults have a college degree compared to the national average of 27%.

The city is lush and green but bisected by numerous highways and roads. Virtually without natural barriers – mountains or bodies of water – Atlanta’s growth has been expansive. Nevertheless its neighborhoods and their connectivity are hindered by the highway, road and rail systems. Despite this infrastructure, the population boom in Atlanta has exceeded the capacity of the roads, earning Atlanta the number one spot on Forbes’ list of worst cities for commuters in 2008.

Georgia Tech and Its Impact on Surrounding Neighborhoods

As it expanded from 4 to 400 acres, Georgia Tech swallowed up entire neighborhoods in Atlanta. The school consumed the Hemphill Avenue neighborhood in the 1960’s; forever changed the face of Bellwood and has taken chunks of Home Park for its campus.

In 1965 a master plan was developed for Georgia Tech to address the potential for enrollment to grow to 25,000 students by 1985. This master plan established the need to expand the campus from its 153 acres to 400 acres in anticipation of

“The place we now know as west campus was, at one point, a vibrant neighborhood. The Couch Building was an elementary school … The Burger Bowl functioned as a city park … and a portion of (the) Woodruff dorms sit where there were once churches. Unfortunately, it was a neighborhood in the wrong place at the wrong time.”
the larger student body. The means to achieve the additional 250 acres was by tearing down the bordering Hemphill Avenue neighborhood. The school had been growing in small bursts since its founding this expansion into the Hemphill avenue area as the first large scale campus expansion in its history. This massive expansion of Georgia Tech’s campus demolished more than 200 buildings in a once-vibrant though poor neighborhood that is now completely gone.

The Bellwood neighborhood developed along Marietta Street, a lively corridor of retail and industrial activity, surrounded by worker housing. The neighborhood fell into decline as the manufacturing sector weakened and people moved to the suburbs in the 1950’s and 1960’s. Georgia Tech seized upon the area’s decline as an opportunity for its expansion and bought up wide swaths of retail buildings for its West Campus, replacing the historic fabric with brutalist style buildings surrounded by surface parking lots. Today, because of the school’s development activity, little is left of this once vibrant neighborhood.

Home Park was rural until the Atlantic Steel Company built a major manufacturing facility in the area in the early 1900’s. Other large manufacturing concerns soon followed fostering a boom of residential development. By the 1920’s Home Park had developed into a charming neighborhood of low slung, arts and crafts style bungalows that earned it the designation of “Atlanta’s best kept secret.”

Georgia Tech had expanded into this neighborhood in the 1950’s, buying up homes and demolishing them. The neighborhood came under siege in the late 1990’s when a
large developer, Turner Broadcasting, and Georgia Tech developed plans for major non-contextual construction in the area that would involve demolition of buildings.48 Faced with these daunting projects and concern about the impact on the neighborhood, the Home Park Community Improvement Association was formed to organize the community and protect the neighborhood.49

Georgia Tech and Its Decision to Build a Satellite Campus in Midtown

In 1996 Georgia Tech had a new president, Wayne Clough, who found its physical plant did not meet its reputation. The school was saddled with significant deferred capital investment and obsolete facilities that limited its competitiveness. Clough initiated a master plan study that identified the need for an addition 3 million square feet of space and recommended further expansion into the adjacent Bellwood and Home Park areas, in addition to infill construction.50

While Georgia Tech was considering campus expansion into these residential neighborhoods, it was ignoring the adjacent Midtown neighborhood, which was directly east of the campus but had been separated from it by the construction of Interstate 75/85 in the 1950’s. The highway was widened to 14 lanes in the 1980’s as part of the infrastructure improvements for Atlanta’s winning Olympic bid.

Midtown was once a high-end residential neighborhood at what was at the time then the northern boundary of the city limits. The area flourished as streetcar lines were built and its main streets were among Atlanta’s most popular shopping destinations.

The creation of the Interstate in the 1950’s erased a number of Midtown’s streets and buildings, creating a tremendous physical and psychological boundary.51 The construction of the interstate system quickened the exodus to the suburbs of area residents, aiding the downfall of Midtown. By the 1960’s Midtown’s fine homes were being used as rooming houses and a significant number of them were burned or demolished by desperate owners.52 The construction of the MARTA Rail line led to additional disruptions and demolitions. By the early 1990’s the area was marked by vacant lots and underutilized buildings and had earned a seedy reputation, though it was in close proximity to the blossoming central business district.

