



Cornell University

May 2, 2013

The Honorable Jessica S. Lappin  
330 East 63rd Street, Suite 1K  
New York, NY 10065

Re: Cornell NYC Tech – Applications C130076ZMM, C130078PPM,  
N130077ZRM, and C130007MMM

Dear Councilmember Lappin:

Thank you for all of your attention and leadership in support of the transformative initiative for the City and Roosevelt Island -- Cornell NYC Tech. We are honored to be the City's and the community's partner, and very much appreciate your valuable guidance and direction through this process. Cornell is committed to being the very best neighbor to the Roosevelt Island community, and to that end we welcome this opportunity to document certain of our commitments to you, the City Council, and the Roosevelt Island community.

**A. Construction Practices.** We have committed to a series of best construction practice measures targeted to reducing air emissions and noise. The specifics are summarized in the appendix to this letter in Exhibit A. In addition to the specific measures, Cornell has also committed to a number of actions targeted to keeping the community and local elected officials informed about construction activities. In particular:

1. Cornell will have an on-site construction field representative to serve as a contact point for the community and local leaders, and who will be available to answer questions and address concerns that might arise during the construction process.
2. Cornell will also maintain and regularly update a web site that will inform the community, local leaders and interested parties about anticipated construction activities.
3. Cornell will form and participate in a construction task force comprised of Roosevelt Island residents (and others if appropriate) appointed by elected officials and Community Board #8. We expect that this task force will meet at least quarterly while construction is ongoing.
4. Cornell will also participate in public meetings on Roosevelt Island in coordination with the Task Force to make sure that the community as a whole is aware of the construction plans and progress.

5. As part of our best management practices, Cornell will undertake air monitoring during abatement and demolition under the auspices of a third party monitor as required by law, and the results of this monitoring will be posted on the construction web site. In addition, Cornell will maintain the on-site air monitoring equipment throughout construction, and will post the results of the monitoring on the construction web site. All results are reportable to NYC DEP who has enforcement responsibilities.

**B. Security.** Cornell shares the community's desire that the Campus be operated in a safe and secure manner. To this end, we will utilize a highly trained Campus security force on our Campus, increasing the security presence on the southern end of the Island well above what exists today.

In addition to committing to provisions for robust campus security, we have begun meeting with the NYPD to introduce them to the Cornell NYC Tech campus plan and to initiate discussions of security needs. This will be an ongoing conversation and we welcome your involvement in this planning process.

**C. Parking.** We agree with the Roosevelt Island community that vehicular traffic on Roosevelt Island should be discouraged as much as possible. To this end, we strongly believe that we should not add unnecessary parking to the Campus, because (1) it may have the unintended consequence of encouraging people to drive to the Island rather than using mass transit, and (2) offering excessive parking on the south end of Roosevelt Island may result in additional cars traveling Main Street rather than using the Motorgate garage. However, we also agree that it is important to closely monitor parking demand and conditions to make sure that an unexpected problem does not arise. Accordingly, Cornell has agreed to the following with regard to parking:

1. First, we will analyze parking needs with our corporate co-location and executive education center/hotel partners to understand the need for on-Campus parking from a business and operational standpoint. These partners are well-versed in vehicular requirements for their prospective occupants, and the proposed zoning text is designed to accommodate parking that these experts identify as appropriate without mandating spaces that will attract more vehicles to the Island.

2. Second, we will undertake an operational parking study upon the award of a contract with the developer selected to build the first corporate co-location building. The study will be completed prior to finalizing design and prior to construction. The study will analyze parking capacity on the Island as the corporate co-location project moves forward, and will evaluate operational strategies for accommodating individuals and cars coming to the building. If the study shows the need for campus parking on site, parking will be provided.

3. Third, we will undertake a formal evaluation of parking conditions at the Campus and on the Island once the Campus has developed 50% of the total planned square footage. In the event that the evaluation demonstrates that Cornell NYC Tech is causing congested parking

conditions on the Island, then Cornell will include parking in the later phases of development to address this condition.

