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Abstract

Using studies, testimonies, and plans started in the 1950s to replace Philadelphia's Dock Street Market, this article critically examines motives and trends that culminated in federally generated studies recommending the forced displacement of the nation's largest inner-city food districts. While markets had served important social functions in addition to food, the consensus among post-war agricultural experts, downtown business leaders, and city planners was that urban food markets were slums associated with high prices, unsanitary conditions, and underperforming real estate. Market redevelopment was motivated by desires to increase land values and assert middle-class values and social norms in addition to concerns about efficiency and public safety. Public authorities and nonprofit organizations like the Greater Philadelphia Movement influenced the planning around Dock Street. Demolishing aging inner-city markets created large tracts of land coveted by postwar city planners for development of residential and commercial amenities like Society Hill that they hoped would lure the middle class back to the city. Unobstructed land that could be obtained cheaply and enclosed entirely like former trash dumps and underperforming industrial areas on the urban periphery were recommended sites for construction of new markets. This case study offers a relevant historical context for the causes of modern urban food desserts.

Keywords

food systems, urban renewal, historic preservation

From the founding of the colonies through middle of the twentieth century, markets were vital economic nodes that mediated the distribution of food from agricultural producers to consumers. As recently as 1918, a majority of cities (56 percent) in the United States with populations over 30,000 had a municipal food market.¹ Progressive-era planners and civic reformers often compared markets to public utilities like water or sewer services that were essential to sustaining urban life.²

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Academic experts continued to promote farmers' markets into the 1920s, even as they recognized that most cities were relying upon ever more distant agricultural sources.³

By the late 1930s, however, city planners and agricultural economists increasingly defined urban food markets as design problems that posed urgent public health threats. William C. Crow, an economist at the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), personally photographed and studied marketing "evils" in New York, Boston, and Philadelphia, while gathering statistical information about food districts in forty cities throughout the nation.⁴ He offered a powerful argument for USDA involvement and funding for urban market research. As two USDA bureau chiefs wrote endorsing the new research agenda: "We shall have to attack distribution as scientifically and as persistently as we have attacked farm production for 75 years."⁵

The postwar consensus among influential experts from the USDA, the Urban Land Institute (ULI), and the American Society of Planning Officials (ASPO) was that urban food markets were slums. Officials associated market physical obsolescence and functional inefficiency with the increased price of food, unsanitary conditions, decaying buildings on prime real estate, and outmoded business practices that attracted social degenerates. City planners and other practitioners of urban renewal likewise looked upon market districts, which often occupied valuable downtown real estate, as potential "development land."⁶ The USDA, ULI, and ASPO all wrote about imperatives to address inefficiencies and blight associated with urban food distribution, which they considered an infrastructural "problem" that could be "solved" by physical design, planning, and technology. Despite very different professional affiliations and economic motivations, the official analyses and recommendations offered by planners, real estate developers, and agricultural economists were rooted in complementary worldviews about farming, urban development, and consumer desires, which resulted in the near elimination of urban markets by the 1970s.⁷

This article critically examines the written and visual rhetoric of studies, testimonies, and plans generated in the 1950s to evaluate and design a replacement for Philadelphia's Dock Street Market. Among the first projects of its type in the United States, its redevelopment illustrates national trends in market research and planning that began earlier in the twentieth century and culminated in the forced displacement of the nation's largest inner-city food districts in the 1960s and 1970s. A brief introduction to common historical patterns of urban food market forms, functions, and development in the first half of the twentieth century is provided as a context for this analysis of Dock Street Market.

In conclusion, this article proposes two reasons why the history of markets like Dock Street matters in the twenty-first century. This history first provides a relevant context for a rapidly growing body of research documenting a revival of urban food markets and their multiple contributions to public health, social interaction, and economic development.⁸ Some of the organizations and agencies that support markets today, such as the USDA and ULI, once dismissed them as functionally obsolete, which suggests that professional expertise is historically contingent and socially constructed. A second, more tentative, hypothesis proposes a direct connection between the rapid market reforms of the 1960s and present food system challenges. Long-standing, often multigenerational business relationships—socio-economic bonds—between producers, distributors, and retailers were broken when food markets were forcibly dismantled and reconstituted. Quantitative and qualitative data suggest that the disruption of markets at mid-century contributed in the following decades to a steady decline in the total number of food stores. Knowledge of this transformation helps to explain the eventual development of what planners today commonly refer to as "food deserts"—geographic areas critically underserved by retail establishments offering fresh, healthy, and culturally appropriate foods.⁹

Market Adaptations

To understand why markets were perceived as a planning crisis, I will ground mid-twentieth-century planning reforms in a brief history of markets and efforts to study them. In the nineteenth and early

decades of the twentieth century, most municipal governments proactively planned, built, and regulated the local infrastructure of retail food distribution. Urban consumers purchased produce, fish, meat, and other provisions in accordance with local laws that prohibited the sale of food outside the boundaries of centrally located market squares and public market buildings where economic exchange was carefully monitored.¹⁰ Most perishable food was grown, distributed, and sold locally well into the 1880s.¹¹

Starting in the mid-to-late 1800s, private venues of retail food distribution began to draw customers away from public markets. Separate butchers, produce vendors, and other small-scale food retailers led the trend and were quickly joined by independent grocery stores that offered a variety of fresh and packaged foods.¹² The transition of retail food sales from public markets to more numerous and geographically dispersed private stores was enabled by deregulation of market bylaws that began in many major US cities in the 1850s.¹³

Private food stores influenced the economic functions and physical forms of older municipal markets. Publicly owned and publicly operated markets adapted to private competition by transitioning from sites of retail trade to wholesale distribution.¹⁴ In large cities in the 1870s, entire food districts formed around municipal wholesale buildings as independent wholesalers, agents, and jobbers occupied private buildings along public streets. From these primarily wholesale market districts, middlemen and other food-system intermediaries supplied the grocery store trade, restaurants, and institutional buyers such as hotels and hospitals.

Dock Street Market illustrates this transformation from retail to wholesale functions. Like many older cities in the United States, Philadelphia had a public market system. In 1800, it had five market buildings; by 1857, the city managed thirteen public markets, most of them situated in the center of major streets.¹⁵ In the mid-nineteenth century, Philadelphia ceased efforts to enforce its bylaws that required butchers and farmers to sell directly to consumers in public facilities, enabling them to sell wholesale quantities of food to private stores instead.¹⁶ Philadelphia city government continued to expand its retail market system, however, as the Delaware Avenue Market was built at the foot of Dock Street in the 1850s.¹⁷ The rise and fall of Philadelphia's nineteenth-century public markets merits additional research, as little is known about precisely when or why individual markets like Dock Street were built, and how, if at all, they might have functioned as a "system." One early government study indicates that market activities developed along what had once been a meandering creek that facilitated docking of small vessels, which helps to explain Dock Street's name, as well as its distinctive curve that deviates from the neighborhood's grid-iron plan.