In the 1980’s the Midtown Alliance was formed by business leaders to promote redevelopment. The activities of the Alliance came to Georgia Tech’s attention in the late 1990’s, and land was
Universities have grown to be such large institutions that they have a moral and practical obligation to take leadership roles in their communities to improve them.  

Wayne Clough, President Emeritus, Georgia Institute of Technology

From its founding as a technical school to its mission today, supporting business development is at the core of Georgia Tech. Soon, Tech realized that its modest plans for Midtown would not really be of much help with the area’s redevelopment goals. Midtown offered large parcels of vacant land, parking lots and underdeveloped sites that were ideal for the large scale development that Georgia Tech needed to fulfill its goal of building an additional 3 million square feet.

Working with local political and business leaders, in 2001 Georgia Tech embarked on the development of a number of facilities in Midtown including a new school of business, a hotel and conference center, a global learning center, an economic development institute, business incubator and state of the art facilities for technology, media, engineering and research programs.

Completed in 2003, the four-block mixed use development known as Technology Square and Centergy, with ground floor retail, restaurants and office space, has become the “beta project’ of the redevelopment of Midtown. Since the construction of Technology Square and Centergy, Georgia Tech’s campus has gained an additional 4 million square feet of space and seen its endowment quadruple. The departure from a traditional campus setting has also been well received by students who appreciate being able to study, shop, work, play and live in the new setting. The school has
“The Georgia Tech Technology Square—Centery project in Midtown shows quite dramatically how a university can serve as a significant generator of economic opportunity and health for a changing economy.”

also benefitted from being physically closer to the business community.

To facilitate ease of access and reduce the impact of the highway the Atlanta Department of Transportation is creating pedestrian friendly bridges to cross the Interstate and reconnect Midtown with western neighborhoods.

The completion of Georgia Tech’s development has been a success for Midtown, the neighborhood has since added thousands of residential units and millions of square feet of new office space and real estate prices have quadrupled.
Suffolk University Satellite Campus Case Study

Summary

Suffolk University was founded more than 100 years ago in Boston, Massachusetts. From its beginnings as a law school for part-time students it has become one of the fastest growing schools in the Northeast. Suffolk University was a commuter school until the mid-1990’s when it constructed its first students dormitory. Striving to break out of this categorization and to be more competitive, the university wanted to offer more student housing, better athletic facilities, and enhanced students services.

With more than 10,000 full and part time students in undergraduate and graduate programs, Suffolk University had begun to outgrow its facilities in Boston’s Beacon Hill, a residential area whose architectural and historic significance is recognized with both a local and national register historic districts. Starting with a Massachusetts Supreme Court battle in the 1970’s that blocked construction of a building proposed by the University, the Beacon Hill Civic Association has vigorously fought the school’s development plans. The most recent clashes led to covenants barring the school from developing within the residential core of the neighborhood as well as capping its enrollment to 5,000 full time students.

Consulting with the Boston Redevelopment Authority and a stakeholder task force, sites for Suffolk University’s expansion were identified in areas of downtown Boston that were physically more appropriate for the school’s needs and in close proximity to its Beacon Hill campus. As a result, Suffolk University began rehabilitation of underutilized buildings in Downtown Crossing, an area that was once considered Boston’s Main Street. These developments have offered the university the appropriate building scale and footprint to meet its needs and have been welcomed by the Downtown Crossing neighborhood.
Suffolk University was founded in Boston, Massachusetts in 1906 by attorney Gleason L. Archer as a law school for working students. Today, the former ‘night school’ offers a dynamic array of academic programs and degrees to nearly 10,000 full and part-time graduate and undergraduate students while still catering to meet the needs of non-traditional learners through day, evening, online and yearlong academic offerings. Its academic reputation has earned it recognition from The Princeton Review and U. S. News and World Report as one of the country’s “best colleges.”

The desirability of Suffolk’s offerings has appealed to both traditional and non-traditional students. The number of undergraduates has doubled since 1996 and the University has seen the number of new applicants increase by 137% between 2002 and 2007. With more than 90% of incoming freshman requesting on-campus housing, Suffolk built its first residence hall in 1996 and is working to meet the goal of housing at least 50% of its full time undergraduate students.