4. Fourth, we commit to developing programs for Cornell Tech students and employees to discourage vehicular use on Roosevelt Island through the use of mass transit, bicycles and other green alternatives, and would be pleased to participate in broader initiatives to encourage water-based transit that could also reduce the need for vehicles on Roosevelt Island.

5. Fifth, in the event that parking is built on the Cornell NYC Tech campus, we will install “smart” system technology for campus on-site parking to monitor actual usage of the Cornell Tech parking facilities. We understand that this technology may be installed at Motorgate and for on-street parking as well, and if available, we agree to use the data generated by this technology in our future parking studies to ensure that the analyses are based on actual rather than just projected use.

6. Finally, as part of our parking studies, we will study conditions on the Red Bus service to assess whether Cornell parking at Motorgate is impacting the Red Bus Service.

We believe that this package of measures will minimize the number of cars travelling to and from the Campus and at the same time ensure that any parking needs are addressed in a prompt and responsible manner.

**D. Recreational Facilities.** The Cornell NYC Tech campus will bring both active and passive open space to Roosevelt Island. One exciting new active use will be a two-way, approximately 1/2-mile dedicated bikeway added to the improved Loop Road. In addition, while the 2-1/2 acres of accessible open space on the campus will include many areas for sitting, walking and socializing, the Central lawn area will be large enough to accommodate informal active uses such as Frisbee, and we are considering adding small exercise stations into some of the larger open spaces on the Campus. In addition to these public amenities, it is likely that the residential buildings on the campus will include recreational areas such as a game rooms or fitness centers for the residents of the building, which will supplement the public amenities.

**E. Recycling and Waste Management.** Cornell is committed to implementing an aggressive effort to minimize the amount of garbage that goes into the landfill. Cornell’s Ithaca campus has implemented a number of innovative approaches – we fully expect to do the same at Cornell Tech. In Ithaca, over 64% of waste is diverted from the area landfill through material use reduction techniques, aggressive recycling programs, and everything from low-tech approaches such as competitions to encourage recycling, to installing outdoor solar powered trash containers.

One specific technique we plan to implement at Cornell Tech could reduce organic waste by over 85%. Our approach is to use a waste pulper and a dehydrator -- proven technology. Working together, these two pieces of equipment remove most of the water and liquid from food waste and paper products, and then dehydrate the remaining material to remove most of the

weight and volume. The dry pulp that is produced is often in a form that can be used for composting. Ultimately our ability to compost and the specific equipment we utilize is dependent on many factors including logistics and energy intensity usage.

In addition, we understand that NYSERDA is preparing a study on the potential for future upgrade of the AVAC system. Cornell will consult with the study team and will consider the feasibility of implementation on the campus.

**F. Educational Commitments and PS/IS 217.** Cornell is committed to improving STEM education in New York City. As the campus ramps up we anticipate reaching thousands of students and teachers through programs such as competitions, fairs, on-campus activities, mentoring, instructional support, internships, institutes, access to STEM materials and labs. Our focus initially will be on tech education for middle school children, with a special emphasis on engaging middle school girls and will expand from that platform as the Campus evolves. Our goal is to embed our commitment to K12 in the fabric of Cornell Tech – to make it a part of our core mission. To do that, as we expand our campus, we will engage faculty and students in program development and delivery.

In the early years, before we have the workforce necessary to launch broad activities, we will focus on pilot schools and leverage partner organizations. Our initial pilot schools include PS/IS 217 on Roosevelt Island, M.S. 406 in East Harlem, and I.S. 204 and P.S.111 in Long Island City, Queens. Beginning this summer, as our first formal program, Cornell Tech will sponsor a summer immersion program on Roosevelt Island to inspire middle school girls from our pilot schools to learn how to “code”. The 8-week program will include instruction in robotics, web design and mobile development paired with high-touch mentorship from the industry’s top engineers and entrepreneurs. nPower, Urban Advantage, and Citizens Schools are among the other organizations we will look to collaborate with at this early stage to create programs that will enrich the educational experience of New York City middle school students.

