

These are the statistical results for the hotel survey.



Hotel Construction Survey

Graduate Student Organization, Stony Brook University
Social Concerns Committee

Background on the proposed construction of a campus hotel:

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Supporting documents for this statement can be found on the website of the Campus Environment Committee at: <http://naples.cc.sunysb.edu/Admin/usenate.nsf/pages/environment>

In the mid-1980s, the state legislature approved a land lease to build a hotel on the SUNY Stony Brook campus on the parcel of land directly south of the main entrance road and east of the Administration Building parking garage. Under the lease, the university would provide the land and utilities, while a private company would construct and operated the hotel. Recently, a company expressed interest in developing the property and a plan was developed. The Campus Environment Committee reviewed the plan and issued a statement expressing their opposition to the location. At the moment, development is on hold, pending the outcome of a lawsuit by local hotel owners and members of the local community.

Construction of a hotel would have both positive and negative impacts on the campus. An on-campus hotel would provide lodging for visiting scholars and athletes and provide accommodations within walking distance of the Health Sciences Center, for families of patients. It would also improve the university's ability to hold meetings and conferences. The negative impacts are due primarily to the choice of location. The first and most serious negative consequence of building at the currently proposed location would be the ecological impact of the loss of a large track of forested land. Construction would require clearing much of the parcel for both the hotel building and a parking lot, as underground parking is not currently being considered. This parcel of land contains many mature trees and a healthy, intact understory, virtually free of invasive species. The land supports populations of many indigenous plants and animals, including mountain laurel, lead-back salamanders and songbirds. Its proximity to the Ashley Schiff Preserve increases its value as wildlife habitat. Construction on this site would also have a negative aesthetic impact. It would degrade the forested buffer between the campus and Nicols Road, which is important for both the surrounding community and the campus. Furthermore, the proposed construction would prominently place a commercial interest at the main entrance to the university, which is not in keeping with the image of the university as an institution of higher learning. Finally, construction of a hotel will place demands on the University's already taxed infrastructure, including water, sewage and traffic. Because the current plan is not available for public review, there is no way to assess the degree of these impacts or how the developer would compensate the university for them.

Careful consideration is needed to determine if the benefits of having a hotel on campus outweigh the costs of permanently destroying a large parcel of wooded land, especially when other locations are

available. In their statement, the Campus Environment Committee recommended several alternative locations, including the parking area north east of the Wang Center and the site of the current Student Union. Other locations are possible and could be identified as part of an environmental master plan. The University Senate unanimously endorsed the completion of an environmental master plan in September 2004, but the administration has not yet taken action on this issue.

1. Do you agree with the idea of building a hotel on campus?
 - |184| Yes
 - |150| No

2. Do you consider an environmental assessment prior to the construction of the hotel necessary?
 - |302| Yes
 - |31| No

3. It is possible that the construction of the hotel will involve a decrease in the number of parking spaces next to the Wang Center. Would you be willing to give up those parking spots for the construction of this hotel?
 - |128| Yes
 - |206| No

4. The hotel may have an indoor bar with alcoholic beverages. Do you think that this will affect the campus' security?
 - |96| Yes
 - |238| No

5. The hotel will have its own parking lot. Which do you think would be better?
 - |47| An open air parking lot (cheaper to build, but involving a decrease in the number of trees surrounding the hotel)
 - |280| An underground parking lot (15-20 times more expensive, but ecological safe)

6. The hotel will have at least one entrance from campus and not from Nicols Rd. Do you think this will affect traffic during day and night?
 - |216| Yes
 - |118| No

7. One of the university's arguments in building this hotel is the fact that it could provide accommodation for relatives of people hospitalized in the Health Sciences Center. Do you think that this justifies the hotel's location within walking distance from the hospital?

|132| Yes

|200| No