Since the 1990’s Suffolk has strived to be more competitive in the academic marketplace, in particular working to shed its image as a “commuter” school by offering on-campus housing, more athletic facilities and enhanced student services. These efforts have been met with resistance by its Beacon Hill neighbors.
The City of Boston, Massachusetts

Boasting a metro area population of 4.5 million, Boston is one of the largest cities in the northeast United States. The city is well known as the Silicon Valley of the east coast and a center for business and management consulting. Its leading edge in these industries is in part fueled by the density of institutions of higher learning in the metro area, including more than 100 universities and colleges.

This has also created a unique problem for the city. The severe deficiency of on-campus student housing has unleashed a flood of students into the retail rental market. Not only has this inflamed longstanding town-gown conflicts but also inflated the rental market as student renters (often many to one apartment) have driven up housing costs, pushing families out of neighborhoods. To address this problem, Boston’s Mayor Thomas Menino issued an order in 2008 requiring that all universities provide housing for at least 50% of their students and limiting the number of students that can occupy an apartment to no more than four.

Suffolk University and the Beacon Hill Neighborhood

Beacon Hill developed at the turn of the 18th century in three parts - the residential areas of the South Slope and the North Slope and the commercial area known as the Flat of the Hill. From 1800 to 1850 the South Slope developed as a residential community of brick row houses for Boston’s elite, known as the Boston Brahmins. It is quite picturesque with cobblestone streets, brick
walks and Federal and Greek Revival Style rowhouses. The South Slope of Beacon Hill was designated an historic district in 1955.

In contrast to the aristocratic residents of the South Slope, the North Slope developed as a community of free African-Americans, many of whom worked for the Brahmins. Its buildings were mostly simple wood or brick structures that were replaced by tenements in the 1900’s but the area is rich in history with stops on the Underground Railroad, the first public school for African Americans and the first integrated school in America. In the middle of the 20th century the North Slope was a target for an urban renewal project, leading Beacon Hill residents to advocate for an historic district to protect what remained. The South Slope was designated as an historic district in 1963.

While a wonderful neighborhood, Beacon Hill’s historic building fabric and lack of open sites for development was less than an ideal location for Suffolk University to expand. Its highly active and civically-minded residents were staunchly opposed to the University’s continued growth in Beacon Hill.

Starting with a successful lawsuit that challenged Suffolk University’s plan to construct a nonconforming building in 1970, the Beacon Hill Civic Association has led the charge in preventing the University from overdevelopment in the area. Following the construction of a high rise dormitory in 2003, Suffolk announced plans to construct another out-of-scale, non-contextual building in Beacon Hill. The proposed 22-story tower was met with staunch resistance from the community, ultimately leading to Boston Mayor Menino nixing the plan.

In 2008 the struggle between the school and the neighborhood over another new building led to a landmark pact between the Suffolk University and the Beacon Hill neighborhood, which left the residents with the upper hand. The agreement created a non-expansion zone that limited Suffolk from expanding its footprint within a certain perimeter of the core residential area of

“We know we don’t have to worry about Suffolk building in certain areas anymore. We had reached a saturation point where we really couldn’t take anymore.”

Robert Whitney, Board Member, Beacon Hill Civic Association
Beacon Hill as well as limited enrollment of full-time undergraduate students to no more than 5,000. As a result to agreeing to these concessions, Suffolk University was allowed to build a 9-story academic building in Beacon Hill.65

**Suffolk University and the Move to Downtown Crossing**

When Suffolk University submitted its master plans for campus expansion in the early 2000’s, the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) decided that a task force of community stakeholders should be involved in the process to mitigate the conflicts between the school’s growth goals and the community’s preservation interests. A number of meetings were held and studies were undertaken to aid in the development of a ten year plan for the university.

One of the recommendations to come out of these efforts was that Suffolk University should develop outside of Beacon Hill in clusters that would be more suitable for the school’s needs and the larger community.66 These clusters focused on moving campus facilities and any new development towards Boston’s Government Center, Financial District and the Theatre District and Downtown Crossing, areas that were targeted by BRA for redevelopment.

The cluster approach and the selection of sites for future development led to what the University refers to as the ‘Suffolk Crescent,’ areas of development east and south of Beacon Hill. All of these areas are far more suitable for the university’s long term needs. The existing buildings are larger and taller, there are undeveloped and underdeveloped sites for new construction and areas like Downtown Crossing and the Theater District, both part of Boston’s former red-light district, were redevelopment priorities for the City. In addition, all of the cluster areas are within walking distance to the Beacon Hill facilities and are well-served by mass transit.
“Getting someone to do something about the Modern that is financially feasible is such a win for everyone. The dorms are a good use, that building has been just sitting there and this is a great opportunity.”