While the Delaware Market was originally built by the city in the 1850s for the purposes of retail trade, by 1870, wholesale receivers and distributors of fruits and vegetables were doing business along Dock Street and neighboring streets. The transition from retail to wholesale trade happened gradually over a series of several decades bracketing the turn of the twentieth century.¹⁸ Eventually, the entire neighborhood became known as Dock Street Market. The attentions of politicians and reformers were drawn to the market as it expanded geographically throughout the neighborhood and the interrelationships among farmers, wholesalers, and retailers on the supply side of the food system grew more economically complex in the decades leading up to, and following, the turn of the twentieth century (Figure 1).

Inefficiency of urban food distribution became the primary object of urban planning analysis and reform in some of the nation's largest cities. The complexity and efficiency of markets attracted close scrutiny shortly after 1900 as a result of an international crisis known generally as "The High Cost of Living," which roughly coincided with the emergence of city planning as a professional discipline. Food prices in the United States climbed steadily through the 1890s and reached a peak in 1917, when it was estimated that between 40 and 60 percent of income was spent on feeding the family.¹⁹ That food was growing more expensive was indisputable; the cause of this increase and what to do about it was less clear to civic leaders and city planners. The nation's largest cities such

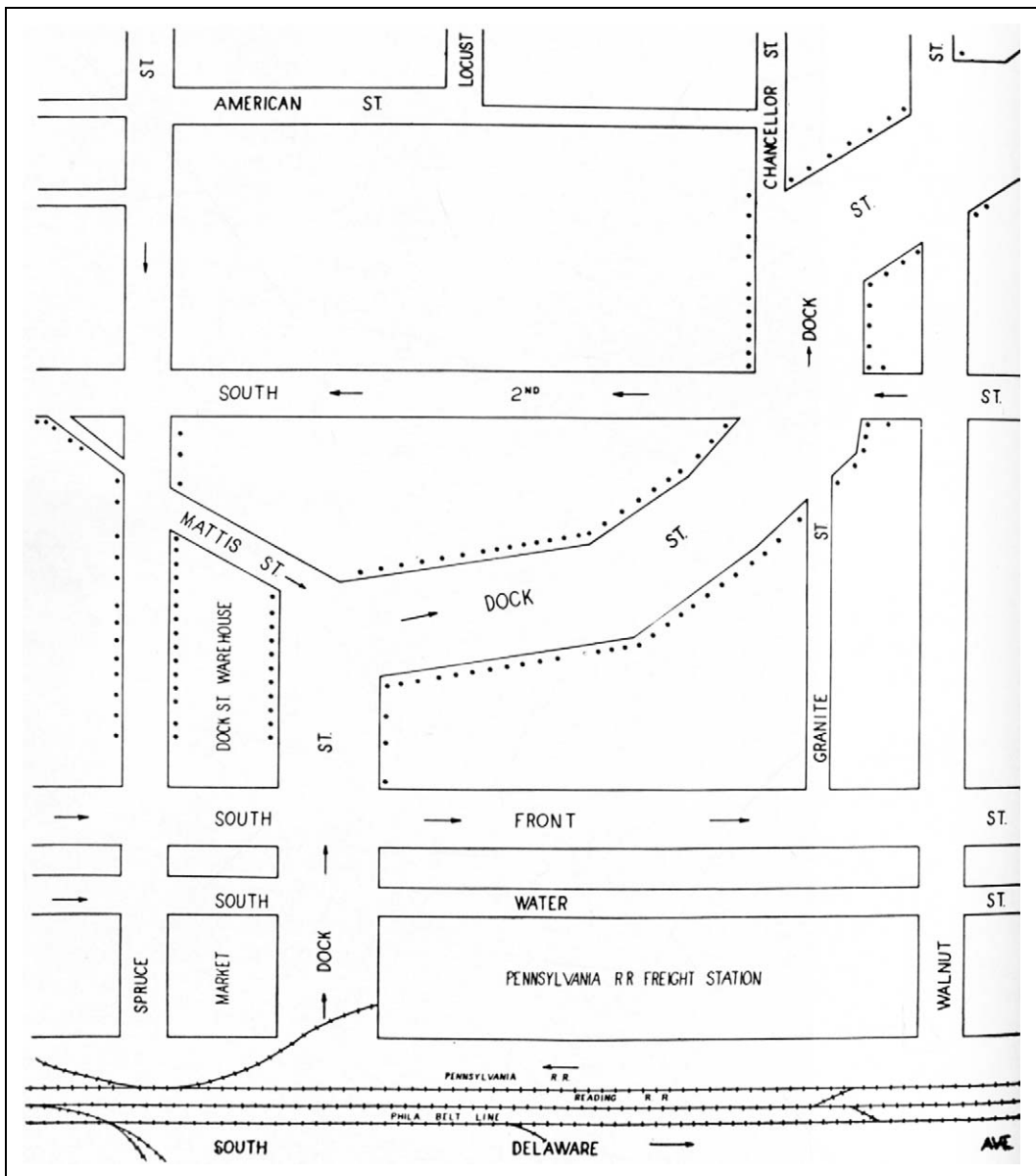


Figure 1. General layout of Dock Street Market showing number and location of individual food purveyors as well as the nineteenth-century Delaware Avenue Market, 1936. Source: R. B. Donaldson, *Philadelphia Wholesale Fruit and Vegetable Markets*, Bulletin 349 (Pennsylvania Agricultural Experiment Station, 1937), p. 10.

as Boston, New York, and Philadelphia resolved to study the issue.²⁰ While several city planning commissions issued extensive reports before World War I about the technical challenges and social implications of urban food distribution, for the most part, their plans and recommendations for major physical interventions never came to fruition for a variety of interrelated reasons including the onset of the Great Depression and the United States' engagement in two world wars.²¹

Nearly all planners who investigated the problem agreed that food was expensive not because it traveled so far to get *to* the city but rather because it traveled so far *within* the city.²² Architects and

planners who studied the issue concluded that food traveled within cities along circuitous paths involving multiple economic transactions before finally reaching points of retail sale. Dozens of specialized and interrelated intermediaries, or “middlemen,” emerged in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to facilitate this movement. Among the most important of these were commission merchants who sold agricultural products on contract for farmers, wholesalers who specialized in the sale of large volumes of one or two commodities, and jobbers who purchased a full line of goods in smaller quantities for resale to retail grocers.²³ The theory among market reformers was that many of the transactions between farmers and consumers, as well as much of the movement and physical handling of food were unnecessary and costly. Their primary conclusion was that markets had developed over decades in an ad hoc manner without proper coordination and planning.²⁴

