At the March 2002 meeting, Professor Peter Stein, Physics, and member of the Faculty Club Statler Board, reported on a survey done regarding faculty clubs at peer universities:

**Services Offered:**

63% of peer group faculty clubs serve dinner. Cornell’s does not.  
84% of peer group clubs offer table service at lunch. Cornell’s does not.  
79% of peer group clubs have parking available. Cornell’s does not.

**Cost to Members:**

Median annual dues at peer group clubs is $169. At Cornell, annual dues are $74.  
Median lunch check at peer group clubs is $10. At Cornell, it is $5.

**Faculty Perception of Value/Price:**

35% of eligible faculty in the peer group belong to their faculty club, as opposed to 12% at Cornell.

**Finances:**

Operating losses in 90% of peer group clubs are offset by revenues from functions. Cornell’s club is excluded from this opportunity.

Only half of peer group clubs receive a subsidy.

**Summary:**

To the question “On a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is nearly moribund and 10 is healthy and thriving, how would you rate your club”, the median
answer by the peer club managers was 8. Cornell’s manager’s response was 2.
Conclusions

1. The quality of services offered by Cornell’s faculty club is so low that despite low price levels, it cannot attract the level of participation of peer faculty clubs.

2. 18 out of 19 peer faculty clubs are considerably healthier than is Cornell’s

3. The relationship between the Hotel School and the Statler Club is probably at the root of the Statler Club’s difficulties.

4. Small incremental changes will not solve the problem.

What’s Needed;

1. Administration resolve to create a Faculty club consistent with the quality of Cornell’s faculty.

2. The Administration should appoint a committee (with sufficient support) to examine the problem, and propose a solution.

In April 2002, Professor Stein introduced the following resolution regarding reestablishment of a Faculty Club:

WHEREAS, a well functioning faculty club that is able to attract the participation of a large and diverse fraction of the faculty can make a significant contribution to the morale, well-being, and intellectual life of the faculty, and

WHEREAS, the growing interdisciplinary nature of research and teaching will increasingly require a social infrastructure that facilitates cross department, college and discipline interactions, and

WHEREAS, peer institutions have found it possible to provide attractive and well-run faculty clubs that can attract broad faculty participation, and

WHEREAS, the ambiance and level of services provided by the Statler Club are no longer consistent with the needs and expectations of the Cornell faculty, and
WHEREAS, the Board of the Statler Club has requested the President and Provost to create an ad hoc committee charged with creating a viable plan for a new faculty club,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Senate supports the request of the Statler Club Board, and asks the President and Provost to constitute such a committee before the end of the academic year.

There being no discussion, the resolution was voted on and was adopted.

At the April 2003 meeting, Professor Peter Stein, Physics, and Chair, University Club Task Force, said they have submitted a report to the Provost and President and he is now bringing forth a resolution to the Senate. He said thriving clubs are the norm at peer institutions. To succeed here, a university club would need an architecturally significant, central, rent-free facility; large special function revenue; independent management; high-quality food; a comfortable and upscale ambiance; an alignment with Cornell’s character and traditions—something that represents the university to the outside.

The Committee felt the facility should be 12,000 net square feet, thereby being able to attract membership of 1,000 faculty and staff. Annual dues of $137 would be charged. The dining area would hold 250. Estimated cost would be $6,000,000 for a new building and $3,500,000 for a renovated facility.

Following discussion, on a vote call, the resolution was approved as follows:

Whereas, the Provost, with the approval of the Senate, charged the University Club Task Force to “…develop a plan for a more vital and appealing university club on the campus”, and

Whereas, the Task Force found thriving clubs on 16 of the 19 peer campuses Cornell uses for faculty salary comparisons, and

Whereas, the Task Force has visited and examined the characteristics of successful clubs at a number of universities, and based on its findings, has presented to the administration a plan to establish a self-supporting club at Cornell,

Therefore be it resolved that the Senate strongly supports the recommendation of the University Club Task Force that Cornell establish a University Club with the following mission and with the following characteristics and capabilities.

Mission of the Cornell University Club
In 1921, President Nicholas Murray Butler of Columbia University created the Columbia Faculty House to provide a place and a setting that would bring together “scholars having diverse intellectual interests...in a social unity that will both increase their satisfactions and add to their influence in the community as individuals or as a group...The Faculty House...is as much a part of the equipment of the University as is a library or laboratory”. Because Cornell in 2003 is far more complex, broad and diverse than Columbia was when those words were written, the goal of a university club, to forge a social unity and increase the satisfaction, effectiveness and cohesiveness of its faculty and staff, is even more vital to Cornell’s well-being today than it was to Columbia’s in 1921.

A Cornell University Club that fulfills its purpose will be far more than a good restaurant. Its aim will be to become a symbol of what Cornell is, a place whose appearance, style, ambiance and programs will foster and reinforce a sense of fellowship between the men and women whose joint and separate labors make Cornell great.

The Cornell University Club will be a key element of the University. Faculty and staff will find it a convenient and attractive hub for meeting, talking and dining with friends and colleagues from across the campus. Its dining facilities will present opportunities for scholarly discourse, administrative matters and social interactions. It will make a major contribution to building a sense of community and fostering pride in and allegiance to Cornell. It will serve as the University’s premier venue to welcome and entertain visiting scholars, corporate leaders, recruiters, alumni and donors. It will contribute to the intellectual climate and work of Cornell by hosting lectures of general interest to faculty and staff, receptions, and departmental retreats. Faculty and staff will find it a welcoming place in which to conduct business or to honor special occasions and accomplishments. New faculty and staff, initially in a social void, will acclimate to the Cornell community through its congeniality. The Cornell University Club will further provide faculty and staff a convenient opportunity to bring their spouses and children into the university environment, and in so doing, demonstrate Cornell’s commitment to family.

In summary, the Cornell University Club will be a cornerstone of the Cornell community.

Characteristics and Capabilities of the Cornell University Club

The club will be a membership organization open to all faculty and staff, housed in a rent-free architecturally significant facility, located no more than a five minutes walk from Bailey Circle (the geographical center of the Cornell faculty). The club will be a self-governing unit within Cornell, with responsibility for its financial affairs. It will not receive financial support from Cornell beyond in-kind contributions for major structural repairs and utilities. It will have the capacity to provide distinctive, high quality food and beverage service, maintain a comfortable and up-scale ambience, and attract a substantial
special function revenue from its members. In its appearance and programs, it will visibly demonstrate alignment with Cornell’s quality, traditions and character. It will occupy roughly 12,000 net square feet, and will have a maximum seating capacity of 250 diners.

Professor Peter Stein, Physics, at the April 12, 2006 meeting, said a resolution adopted by the Senate three years ago requested that Cornell establish a University Club.

It was presented and discussed with President Rawlings, and then President Lehman. Following that, Professor Stein and Dean Walcott had a meeting with Carolyn Ainslie, Vice President for Planning and Budget. The Administration believes it can no longer carry the subsidy for what it would cost to run a Faculty Club in the Statler. Professor Stein feels that the current club could very well close in the not too distant future.

Professor Peter Stein, Physics, presented an update on the University Club at the May 2007 meeting, saying the University Club Task Force has discussed this with three presidents at Cornell. All said it was a wonderful idea and a lack at Cornell. President Skorton agreed to give the problem to a consultant group in Toronto developing a master plan for the campus.

The consultant group asked Professor Stein to assemble a group of people to meet with during the summer to discuss various issues. He will be sending an email to the Senate requesting volunteers for this purpose.