Anne Meyers, President of the Downtown Crossing Association

At the suggestion of the BRA and the task force, Suffolk University responded to a request for proposals for the development of the Modern Theatre, a nearly 100 year old historic theatre that had been vacant since the 1980s. The Modern Theatre along with other historic buildings in the area had been in such dire straits that they had been placed on the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s List of Most Endangered Places. The completed renovation of the Theater provided performing space as well as much needed dormitory space for 200 students.

“I’m delighted to see Suffolk University joining the Downtown Crossing community. Suffolk students will greatly add to the vitality of this area and ensure that it remains vibrant at all hours of the day.”

Suffolk has developed other residence halls in Downtown Crossing including the acquisition of a failed condominium conversion of a former office building that is now a dormitory for nearly 300 students.

The University continues to pursue development opportunities outside of Beacon Hill and is currently investigating the potential to redevelop the former Filene’s Department Store site in Downtown Crossing.
Harvard University Satellite Campus Case Study

Summary

In the 1980’s Harvard University embarked on a bold plan for its future. The University, which has a 200 acre campus in Cambridge, Massachusetts, began acquiring parcels of land in nearby North Allston, an underutilized industrial area near its athletic facilities and School of Business. Today, Harvard University owns 350 contiguous acres in North Allston to be developed into a satellite campus.

Through its expansion over the years, Harvard University’s campus had become the physical core of Cambridge, a community of 120,000 outside of Boston. With such a large footprint, the University abuts and is a part of several densely populated residential areas. Over the last 30 years, public displeasure with Harvard’s expansion into residential areas has led to efforts to block and restrict its new construction plans.

The driving force for the expansion was that Harvard University also wanted to be more competitive in the fields of science and technology, like its Cambridge neighbor the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The satellite campus offered the school the opportunity to build new facilities to enhance science and technology programs, as well as providing a bank of land for a multitude of long term projects. Stalled due to the recent recession, the University is investigating its options to move forward with construction projects in Allston which it plans to resume by 2013.
Harvard University and Its Campus

Founded in 1636 in Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University is this nation’s first university and among its most distinguished. Though highly selective in its admissions, there are more than 20,000 undergraduate, graduate, and postgraduate students enrolled in Harvard University’s programs.

Harvard’s home in Cambridge is across the Charles River, approximately three miles, from Boston. It boasts a 200 acre campus with 380 buildings encompassing 15 million square feet of space in the heart of town. Though its campus is quite large, the town of Cambridge is only 7 square miles so Harvard University physically dominates the city from its central location.

In the 1980’s Harvard developed a 50 year master plan, and one of its primary goal was to make its science and technology offerings more robust to be more competitive in these fields.

The City of Cambridge, Massachusetts

Cambridge is located within the Greater Boston area and has a population of 120,000. Formerly one of New England’s most active industrial cities, being the home of Harvard and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) has enabled Cambridge to transition into one the nation’s hubs of the information technology and biotechnology fields. Its economy is robust with only 4% unemployment. 69
Not only does the presence of the universities foster business development in Cambridge, Harvard and MIT employ nearly 20,000 of Cambridge’s residents, making them the city’s largest employer. Cambridge is only 7 square miles and high demand for housing has made it one of the country’s most expensive housing markets, with the median price for a single family home costing nearly $700,000.

**Harvard University and Its Neighborhoods**

Harvard University is so large that its campus stretches across five neighborhoods, including Agassiz and Riverside.

Agassiz, home to Harvard’s North Campus, is a moderately-dense residential neighborhood with a commercial core located in Harvard Square, the southernmost part of the area. The neighborhood is rich with highly ornamented Victorian-era homes that were built following the development of railroads in the late 19th century.

Following the post-war enrollment boom, Harvard University began acquiring homes in Agassiz, many of which were demolished for
Some of the properties were held by the University for decades for potential future development without the community’s knowledge. Following the release of a Harvard University Master Plan in 1975, the school’s ownership of these properties became public knowledge. The outrage in the community over the school’s stashed real estate holdings forced the school selling off many of the homes in the 1980’s.