The most widely proposed solution was consolidation of existing food districts into newly constructed, wholesale “terminal markets.” A concept developed in the first decade of the 1900s, a terminal market was a modern warehouse and distribution facility optimally located to take advantage of multiple transportation modes: steamship, truck, and railroad. These elaborate complexes were to be composed of massive refrigerated warehouses, auction floors, offices, loading docks, and railroad sidings. In theory, all food destined for a city would funnel through one terminal market where it would be broken into smaller units, repackaged, and then delivered along the straightest possible routes to neighborhood retail stores. American market reformers looked to European cities for the latest trends in food terminal design, especially Munich, Germany; Paris, France; and London, England.²⁵

In practice, however, several challenges stymied implementation of these schemes in the United States. Perhaps the most intractable was what one expert described as the tendency of “markets to persist in a given location.” Henry Erdman, who was among the first generation of academically trained agricultural economists in the United States and one of the most influential, noted that forced displacement followed by total demolition was the only sure way to move a market and its merchants. Otherwise, market men preferred to remain at their existing locations where their ways of doing business were governed by certain traditions and their customers were familiar with the setting and routine. Modernized facilities might promise improved efficiencies, but merchants generally associated major changes with uncertain economic prospects.²⁶

Attacking Distribution

The USDA assembled government and academic agricultural economists to study the markets of Philadelphia in 1935, including professors from Pennsylvania State College and the New Jersey College of Agriculture.²⁷ Among the representatives of the USDA was William C. Crow, who had just joined the agency that year as an associate agricultural economist; after World War II, he would become the single most influential urban market expert in the United States and arguably among the most important in the world.²⁸ But in Philadelphia in 1935, Crow and his government colleagues were embarking on a new type of study, one with no precedent at the federal level.

A brief overview of the USDA’s historical development enables a deeper understanding of its midcentury approaches to market research. In the first half century following its establishment in 1862, the USDA narrowly interpreted the scope of “agricultural activities.” Transportation, manufacturing, and marketing were considered “commercial issues,” and thus the domain of what was then known as the federal Department of Commerce and Labor. During the nineteenth century, the USDA, as well as land-grant colleges, and the agricultural press, were almost singularly dedicated to enhancing farm productivity.²⁹

The “high cost of living” galvanized public and political support for the federal government to improve food access and affordability. The USDA created the Office of Markets in 1913, which was nebulously empowered by congress to “acquire and diffuse” information about marketing.³⁰ In the

twenty years that followed, the USDA executed this mandate by offering research intended to make existing markets function more efficiently. It disseminated commodity supply and sales data through a market news service, developed standard grades and packaging for fresh foods, enforced trading rules, and conducted health inspections.³¹

By the late-1930s, however, it had become clear to the USDA that entirely new market facilities would be necessary to “ensure the welfare of the Philadelphia market” and others like it in large cities across the nation. The agency had exhausted its ability to improve market efficiency through dissemination of information; rapid globalization of the food system exacerbated the situation. As Crow concluded in a landmark USDA report published in 1939: “Markets designed to retail small quantities of local produce in an age of comparative self-sufficiency could hardly be expected to be efficient in the wholesale handling of the huge volume of produce needed by a large city”³²

Several observations led the agency to this conclusion: a majority of the consumer’s dollar spent on food actually paid for distribution costs rather than the farmer’s labor. This “price spread” or “margin” between the farmer’s profit and the consumer’s cost was widening over time.³³ Urban markets in most major US cities were very old, which was considered a proxy indicator of their inefficiency, and a sign of public neglect. Boston’s Faneuil Hall had been in operation for roughly 200 years and was still the city’s most important market; Dock Street Market was nearly 100 years old. Of the 101 markets in forty cities surveyed by Crow in 1938, only 44 were built in the preceding twenty years, and most of these were constructed as railroad produce terminals. These newer markets were not unified, publically owned, and managed facilities open to all for free trade.³⁴ Moreover, construction of privately owned wholesale facilities contributed to what had become known earlier in the century as a “split market.” Instead of food flowing into a city’s one “terminal market,” it was received and distributed from several disjointed market districts—a condition the USDA considered highly undesirable. “The usefulness, perhaps even the preservation, of the markets demands action toward improving practices, organization, and facilities,” Crow wrote in 1938.

What did Crow and others at the USDA mean when they wrote about the “preservation” and “welfare” of markets? It first helps to understand that they used the noun “market” in at least two distinct ways, to refer to two different geographic scales. For example, when the USDA and its collaborators wrote about “the Philadelphia Market” in 1936, they were referring to the city’s entire distribution system—all the wholesale fresh food transactions conducted anywhere within its borders, independent of the foods’ origins and ultimate destinations. According to this usage, the City of Philadelphia was one of the leading markets in the United States, receiving fruits and vegetables from thirty-six states and more than a dozen countries. Approximately half of this volume was sold to retail stores and “hucksters” for purchase by consumers within the city; the other half was purchased by chain stores and “out-of-town buyers.” At this time in the 1930s, Philadelphia also had within its borders five separate wholesale “markets,” of which Dock Street was the largest in terms of the number of firms and workers as well as the volume of fruit and produce handled. This was the second way economists used the word market as a noun—to refer to individual wholesale facilities or neighborhoods.

The USDA and its academic collaborators sought to preserve the City of Philadelphia as a viable market for the distribution of agricultural products. They were monitoring two trends perceived as threats to this objective. The first, and most alarming, were the so-called chain store methods of purchasing. Chain grocery stores like A&P and Kroger, which were founded in the 1880s, expanded rapidly across the nation during the interwar period. In the 1920s, they began pioneering a system of distribution in which they purchased commodities directly from product manufacturers and agricultural producers. Grocery chains began to negotiate bulk purchases with individual farmers, which were then sent directly by rail or truck to their private distribution warehouses and on to their individual stores, entirely bypassing urban public markets like Dock Street. By doing so, chains were able to negotiate lower prices with farmers and secure assurance of supplies, which were critical for

planning merchandising programs.³⁵ The second trend was the extent to which private market facilities, like the Pennsylvania Railroad Produce Terminal built in 1927 about a quarter of a mile south of Dock Street, were further “splitting” the overall Philadelphia market into smaller, uncoordinated, and potentially redundant, underperforming fragments. The USDA and other mainstream agricultural economists worried that the more redundant and inefficient a city’s wholesale distribution system, the more likely farmers were to either send goods to other competing markets—to New York, for example—or to contract directly with chain stores. Thus, in order to preserve the “Philadelphia Market,” the USDA would need to curtail chain store buying methods. The only way it could envision doing so was to reorganize Philadelphia’s redundant and inefficient individual markets into one consolidated and modern terminal market.