Cornell embraces the opportunity to adopt PS/IS 217 as part of Cornell’s educational mission. In her April 30, 2013 written testimony, the principal of PS/IS 217 identified a number of ways that Cornell could become involved in the school, including teacher training and support, STEM education, after school programming courses, tech events, career day options, and hardware and software programming development. All of these elements are items that Cornell is anxious to pursue and commits to include in its educational outreach as the Campus develops. Our intent is to continue to develop these programs as our faculty and student body grows, and to have a program that touches on all of these points shortly after the Campus opens.

**G. Barging.** We understand and agree with the community’s goal of reducing construction traffic along Main Street as much as possible. From the very beginning of the project, we looked for approaches to reduce trucks trips, including committing early on to recycle the existing building materials for reuse on site. In addition, very early in our planning we initiated a comprehensive study to determine the feasibility of using barging as part of the build out of the

Campus, hiring marine engineers, researching other construction projects, meeting with the Department of Environmental Conservation and other regulatory agencies to test the possibilities. Based on this extensive work, we are now able to commit to use barging for an unprecedented amount of construction activity. In particular, subject to obtaining final regulatory approvals:

- a. Building material not reused on the Project Site will be removed by barge
- b. Nearly all bulk materials will be delivered and removed by barge
- c. Heavy materials such as steel, curtain wall, and large equipment will also be delivered by barge.

This will be by far the most aggressive voluntary use of barging in the City and will put Cornell at the forefront of best building practices in the City. This approach will reduce the number of construction vehicles along Main Street by approximately 40 percent from the numbers included in the EIS for the project. When added to the trip-saving measures already reflected in the EIS analysis, the number of construction vehicles will be reduced by **more than half** of what would be generated by conventional construction techniques.

In addition to the measures noted above, we also commit to working closely with our development partners to encourage the use of precast concrete in lieu of concrete poured on site. While this commitment will not eliminate all concrete trucks, the precast elements will be able to arrive by barge, further reducing the overall number of construction vehicles.

**H. Red Bus Service.** During construction of Phase 1, the EIS assumes that most construction workers parking at the Motorgate garage will rely on the Red Bus for travel to/from the project site. During off-peak hours when the Red Bus operates at comparatively lower frequencies, there is a potential for a line-haul impact on the Red Bus that would warrant an increase in its service during off-peak hours (i.e., during the 6 to 7 AM and 3 to 4 PM construction peak hours). Cornell has committed to fund the operating costs associated with providing additional Red Bus service if project activity adversely impacts the Red Bus service during the construction period.

**I. Community Commitments.** Cornell has had many meetings and conversations with members of the Roosevelt Island community starting well before Cornell was designated as the developer of the applied sciences campus, and continuing through to today. In the course of those conversations, Cornell has made numerous commitments to the Roosevelt Island community, Community Board #8, the Manhattan Borough President, and the City Planning Commission, as summarized in list appended to this letter as Exhibit B. The list is an important part of Cornell's commitment to its neighbors on the Island, and we reaffirm our commitment to each of the items on the list. We are committed to working with the community in implementing these measures as quickly as possible consistent with the build-out of the Roosevelt Island campus, and will meet with the community within the next few months to develop a schedule for implementation.

Thank you for your attention, and we look forward to our ongoing work with you, your staff, the Council and the Roosevelt Island community on this transformational project for the City.