The conflicts between the Agassiz community and Harvard University are long-standing. In 2003, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was developed between the parties to mitigate the impact of the University’s development in the area. This 25-year MOU included restrictions on how much new space Harvard could build, and required that it add community enhancement features, incorporate robust construction mitigation procedures and traffic calming measures for any new projects.

Riverside is a primarily residential neighborhood that developed in the 1800’s along with the book bindery and printing companies Little, Brown & Company and the Riverside Press (Houghton Mifflin). The working-class neighborhood had charming wood frame houses that remained relatively untouched until the 1940’s and 1950’s, when many of these structures were blighted and demolished for public housing.

In the 1960’s and 1970’s Harvard University built Peabody Terrace, a complex of tall, brutalist towers for student housing that stand in stark contrast to the low-rise character of Riverside. In addition to separating the community from its waterfront, these “tower in the park” type structures were built with inward facing courtyards and no relation or connection to the surrounding built fabric.

These neighborhoods, while distinct, share a certain low-scale, residential density that is not well suited for the intensity of use, scale, bulk or height that Harvard University wants to construct to meet its long-term needs.
Harvard University and the Its Decision to Develop a Satellite Campus

Faced with the reality that opportunities for large scale, long-term growth in Cambridge were limited, Harvard University looked to nearby areas for development opportunities to enable growth for decades to come.

Harvard University has long had facilities in North Allston, Massachusetts, a small town directly across the Charles River from Cambridge. Harvard’s athletic facilities have been sited there since 1903, and its renowned School of Business moved there in 1926. Excluding Harvard’s facilities, land use in North Allston was largely industrial with former manufacturing sites, storage lots and disused rail yards.

Harvard University identified Allston as the site for its future-long term growth because it would allow the school to build a significant land bank for immediate and long term building needs. The site was ideal for the school’s plans because property could be had for fractions of the cost of acquisitions in Cambridge; there was an abundance of undeveloped and underdeveloped sites; and it was literally across the river from Harvard’s main campus. In the 1980’s Harvard began acquiring land in North Allston around its current School of Business and athletic facilities. Today the school owns more than 300 acres in North Allston.

Harvard’s ambitious 50-year plan for the site includes new academic facilities, student housing, a theater, and museum. These plans were stalled in 2008 when the school’s endowment took a major hit as a result of the economic recession. Currently, Harvard plans to resume construction in 2013 and is also exploring options to partner with private developers to move the project forward.

Though the construction of a satellite campus for Harvard University was halted leaving vacant parcels, unfinished construction projects and disappointed Allston residents, the merits of decision to expand into and underutilized, development hungry area like North Allston is unquestionable.
Columbia University Satellite Case Study

Summary

There have long been tensions between Columbia University and the Morningside Heights community due to the school’s encroachment into the neighborhood. In the 1960’s the University’s proposal to build a gym in Morningside Park led to infamous protests, and the plan was halted due to the backlash. The school’s relationship with the neighboring community continues to bear the scars from this and other development battles.

Columbia University has moved three times since it was founded in 1754. By the late 1980’s, Columbia was beginning to outgrow its beautiful McKim, Mead and White-designed campus. With competition for top professors, talented students and research funding reaching a fever pitch among Ivy League institutions, Columbia began to look at alternative locations for large scale campus construction to strengthen its position as a leading institution.

The site Columbia University selected was a 17 acre parcel in West Harlem. Mostly industrial, Columbia chose this site for its satellite campus which will include 6.8 million square feet for classrooms, research, and housing to avoid further conflict in Morningside Heights over new construction.
Columbia University and Its Campus

Columbia University is the oldest college in the state of New York. It was founded in 1754 as King’s College with classes held in the school of Trinity Church in lower Manhattan. Soon thereafter King’s College moved to a dedicated building near Park Place.

In 1857 Columbia University relocated to a purpose built campus at East 49th Street and Madison Avenue. The move gave the school much more space, helping it expand into a university with a number of new programs and academic offerings including schools of law and engineering.

Under the direction of University President Seth Low, in 1896 Columbia University moved to its present location in Morningside Heights, which was not highly developed at the time. The move was triggered by the need for more space and the desire to create an “academic village.” The campus master plan was developed by renowned architects McKim, Mead & White.

Like so many American universities, Columbia experienced a building boom in the 1960’s following the increase in enrollment in the post-war era. To manage this larger student body, the school began acquiring residential buildings in Morningside Heights and constructing new facilities. Today, Columbia University’s 32 acre campus accommodates 27,000 students in undergraduate, graduate and professional programs.

