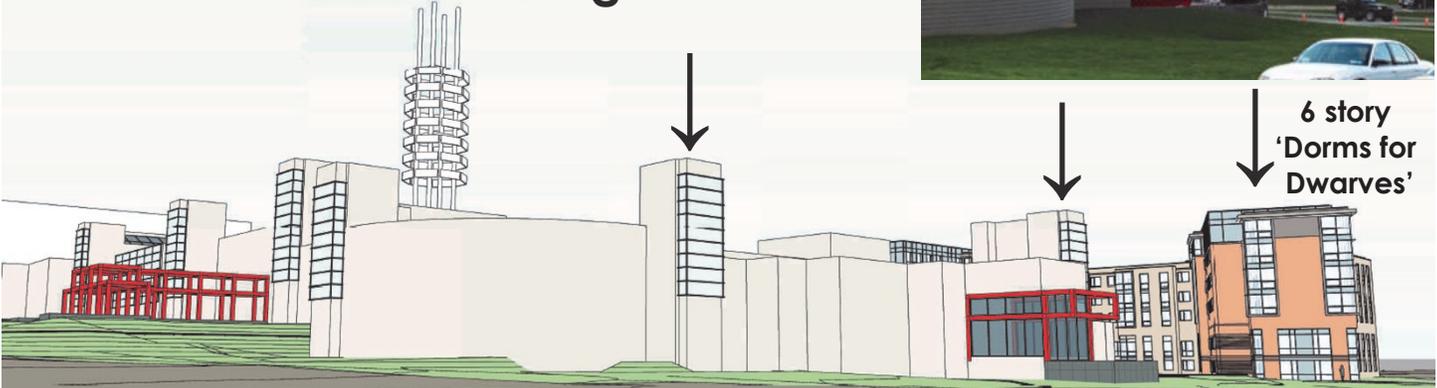
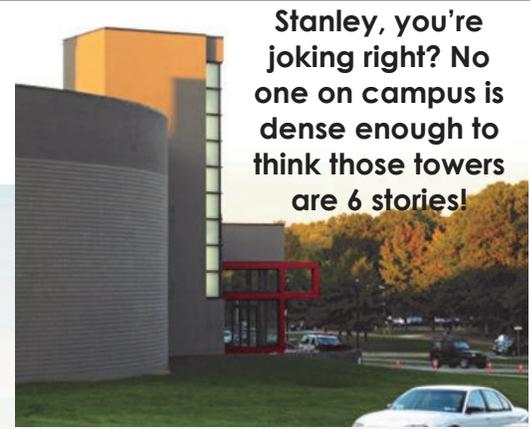


Is President Stanley Lying About the Effect the New Dorms Will Have on the Wang Center? Or Does He Really Believe the Wang Center Light Towers Are 6 Stories High?



On September 28, members of the Asian Student Coalition delivered a letter to President Sam Stanley asking for a meeting to discuss the proposed Toll Drive Residence Halls, the negative effect they will have on the Wang Center, and why a nearby alternative space was never considered. The signatories included past and present Presidents of AA E-Zine, AAJ, ASA, CASB, China Blue, ISO, JSO, PUSO, and Taiko Tides. In response, they were given copies of KSG Architects drawings, which they already had and which had provoked their letter. The drawings, one seen above, falsely show the Wang Center light towers as 6 stories high. Other drawings, using the same false height, show the 6 story dorms as not visible from the academic mall, implying they would not have a negative impact on the Wang Center pagoda tower. The original KSG rendering on the next page more accurately shows the true height of the dorms towering over Wang.

Excerpts of letter given to the President

DEAR PRESIDENT STANLEY,

Last May, student(s) and alumni... wrote to you privately and publicly requesting that you stop the planned construction of the Toll Drive Residences. There has been no response from you. The plans are still listed on the KSG Architects website and the cafeteria portion on FSA's.

Even more distressing were the photo-illustration and drawings commissioned by the University after the request. These were given to faculty members who asked to meet with the head of the SBU/FSA planning committee. These faculty were part of the group which had created the original Asian Faculty Association. They had invited Charles Wang for his first visit to campus in 1996 where he was asked to fund an Asian American Center.