Agricultural economists feared that the failure of wholesale markets in cities like Philadelphia would lead to three unfavorable consequences. First, the disappearance of open urban markets would “leave farmers at the mercy of large buying organizations,” namely chain stores.³⁶ Second, in the absence of other marketing options, farmers would be forced to take whatever prices chains offered. And third, local independent retailers “were dependent almost entirely on the wholesale markets of Philadelphia for supplies.” The volumes of their individual businesses were too small to permit them to buy like chain stores directly from farmers in ever-more-distant agricultural regions. They depended on the 150 food purveyors—wholesalers and jobbers—who populated storefronts along streets in markets like Dock Street.³⁷ In sum, agricultural economists predicted that the collapse of the Philadelphia Market would lead to the consolidation of the food industry, though nobody used exactly those words to describe this possibility at that time.

Bad Neighbors

Because the USDA had neither the mandate nor the financial resources for market development or planning under the federal marketing laws that existed in the first half of the twentieth century, Dock Street remained a subject of study and complaint, but not action. “It gets in the papers and then nothing happens,” groused the chairman of a meeting convened in 1951 to update the president of the ULI about the Dock Street situation.³⁸ The Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce had recently instigated formation of an ad hoc committee to study Dock Street, survey its merchants, and make recommendations for either the market’s reconstruction or for its removal and redevelopment. The transcripts of the 1951 ULI meeting offer a unique perspective on how planners, city business leaders, and industry experts debated the pros and cons of market planning in the context of postwar federal agriculture and urban renewal acts. Two of the most influential men in mid-century urban design and food market reform provided testimony: Edmund Bacon, the then Executive Director of the Philadelphia City Planning Commission, and William C. Crow, who had become Director of Planning and Facilities at the USDA. Their discussions suggest how plans for Dock Street were shaped by the redevelopment of Society Hill, regarded as one of the most celebrated historic preservation projects in US history, and among the most notorious cases of government-sponsored gentrification.³⁹

While Dock Street was perceived to have the same problems in 1951 as it did in 1935, planners had begun to debate the importance of market location in the context of urban design and real estate economics. Should Dock Street be reconstructed in its present location or should it be relocated, and if so, to where? Moreover, were markets an industrial land use best kept isolated from the general public or were they a potentially dynamic civic amenity to which the public should be welcomed? Discussion of these questions revealed changing ideas about the fundamental character of food markets and the value and appropriate uses of urban land.

At the 1951 meeting, the ULI heard two very different perspectives. Representing one point of view was A. Victor Cancelmo, Chairman of the Dock Street Improvement Association, who

reported that 65 percent to 70 percent of market merchants preferred to remain at Dock Street and build new facilities.⁴⁰ Representing the other was Edmund Bacon, who described the evolving plans for Old City as “a project for restoring [an] entire residential area to a sort of Williamsburg character of historical restoration, tearing down some commercial buildings and building new apartments, basically restoring old houses” with a system of intersecting garden walks, the eastern end of all of which was the present location of Dock Street Market (Figure 2).⁴¹ Cancelmo thought the juxtaposition would be ideal. “It would be a very beautiful thing to be at the eastern end of the old Philadelphia,” to have tourists visiting Independence Hall, Carpenters Hall, and the new Mall see a new food market in action.⁴² Others on the committee had doubts about the mingling of such land uses. “They wouldn’t be particularly good neighbors . . . a fine type of residence section and Dock Street.” Cancelmo, seemingly defensive, shot back: “We don’t make bad neighbors.”⁴³

Their exchange underscored a dramatic shift in thinking since World War I about the planning and design of terminal markets. In the progressive era, architects and planners envisioned wholesale food markets to be public amenities, like retail markets had been in earlier decades. As such, they designed them as multistory facilities sited in dense urban environments, embellished with landscaping and decorative architectural detail. However, advances in machinery and methods developed during World War II for moving materiel influenced those who thought about the design of distribution facilities.⁴⁴ According to Raymond Vernon, the renowned Harvard economist and an early theorist of globalization, it was difficult to adapt “city-style multi-story” buildings for the labor-saving devices made possible by the “technological revolution” in goods handling.⁴⁵ Terminal markets remained the most salient concept, but the architectural massing and locations proposed for such facilities changed after the War to single-story structures situated in the suburbs or on the urban periphery.

In his ULI testimony, Crow explained the new design thinking, confirming that food distribution had become an industrial land use, which he likened to lumber and coal yards. Markets, he said, were “not a great deal different from that. It is a one-story operation” that required large expanses of inexpensive land. He saw no need in Philadelphia, or elsewhere, for markets to “be near your department stores, your hotels, your big apartment developments, your historic shrines, your subways, and other city developments of this kind.” More important to Crow were easy access and the segregation of land uses: a place to get in and out of quickly. Sweeping his hand across a map laid out before the committee, Bacon pointed to the locations of future infrastructure—the Schuylkill Expressway, the Penrose Avenue Bridge—which suggested Oregon Avenue in South Philadelphia to be an ideal location for distribution. In doing so, Bacon assumed a role that would become common among municipal planners at mid-century: he advised and consulted on the location of markets. The internal layouts and social dynamics of these new facilities were left to the expertise of the USDA.

Mainstream urban planners were more interested in redeveloping former market sites, like Dock Street and Society Hill, than they were in planning new food markets for the future. The ASPO published an advisory brief in 1955 encouraging its members to capitalize on the inherent potential of antiquated food markets. Instead of recommending best practices for market planning, design, and operation, the ASPO mostly offered rationales for their removal: “In many cities the central business district is in desperate need of lands in which to expand and develop new retailing and business uses, while only a few blocks away an inefficient produce market occupies decaying buildings and draws large numbers of trucks and other vehicles through the already congested heart of the city.”⁴⁶

Less than a week after its initial meeting, the ULI issued a report recommending the removal of Dock Street Market. The properties, it advised, should be purchased by the city using eminent domain if necessary; a new market should be built near the intersections of Oregon and Delaware avenues in southeast Philadelphia. Once completed, Dock Street merchants should be moved “en masse.”⁴⁷ The next step was to begin designing the new market.