Seeking to maintain its leading position in the academic marketplace, Columbia University is looking to develop large-scale, state-of-the-art facilities for its science and research programs and new space for other academic programs, student and faculty housing, and services.

As part of its justification for the need for significantly more space to remain competitive,

“As knowledge grows and fields grow, we need more faculty, you need a certain scale. And we need places to put them. Now, a number of young faculty share offices. Our science departments have lab conditions that don’t compare to what other top universities have.”

Columbia University President Lee Bollinger
Columbia University cited its having significantly less space per student than other leading universities. Based on a 1998 survey Columbia University had 194 square feet per student; compared to its peers Princeton University which had 561 square feet, the University of Pennsylvania with 440 square feet, and Harvard with 368 square feet per student.81

Columbia University and the Morningside Heights Neighborhood

Morningside Heights is a unique neighborhood on the Upper West Side of Manhattan that is flanked by two magnificent greenspaces – Morningside Park and Riverside Park. The neighborhood has come to be defined by the number of large institutions located there. Nonetheless its residential buildings (brownstones and apartment buildings) are among the most notable and distinct in Manhattan.

Morningside Heights was sparsely developed until the late 1800’s when a number of institutions including Columbia University, the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Barnard College, Riverside Church and St. Luke’s Hospital were constructed near the newly completed Morningside Park.

Residential construction followed with most building in the area occurring between 1900 to 1915, with the IRT Subway line opening in 1904. Along with the subway came handsome rowhouses and apartment buildings for the middle class.82 Over the years the institutions in Morningside Heights, excluding the Cathedral, continued to grow beyond their original footprint, consuming the area’s residential fabric either directly through demolition or ownership of buildings.

Starting in the late 1950’s, Columbia University evicted nearly 7,000 residents from properties it owned in the neighborhood, many of whom were poor minorities; others became the University’s tenants.83 This shift in control over the neighborhood increased the tension in the densely-populated area.

Columbia University has proposed a number of projects that have left residents in Morningside Heights angry over its treatment of the community. A turning point came in 1961 when the
University obtained a contract from the City to build a gymnasium in Morningside Park.\textsuperscript{84} Constructing a private facility in a public park was unconscionable to many. Further inflaming town-gown tensions, the design of the publicly accessible part of the gymnasium revealed that it was quite small and only accessible from a lower level back door. Many felt that this marginalization was symbolic of how Columbia University felt about the community.\textsuperscript{85} By 1968 the community outcry led to a number of protests by community groups, residents and students. Though excavation had already started, the highly visible protests which garnered national attention caused the school to abandon the project.

In 2003 Columbia University considered development of campus buildings on the grounds of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine. However, the University backed away when community opposition grew heated once again.

\textbf{Columbia University and the Move to West Harlem}

Columbia University dominates Morningside Heights both physically and psychologically. In the past, to accommodate its growing need for space, Columbia had built new buildings within its campus, squeezed non-contextual buildings into Morningside Heights’ residential fabric, and acquired a number of the areas buildings for future development. This piecemeal approach was not only incompatible with the neighborhood of Morningside Heights, but also not a practical way to build that massive amount of square footage that Columbia indicated it needed.

With that knowledge, the university looked to areas of New York City that were close to its existing campus and would enable it to build out large facilities over a long time period. The university was also seeking to avoid further conflicts with the Morningside Heights community.
“Columbia hopes to avoid the kind of community opposition and campus rebellions caused by its past attempts to expand, or its effort in 1968 to build a gymnasium in Morningside Park. To that end, the university is focusing on a run-down industrial area of warehouses, auto-repair shops and a meatpacking plant, avoiding a string of apartment buildings.”

Columbia University intends to build out over time nearly 6.8 million square feet of space for classrooms, housing, research, parking and student services. The first phase of the project is intended to be completed in 2015 will include new buildings for science, art and business programs. The second phase which includes new dormitories, athletic facilities and academic buildings will be built out over a 25 year period. In 2003 Columbia announced plans to develop a satellite campus in an area of West Harlem referred to as Manhattanville. The 17-acre parcel that Columbia selected was dominated by industrial uses with auto shops, storage facilities an MTA garage and approximately 400 residents. The University began buying parcels of land in the area in the late 1960’s.
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