

Hunter's Twin Towers Postponed Indefinitely

by John Obelenus

The much maligned plans for the construction of Hunter's twin towers were halted once again early this January when Mayor Koch, together with City Comptroller Harrison J. Goldin, blocked any further City University construction pending submission of a new master plan covering both municipal and private institutions by City University Chancellor Robert J. Kibbee and Harold M. Jacobs, chairman of the Board of Higher Education.

The \$84 million project for the construction of twin towers on opposite sides of Lexington Avenue between 67th and 68th Streets was halted originally during the city's fiscal crisis in November 1975, leaving the foundations of the buildings brought only up to ground level. Since that time there has been no further construction effort to complete the towers.

In a letter sent to the New York State Public Authorities Board, which has the power to further the construction of the project, Mayor Koch and Comptroller Goldin asked that the proposed resumption of the Hunter project be put off indefinitely. According to the joint letter the Hunter project was postponed until the new master plan demonstrated whether or not the project was "needed in

terms of long-range student enrollment expectations for City University."

The letter also pointed out that the Hunter project would involve the city in a bond issue that would cost more than \$6 million per year for the next 30 years. The Koch-Goldin letter also expressed concern over whether there were not more important construction projects which would contribute to the long-range economic health of the city.

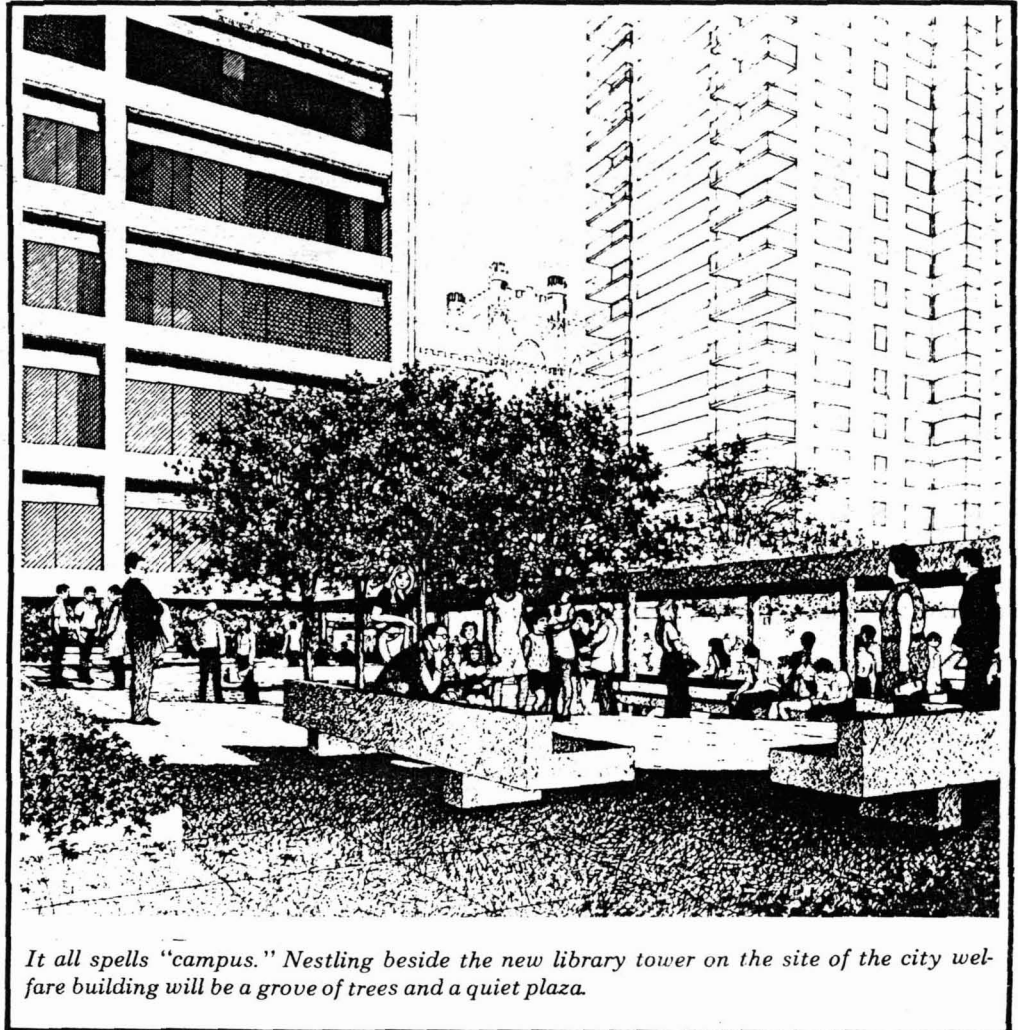
According to Howard Miller, Chairman of the three-man state board, the state administration was willing to go along with resumption of the project, but not, however, without city agreement and concurrence.