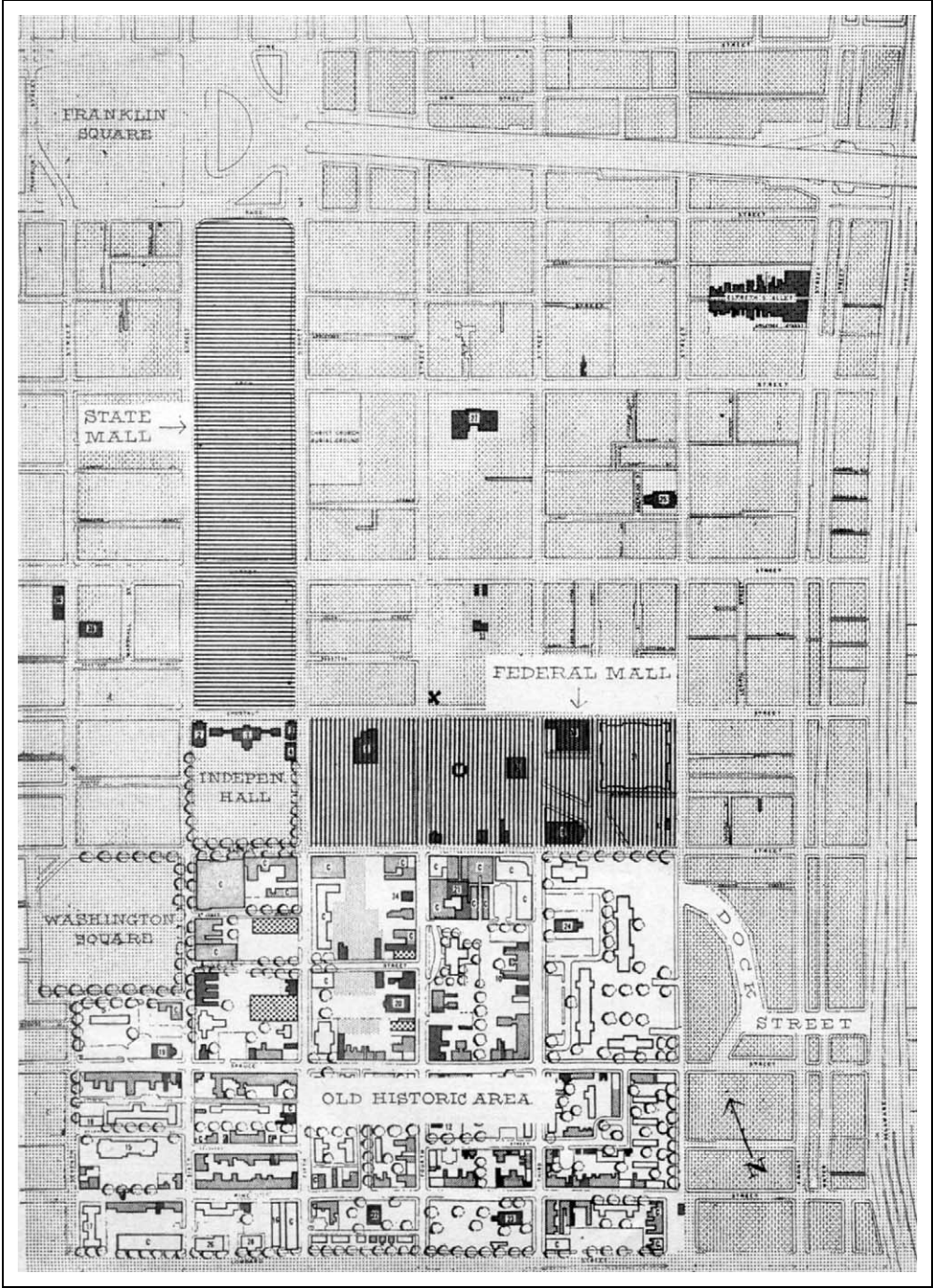


Figure 2. Dock Street in relation to the Society Hill “Old Historical Area” and Independence Mall. *Source:* “Philadelphia’s Redevelopment: A Progress Report,” *Architectural Forum* 103, no. 1 (1955): 118–27; map from page 124.

Food Slums

The Greater Philadelphia Movement (GPM) endorsed the project and, in 1954, began to coordinate planning and fundraising of the new market.⁴⁸ GPM quickly raised a quarter million dollars for a feasibility study, incorporated the Philadelphia Food Distribution Center Corporation to manage the undertaking, and appointed Vernon D. Northrup executive vice president of the new entity. Northrup immediately set out to raise additional money from local foundations.⁴⁹ Appeals by Vernon and others reveal that market planning, like so many other urban renewal undertakings, was arguably motivated by desires to assert middle-class values and social norms more than it was by concerns about efficiency and public safety.⁵⁰

Traditional methods and spaces of urban commercial activity conflicted with evolving middle-class norms concerning food safety and preservation. Those who advocated for the removal of wholesale distribution from center-city locations frequently described food markets as incubators of social pathologies like alcoholism, criminality, and sometimes even perversion. Rationales for the demolition and redevelopment of market districts correspond closely with what urban historian Allison Eisenberg has called the standard “mantras of urban renewal.”⁵¹ As such, the relocation and redesign of markets like Dock Street would supposedly decrease traffic congestion, increase the municipal tax base, root out obsolescence, and eliminate physical and social problems thought to be imperiling still economically viable sections of downtown.⁵²

However, the rhetoric of market renewal was different: it sought to publicize and personalize a connection between an essential human need—food—and the urban markets through which most fresh produce passed. Accounts of market conditions were calculated to invoke visceral feelings of shock and alarm, which, the USDA, congressional leaders, and others hoped would provoke the public to advocate for food distribution reform. Proposals for a new freeway, by contrast, might interest the average person to the extent that it could alleviate the commute to work. Housing projects might further some abstract belief in “a decent home for every American.” Because it entered the home and the body, food made market renewal intensely personal for those who lived in the city, the suburbs, and beyond.

Descriptions of the conditions at Dock Street were typical of the rhetoric deployed by chambers of commerce, the USDA, and mainstream urban planners to mobilize opinions and resources in support of renewal. “The Dock Street Area has become a congested and noisome slum,” wrote Northrup in a mid-1950s appeal for grant funding to support planning new market facilities. These conditions, he argued, were unknown to most Philadelphians:

In some parts of the market sanitary standards are of the most primitive kind. Food heaped on the sidewalk collects dirt, germs and filth splattered from passing trucks. There are no public toilets, and in some buildings, no toilets at all. Loading platforms, public streets, alleys and vacant lots fill these needs. The area is frequented by derelicts from Skid Row. Obviously, working conditions like these cannot attract and hold a high type of labor. Some of the markets draw labor . . . from nearby slums, the underworld, and from floaters who drift from city to city. Such laborers work an hour or so—enough to buy a bottle of cheap liquor or jug of fortified wine—and they sleep on the streets or in the corner of the very buildings from which the food is distributed . . . Yet through this pestilential rookery passes a large portion of the food eaten in Philadelphia!⁵³