Sincerely,



Cathy S. Dove

Cc: Honorable Mark Weprin, Chair, Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises  
Honorable Leroy G. Comrie, Jr., Chair, Land Use Committee  
Anne McCaughey, Esq., Counsel, Land Use Division, New York City Council



**EXHIBIT A**  
**CONSTRUCTION – NOISE CONTROL AND AIR QUALITY**

**Noise (Construction)**

The following measures will be implemented during construction to minimize construction noise levels::

- Equipment that meets the sound level standards specified in Subchapter 5 of the New York City Noise Control Code will be used from the start of construction.
- As early in the construction period as logistics will allow, diesel- or gas-powered equipment will be replaced with electrical-powered equipment such as welders, water pumps, bench saws, and table saws (i.e., early electrification) to the extent feasible and practicable.
- Where feasible and practical, construction sites will be configured to minimize back-up alarm noise.
- In addition, all trucks will not be allowed to idle more than three minutes at the construction site based upon New York City Local Law.
- Contractors and subcontractors will be required to properly maintain their equipment and mufflers.

In terms of path controls (e.g., placement of equipment, implementation of barriers or enclosures between equipment and sensitive receptors), the following measures for construction will be implemented to the extent feasible and practical:

- Where logistics allow, noisy equipment, such as cranes, concrete pumps, concrete trucks, and delivery trucks, will be located away from and shielded from sensitive receptor locations. Once building foundations are completed, delivery trucks will operate behind a construction fence, where possible;
- Noise barriers will be utilized to provide shielding (e.g., the construction sites will have a minimum 8-foot barrier and, where logistics allow, truck deliveries will take place behind these barriers once building foundations are completed); and
- Path noise control measures (i.e., portable noise barriers, panels, enclosures, and acoustical tents, where feasible) will be used for certain dominant noise equipment to the extent feasible and practical (i.e., asphalt pavers, drill rigs, excavators with ram hoe, and hoists). These barriers are conservatively assumed to offer only a 10 dBA reduction in noise levels for each piece of equipment to which they are applied. The details for construction of portable noise barriers, enclosures, tents, etc. are based upon NYCDEP Citywide Construction Noise Mitigation.

### **Air Quality (Construction)**

To ensure that the construction of the proposed project results in the lowest practicable diesel particulate matter (DPM) emissions, the project will implement an emissions reduction program for all construction activities, consisting of the following components:

- Diesel Equipment Reduction. Construction of the proposed project will minimize the use of diesel engines and use electric engines, to the extent practicable. The project will apply for a grid power connection early on so as to ensure the availability of grid power, reducing the need for on-site generators, and require the use of electric engines in lieu of diesel where practicable.
- Clean Fuel. Ultra-low sulfur diesel (ULSD) will be used exclusively for all diesel engines throughout the construction sites.
- Best Available Tailpipe Reduction Technologies. Nonroad diesel engines with a power rating of 50 horsepower (hp) or greater and controlled truck fleets (i.e., truck fleets under long-term contract with the project) including but not limited to concrete mixing and pumping trucks, will utilize the best available tailpipe (BAT) technology for reducing DPM emissions. Diesel particle filters (DPFs) have been identified as being the tailpipe technology currently proven to have the highest reduction capability. Construction contracts will specify that all diesel nonroad engines rated at 50 hp or greater will utilize DPFs, either installed on the engine by the original equipment manufacturer (OEM) or a retrofit DPF verified by the EPA or the California Air Resources Board (CARB), and may include active DPFs, if necessary; or other technology proven to reduce DPM by a similar level as the retrofit DPF verified by the EPA or CARB. This measure is expected to reduce site-wide tailpipe PM emissions by approximately 90 percent or more.
- Utilization of Newer Equipment. USEPA's Tier 1 through 4 standards for nonroad engines regulate the emission of criteria pollutants from new engines, including PM, CO, NOx, and hydrocarbons (HC). All nonroad construction equipment in the proposed project with a power rating of 50 hp or greater will meet at least the Tier 3 emissions standard. Tier 3 NOx emissions range from 40 to 60 percent lower than Tier 1 emissions and are considerably lower than uncontrolled engines. All nonroad engines in the project rated less than 50 hp will meet at least the Tier 2 emissions standard.
- Dust Control. Strict fugitive dust control plans will be required as part of contract specifications. For example, stabilized truck exit areas will be established for washing off the wheels of all trucks that exit the construction site. Truck routes within the sites will be either watered as needed or, in cases where such routes will remain in the same place for an extended duration, the routes will be stabilized, covered with gravel, or temporarily paved to avoid the re-suspension of dust. All trucks hauling loose material will be equipped with tight fitting tailgates and their loads securely covered prior to leaving the