The photo, even though taken from the best possible angle, at the best possible time of year, and poorly drawn to have the dorms seem lower than they

really will be, still showed just how horrendous the Wang Center garden would become. The six story dorms, towering four stories over the garden, will overpower it, destroying the gardens beauty and serenity. While in the past two years its pond has often been left unfilled and barren, in earlier years it was a wonderful place to hang out.

Another special design of the Wang Center will be rendered unusable forever. The curtains covering the Noh style theatre windows, which allow the exterior to become part of the interior, will never be able to open again. Not only will the current natural landscape be replaced by bricks, with dorm lights going on and off, opening the curtains would have an impossible to control negative impact on any performance in the Wang theatre.

Worse, however, was the drawing that made it appear the 6 story dorms were the same height as the 3 to 4 story Wang Center light towers. Upon seeing the drawing, the first reaction is anger. Does the University think anyone is stupid enough to believe this?

The second reaction is fear. What if the University planners believe this?

Yes, we know that stories can be of different heights, and the front of the Wang Center is on higher ground, but the light towers are only as high as the four story Wang Center conference rooms by the Skylight Lobby, and the first floor of that is below ground even on the lower rear side.

The dorms as presented in that drawing by KSQ Architects would have to be dorms for dwarves with below normal ceiling height.

Because the main entrance and the academic mall are higher than the Wang Center, removing the tree barrier behind Wang

and building dorms of any height would completely ruin the view of the Wang Center.

But six story dorms, higher than any portion of the Wang Center walls, will destroy the view of its pagoda tower sculpture as well. The pagoda has become the University's icon, pictured on countless brochures and websites, and even the Alumni Association credit card.

We fail to understand why you would choose to destroy the Wang Center's aesthetics when an easy alternative - dorms by the stadium / tennis courts - is available. It is less than a two-minute walk away on a different side of the Union lot.

This alternative space was initially offered to Charles Wang for the Wang Center. It has room for construction of more dorms now and the ability to expand in the future. New high temp pipes have already been installed. Like the popular University of Texas at Austin stadium dorms, dorms in this alternative space could be for athletes and supporters of our increasingly popular sports teams.

We fail to understand why a group of nine white males and one white female could make this decision for a campus that is not monochrome....

We fail to understand why no constituent group on the campus was ever informed about the effect of the Toll Drive Residences on the Wang Center. Actually, why were no constituent groups even told about the plans at all?

We would like you to meet with us to explain why you are disregarding the feelings of the Asian and Asian American community. And it is not just our community.

The Wang Center is considered the most beautiful building on campus and one of the most popular non-student event venues. (Students groups have difficulty getting access.) Some departments reserve space a semester in advance to guarantee they can get the dates they want.

Charles Wang's goal was for everyone to learn something about Asia just by being in the building. How does destroying its classic Suzhou garden teach anything but a classic lesson in white privilege?

As student Melani Tiongson said, the proposed dorms are "like a slap in the face to my culture" and reminiscent of the days when people of color like her

were "shafted for the benefit of something allegedly 'greater.'"

Why do you not think that beneath their polite demeanor, Asian and Asian American faculty and staff do not feel that you have

treated them just as disrespectfully?

Why you think this will endear Asian and Asian American students to become supportive alumni of Stony Brook? Or make current alumni become supportive?

Why is nearness to the academic mall more important than everyone on campus who appreciates the Wang Center's beauty?

We would like to meet with you so that you can tell us, in your own words and to our faces, why you believe we and the Asian and Asian American community at Stony Brook are less important to you than residence halls.

Sincerely,
 Kevin Diangkinay, ASC Co-Chair, PUSO Past-President
 Wilson Jiang, Save Wang Co-Chair, SBU AA E-Zine Editor
 Max Wei, Save Wang Co-Chair, SB Photo Club VP
 Sam La Fleur, Taiko Tides President
 Christine Sicwaten, PUSO President
 Winnie Chan, CASB President
 Audrey See Tho, ISO President
 Derek Wu, China Blue President
 Christine Lee, ASA President
 Maro Kariya, JSO President
 Fariyah Sattar, Bengalis Unite President
 and AAJ, AA E-Zine, ASA, CASB, China Blue, ISO, JSO, PUSO, SBU AA E-Zine, Taiko Tides, and TSA Cabinet members.

www.aezine.org/SaveWang



Original KSQ Architects rendering showing truer height of Toll Drive Residence Halls towering over Wang Center.