The popular media conducted its own investigations in the 1950s that amplified and broadcast these concerns to a national audience. A series of exposés published by *Reader's Digest* and *Redbook* (the self-proclaimed “Magazine for Young Adults”⁵⁴) sought to uncover market conditions that “No vigorous young American home builder, husband or wife, would tolerate . . . if he or she knew the facts.”⁵⁵ Urban renewal advocates considered the public's ignorance of the

prevailing conditions and practices in older markets among the primary reasons why major redevelopment had failed to get underway by the mid-1950s. USDA market reports cited newspaper and magazine journalism as evidence of the public's growing dissatisfaction and alarm.⁵⁶ Congressional leaders referenced these same sources to motivate colleagues to support market-reform legislation. In 1952, the Chairman of the House Committee on Agriculture read into the Congressional Record *Redbook's* recent article "Filth in Our Food—An Exposé of the Appalling Conditions in Many of America's Wholesale Fruit and Vegetable Markets." He hoped it would be read by millions who would pressure congress to "attack" the "unspeakable squalor" of the nation's marketplaces.⁵⁷

Popular magazines that catered to a young and largely suburban readership described markets and their problems in terms that conveyed socially conservative, antiurban biases. While the USDA characterized inner-city markets as "antiquated" and "obsolete," *Redbook* and *Reader's Digest* went further: markets were "primitive" and "hoary with age." Moreover, they were symbolic of technologically obsolete ways of living and functioning—vestiges of the "gaslight era" holdovers from "horse-and-buggy days." A pre- and postwar generational divide was offered as an explanation for the growing intolerance of older markets. Thus, "sequestered in the oldest, least accessible parts of town," urban wholesale market districts might be familiar to "old timers" but they were unknown to "America's young adults [living] in fringe residential suburbs A new generation, working hard to keep healthful homes, immaculate kitchens, wholesome tables, would not abide these food slums." It was this new generation of suburban residents that *Redbook* was addressing when it encouraged its readers to think of America's markets in the context of their own domestic standards, aspirations, and ideals: "All young people raising families want clean, immaculate kitchens. Why, then, should the kitchens of our cities be broken-down and filth-ridden?" Such markets had "no place in modern America."⁵⁸

Dock Street Market had a long history of open-air selling on streets and sidewalks, as did most market districts in the United States and abroad. Doing so was a matter of tradition as much as physical necessity; marketing space was limited. Moreover, produce inventory typically turned over quickly, often selling within a matter of hours after its arrival.⁵⁹

The propriety of unsheltered commerce was increasingly called into question by mainstream news sources, as well as the USDA and municipal planners, particularly where food was involved. Purchasing food inside controlled architectural environments became the norm for most middle-class Americans after World War II. The most modern postwar supermarkets featured air conditioning, clean surfaces, bright artificial lighting, wide aisles, even music.⁶⁰ Despite its outdoor, agricultural origins, the thought of storing, buying, and consuming food outside in an urban environment made some pundits uncomfortable. New white-collar professionals living increasingly indoor, automobile-oriented lives associated unsheltered food with lower economic classes and ethnic minorities.⁶¹

The effect of long-term outdoor storage on the quality and safety of food was no doubt a legitimate concern. However, Northrup's grant proposal, as well as articles in newspapers and magazines from the 1950s, suggests that a deeper source of anxiety than food's exposure to inclement weather was its potential exposure to unsavory human elements more common to public urban, than private suburban, environments. The poor and the homeless were specifically imagined as a threat to the wholesomeness of the nation's food supply. "Human derelicts always gravitate to the market place," wrote one journalist. "There they get drunk, try to keep warm in doorways, and stave off hunger with stolen fruit and vegetables. Their spew and body wastes contaminate the sidewalk on which merchandise is laid out."⁶² The ASPO called it a "fact" that markets were a known "gathering place for vagrants, and sometimes criminals," which of course was thought to contribute to blighting effect on adjacent areas.⁶³

What many in the national media appeared to be saying was that American shoppers should no longer tolerate their food traveling through urban neighborhoods. Rather, it was preferable to buy

food that was prepackaged indoors, somewhere out of sight. *Redbook*, for example, endorsed the design of newer food distribution facilities that were not bisected by public streets and could therefore exclude unauthorized visitors. They were enclosed by “cyclone fence topped with barbed wire, to keep the drifters out.” In these modern terminals, food rolled from boxcars and trucks directly into factories and warehouses on mechanical conveyor belts and motorized forklifts “with a minimum of manpower and *no contact with the street*.”⁶⁴ Rhetoric of this sort was calculated to advance urban renewal objectives by provoking fears that the safety of the public food supply was endangered by the race, class, and ethnicity of laborers and the older markets in which they worked.

Food City of Tomorrow

Philadelphia was among the first municipal beneficiaries of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946, which significantly expanded the USDA’s mandate and resources to study markets by applying a “scientific approach” to the problems of transporting, distributing, and selling agricultural products.⁶⁵ In the ten years that followed, the USDA worked with state and local planning agencies, as well as local business leaders, to conduct studies throughout the country, writing reports and preparing plans for markets located in approximately fifty cities.⁶⁶ At the request of the GPM, in 1951 the USDA prepared a set of designs for new buildings and a scale model depicting the possible layout for an entire wholesale market facility in South Philadelphia. The GPM additionally retained the services of the nationally renowned, Philadelphia-based architect George Howe to assist with design, most likely the early renderings and graphic depictions of the market in particular.⁶⁷ An advertising brochure designed to attract merchants to the new market heralded the “Food City of Tomorrow” (Figure 3).

The brochure’s high-elevation, oblique perspective of the market was a visual rhetoric commonly deployed by planners in the 1950s;⁶⁸ all the congestion, density, and waste associated with inner-city markets were replaced with a sweeping vista of geometric simplicity and connectivity meant to imply functional efficiency. Ribbons of future highway and cloverleaf interchanges frame one long-edge of the rectangular plan with railroad tracks bordering the other. The open ends of the site recede beyond the frame, unbounded into the horizon, promising possibilities of limitless future expansion. If Le Corbusier envisioned urbanity as parks with towers—“machines for living”—the USDA idealized food markets as industrial parks, a horizontal logic of single-story warehouse slabs and parking lots designed for machines of distribution.⁶⁹

Following passage of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946, the USDA created a standard set of designs that included plans, elevations, and photographs of a scale model illustrating what it considered to be the “proper design and layout” of a terminal market. It then recommended these plans be implemented to replace every one of the inner-city markets it studied and planned over the next two decades. All these planning reports were researched and authored by a small cadre of USDA agricultural economists under the direction of William C. Crow.⁷⁰