sites. Chutes will be used for material drops during demolition. An on-site vehicular speed limit of 5 mph will be imposed. Water sprays will be used for all excavation, demolition, and transfer of spoils to ensure that materials are dampened as necessary to avoid the suspension of dust into the air. Loose materials will be watered, stabilized with a biodegradable suppressing agent, or covered. In addition, all necessary measures will be implemented to ensure that the New York City Air Pollution Control Code regulating construction-related dust emissions is followed.

- Source Location. In order to reduce the resulting concentration increments, large emissions sources and activities such as concrete trucks and pumps will be located away from residential buildings, academic locations, and publicly accessible open spaces to the extent practicable and feasible.
- Idle Restriction. In addition to adhering to the local law restricting unnecessary idling on roadways, on-site vehicle idle time will also be restricted to three minutes for all equipment and vehicles that are not using their engines to operate a loading, unloading, or processing device (e.g., concrete mixing trucks) or otherwise required for the proper operation of the engine.

In terms of Air Quality monitoring, the following will be undertaken:

- Depending on the extent and type of asbestos-containing material (ACM), an independent third-party air-monitoring firm will collect air samples before, during, and after the asbestos abatement. These samples will be analyzed in a laboratory to ensure that regulated fiber levels are not exceeded.
- Work zone air monitoring for lead may be performed during certain activities with a high potential for releasing airborne lead-containing particulates in the immediate work zone, such as manual demolition of walls with lead paint or cutting of steel with lead-containing coatings. Such monitoring will be performed to ensure that workers performing these activities are properly protected against lead exposure.
- A RAP and associated CHASP were prepared and submitted to NYCDEP and were approved by NYCDEP. The CHASP identifies potential hazards that may be encountered during construction and specify appropriate health and safety measures to be undertaken to ensure that subsurface disturbance is performed in a manner protective of workers, the community, and the environment (such as personal protective equipment, air monitoring requirements including community air monitoring, and emergency response procedures).

## **EXHIBIT B**

**During the course of the ULURP process, Cornell has had numerous meetings with community groups and elected officials. We have made multiple commitments to Community Board 8 and the Borough President's Office, all of which have been put in writing. The following list includes the commitments made to date:**

The specific RICC recommendations that Cornell has agreed to adopt include:

- Provide space for community groups to meet and provide access for Roosevelt Island organizations to auditorium space, when available
- Be fully compliant with ADA requirements such as incorporating accessibility features on campus such as a "looping" system for hearing impaired and disabled access (universal design)
- Investigate the feasibility of providing reduced rates for hotel space for Island residents, when accommodations are available
- Work closely with PS/IS 217 to implement Roosevelt Island pilot programs focused on tech education for middle school students. Work with other age groups too
- Work with our Cooperative Extension Office, and designate a campus person to work on outreach programs with community
- Work with the community to program outdoor space for children
- Provide computers and help with computer training for members of the Senior Center
- Create mentoring programs for the Island's population of post-high school young adults
- Create a "shadowing" program for Island middle school students to accompany scientists and observe academic/laboratory process
- Create an environment in which Cornell NYC Tech technology students can research ways that technology can enhance lives of older adults and the disabled
- Provide consideration to Island organizations and services prior to working with outside organizations when feasible
- Preserve the Goldwater WPA murals, and consider preserving and displaying other Island historic artifacts, where appropriate and feasible

- Provide Islanders opportunities to announce Island news and cultural events to Cornell faculty, students, and staff through electronic community bulletin boards, postings, and newsletters
- Post Cornell NYC Tech employment and sub-contracting opportunities and cultural opportunities via email, WIRE, blog, and local bulletin boards
- Provide primarily non-monetary support for community's cultural and religious events
- Provide computer training for the disabled group, and investigate the donation of Dragon software, and
- Sponsor a "tech hackathon" to advance technology education for the disabled.