Before the letter halting further construction in the City University was released from the Mayor's office, a comprehensive sale of \$111.5 million worth of State Dormitory Authority bonds was concluded to further construction at Lehman and City College.

PRESIDENT WEXLER ASKS FOR COMPLETION OF PROJECTS

Hunter's president, Jaqueline Wexler, felt that the additional space was desperately needed and deserved, mainly to keep the student enrollment level up to

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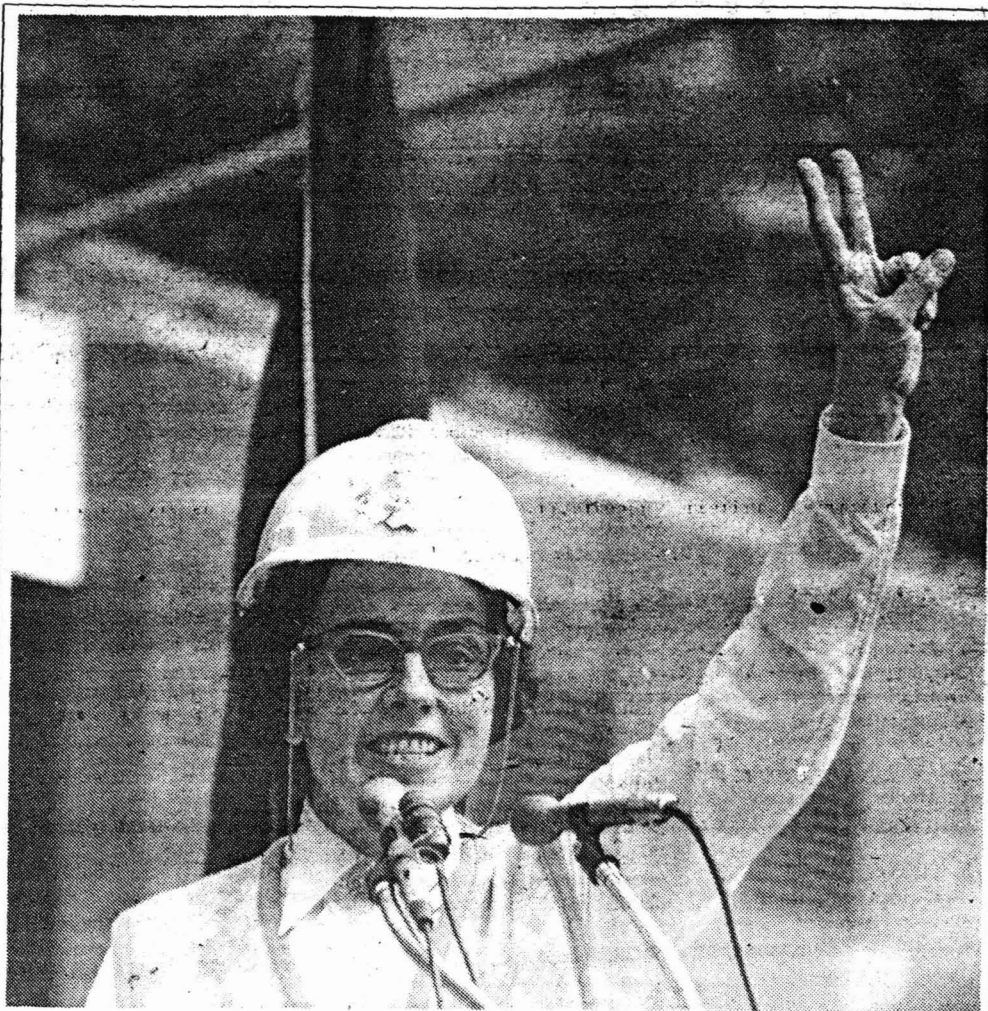
It all spells "campus." Nestling beside the new library tower on the site of the city welfare building will be a grove of trees and a quiet plaza.

Twin Towers

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12,000. The added space is needed, she said, to come closer to the Regents' guidelines, which recommend that there be 100 assignable square feet of space per student.

Termination of the project, according to Mrs. Wexler, as reported in the *New York Times* would mean that the city would have spent "\$22 million in abandoned construction, plus a minimum of \$4 million to \$6 million in settlement costs." Completion, on the other hand, she said, "would provide 200,000 man-days of instant employment in the dreadfully depressed construction industry of New York City."

The Board of Higher Education and Chancellor Kibbee, in a letter to the Governors' office, said that any master plan would sustain Hunter College's enrollment. In the same letter, the Governor was also assured that only construction that is essential to properly house the students and staff of the university would be forwarded. The letter stressed that since the Board is in the midst of a planning process to determine "the full scope, structure and configuration" of the university, they could not say, at the moment, what the specific needs were.



President Wexler during groundbreaking ceremony for proposed Hunter towers.

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