Perhaps as a result, these USDA reports communicate the logic of a paradigm—a shared set of assumptions about research methods and the relevance of specific data that informed approaches to, and interpretations of, market problems and preferred solutions. It was indicative of what political scientist James C. Scott describes as the “administrative ordering of nature and society” so typical of state-led approaches to framing and solving problems. Maps, photographs, statistics, and other abstractions of reality represent ways of “seeing like a state” that were commonly utilized in the mid-twentieth century to simplify and compress social and physical phenomenon that were inherently complex and multidimensional.⁷¹

The USDA carefully considered some aspects of existing and new markets, but, in retrospect, it overlooked other potentially important details. For example, the agency studied the relationships between the hard infrastructure of architecture and technology. Reports often contained photographs



Figure 3. “Food City of Tomorrow.” *Source:* Temple Urban Archive, Greater Philadelphia Movement Collection. Courtesy of Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation.

composed to convey chaotic markets clogged with truck trailers from which men laboriously unload produce crates that were then stacked on sidewalks (Figure 4). These images provided a contrast for the USDA’s standard set of market designs. Buildings it considered ideal were essentially single-story reinforced concrete rectangles featuring tall ceilings, wide front and rear loading docks, office mezzanines, and open plans free of obstructions, with movable partitions. Portable power conveyors and motorized forklifts moved foods into, through, and then back out of each building (Figure 5).⁷²

Representations of individual people and the names of specific businesses—details about the soft infrastructure of markets—are notably absent from the USDA’s reports and plans. There was no regard for “urban history, traditions, . . . aesthetic tastes,” or other potential social and economic concerns. According to James Scott, such two-dimensional, diagrammatic thinking was typical of the “high-modernist” planning ideology of the period.⁷³ USDA studies of markets in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and San Francisco were typical in their emphases on centrality, unification, and visual coherence, all attributes of what Scott calls state simplification.

Other contemporary observers noted the inherent social complexity of markets. A 1948 dissertation about the proposed displacement of Dock Street merchants speculated about the socioeconomic importance of relative locations and relationships within the market. Were all stores equally valuable? If not, how would site selection within a new market be negotiated? “A location is more than a certain type of physical structure at a particular geographic point,” the author mused. “It includes also a set of relationships with the activities surrounding it and, moreover, the reaction of buyers and sellers to these relationships.”⁷⁴ This astute description of “location” could be applied to a definition of markets more generally. The USDA privileged some physical attributes and obscured or overlooked other social and economic relationships.

Its mid-century paradigm was likely shaped by the educations of its staff. Henry Erdman, an early and influential agricultural economics professor at the University of California, Berkeley, lamented

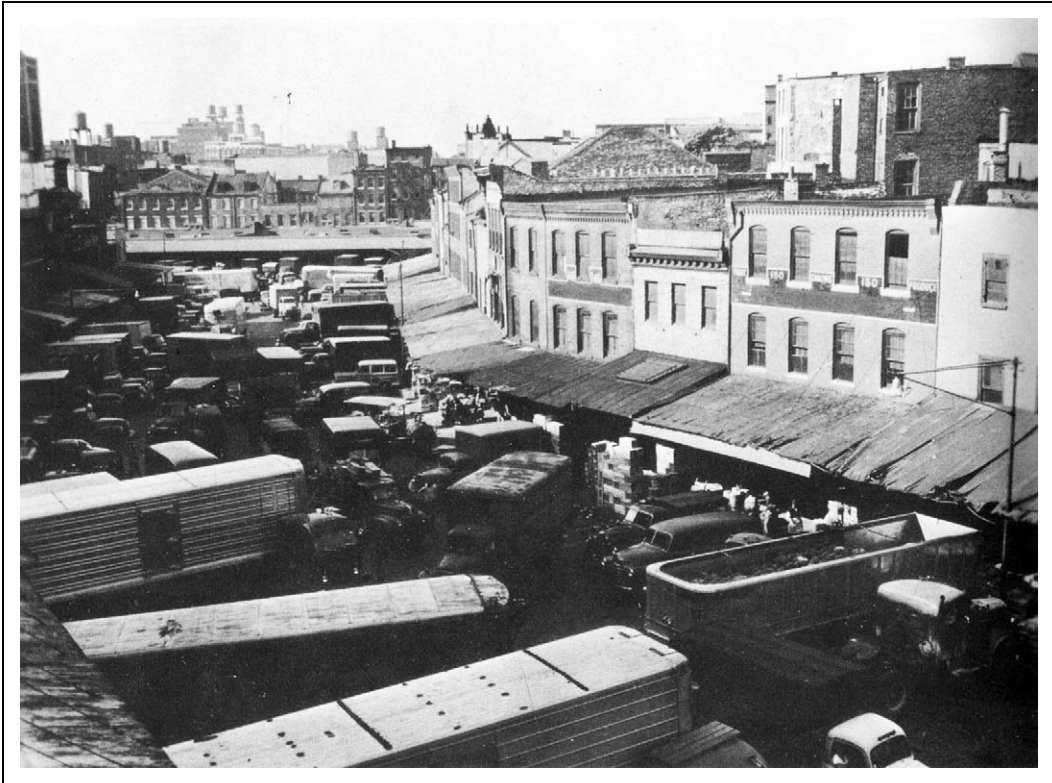


Figure 4. Long-haul trailers jostle for parking space with station wagons, pickup trucks and workers on the relatively narrow, cobblestone curve of Dock Street, circa 1958. Source: USDA, *Wholesale Food Distribution Facilities for Philadelphia, PA*, Marketing Research Report No. 201 (Washington, DC: USDA, 1958), 12.

the fact that by World War II the profession had become increasingly focused on “fine measurements and . . . refinements in statistical procedure.” Students no longer took classes in history, political science, and sociology. Erdman, by contrast, was known for taking his classes on 5:00 a.m. tours of the San Francisco Produce Market, so his students could observe interactions among suppliers, buyers, and sellers. He claimed that he never “lost sight of the people” represented by the numbers.⁷⁵

Econometric and statistical analyses enabled the USDA to calculate correlations among physical conditions and costs between existing and future facilities. For example, the costs of “excessive handling” incurred moving goods by hand into multistory buildings were estimated with implied accuracy down to the level of single dollars. The inverse of these numbers formed the basis of estimated savings to be gained in new facilities.

The agency’s approach to market reform shared important ideological parallels with its efforts to reform agricultural production. Writing about the USDA’s enthusiastic promotion of industrialized, monocrop farming, historian Deborah Fitzgerald notes that “as the collection of . . . information became more scientific, and thus more rationalized, it also became more abstract, less about people and their problems and more about processes and products.”⁷⁶ Missing from the USDA’s maps of split markets, statistics about transaction wait times, and photographs of nameless wholesalers, jobbers, and buyers was any analysis of the social and functional relationships among these dynamic entities.