**Cornell has also committed to being a great neighbor in the following areas:**

**Construction Measures**

- Agreed to investigate the feasibility of utilizing barging techniques for material delivery
- Hire independent 3<sup>rd</sup> party to monitor air quality during abatement
- Monitor air quality during demolition and excavation
- Create a Construction Task Force comprised of Roosevelt Island residents (and others if appropriate) appointed by elected officials and Community Board 8
- Maintain and regularly update a web site that will inform the community, local leaders and interested parties about anticipated construction activities
- Have a Remedial Action Plan (RAP) and Construction Health and Safety Plan (CHASP) in place
- Implement a number of best practices in connection with the development of the campus that will minimize emissions from vehicles and equipment
- Have an on-site construction field representative to serve as contact point for the community and local leaders
- Will fix any damage caused by Cornell's construction activities
- Pay for the operating costs associated with providing additional Red Bus service using existing buses during the early morning hours

- Pay for the costs of snow removal on the upper deck of the Motogate garage in the event that construction worker parking requires that the upper deck of the garage be opened during the winter months.

### **Studies**

- Participate in a RIOC study for alternative uses for the existing steam plant facility to the north of the site
- Assess the feasibility of reintroducing pedestrian and bicycle access from Roosevelt Island to the Edward I. Koch/Queensborough Bridge
- Continue analysis of the viability of introducing a high pressure gas line on the Island and a co-generation facility at the Campus.

### **Community Liaison**

- Name a Community Liaison to serve as contact person for the community and local elected officials.

### **Campus Open Space**

- Make publicly accessible open spaces fully open, inviting, and accessible.

### **Parking**

- Undertake an operational parking study before introducing a hotel/executive conference facility on the Island
- Discuss parking needs with potential partners for the executive education center prior to any designation
- In the event that parking has not already been introduced onto the Campus, Cornell would perform a formal evaluation of parking conditions at the Campus and on the Island once the Campus has developed 50% of the total planned square footage
- Develop programs for students and employees to discourage vehicular use on Roosevelt Island through the use of mass transit, bicycles and other green alternatives.

### **Public Services on Roosevelt Island**

Cornell will provide certain direct services and improvements when it comes to Roosevelt Island. Supplementing the services already provided by the City and RIOC, Cornell will:

- Provide security services for its campus and buildings. In addition, we have already begun conversations with the City as to how best coordinate security for the rest of the Island
- Build and maintain 2-1/2 acres of publicly accessible open space on the campus, including landscaping, public seating areas and lighting
- Widen and totally rebuild the public loop road surrounding the campus, including adding sidewalks, landscaping, a bike lane, and parking spaces
- Replace the existing water main and sanitary sewer beneath the Loop Road
- Replace the existing storm outfalls beneath the Loop Road
- Partner with ConEd to bring high-pressure gas service to Roosevelt Island.

#### **HireNYC**

- Fill 15% of all new permanent, non-academic jobs created in connection with the project for at least the first ten years after campus operations begin with members of the City's low-income population.

#### **K-12**

- Impact over 10,000 students and 200 teachers a year through outreach programs such as competitions, fairs, on-campus activities, mentoring, internships, institutes, access to STEM materials and labs.

#### **Revolving Fund for Startups**

- Investing \$150 million [over 30 years] in NYC area tech start-ups in partnership with venture capital investors.

#### **MWBE Outreach**

- Minimum participation goal of 17%.