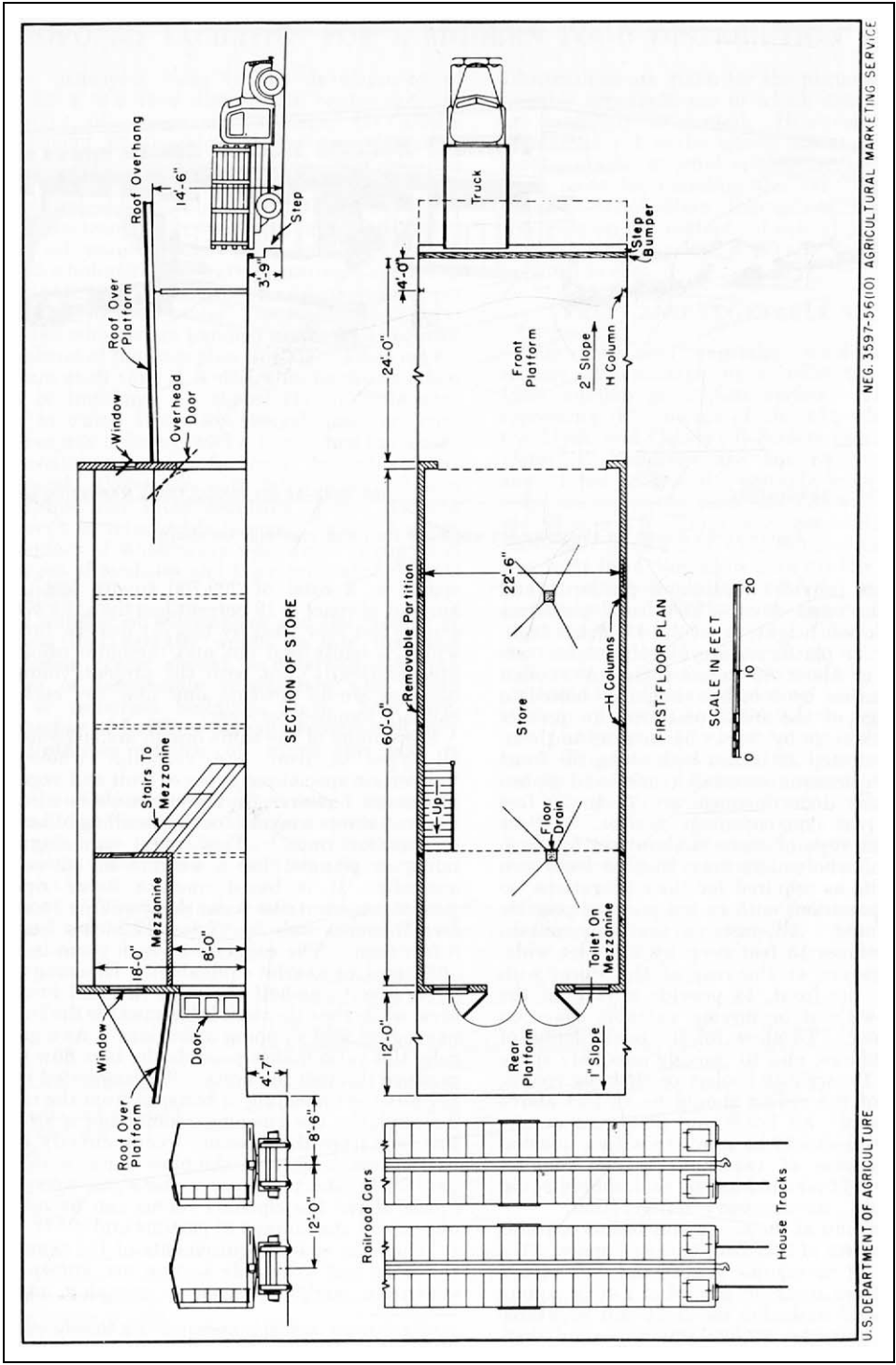


Figure 5. The USDA's "possible floor plan for a wholesale fruit and vegetable store." Source: USDA, Wholesale Food Distribution Facilities for Philadelphia, PA, 24.

Conclusion

There was never any desire among agricultural economists or city planners to preserve the physical buildings or the functional relationships that existed on and around Dock Street. The USDA's goal was to safeguard Philadelphia as a market for produce and other perishable foods through the construction of modern terminal facilities that would, in theory, minimize labor costs by maximizing technologies like forklifts and tractor trailers, the operation of which were enabled by the Interstate Highway System, gated industrial parks, and single-story architectural typologies designed for mass distribution. Demolishing aging inner-city markets created the large tracts of open land coveted by postwar city planners for development of residential and commercial amenities they hoped would lure the middle class back to the city.

Public authorities, nonprofit organizations, and business associations such as the GPM profoundly influenced the planning of Society Hill and Dock Street Market. The nonprofit Philadelphia Food Distribution Center Corporation (FDC) assembled 388-acres of land—a former trash-burning dump—recommended by the ULI and the USDA for the site of a new market. In 1958, construction began on three market buildings to house seventy produce and twenty-five seafood merchants. On a Friday night in June 1959, Dock Street Market was closed by the city, its remaining merchants forcibly relocated, and its buildings demolished. As was true elsewhere in the United States, unelected, nongovernmental entities leveraged political power and channeled financial support to urban renewal projects that altered the city's physical and economic structure, separated “incompatible” land uses, and literally and figuratively paved the way for deindustrialization.

Removal of Dock Street Market significantly advanced the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority's development goals for the Washington Square East Urban Renewal Area, better known as Society Hill. The project was a novelty at the time because instead of proposing total urban demolition and reconstruction, it retained and restored the area's historic eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century architecture, except along Dock Street. The market's buildings were at least as old, if not older, than the residences designated for restoration in accordance with strict preservation standards enforced by rigorous government oversight. But as preservation historian Charles Hosmer wrote about the larger Independence Mall project, “there was no interest . . . in keeping businesses operating inside an area to be designated as a ‘shrine.’”⁷⁷ The only trace of the market that remains today is the distinctive curve of Dock Street, still paved in its original cobblestone, which now provides access to I.M. Pei's Society Hill Towers, the high-end residential condos that were built in its place.⁷⁸

It was Edmund Bacon who ultimately convinced downtown property owners that Dock Street Market “should be rooted out and moved to the suburbs where it belonged,” according to one participant in the ULI study.⁷⁹ By the mid-1950s, city planners like Bacon had dedicated their efforts to preventing the downtown from becoming a “failing business center.”⁸⁰ These planners were involved in what we have come to call “food system planning” only to the extent of consulting with the USDA about the location of new markets and coordinating with other interests about the future uses of former markets. Merchants themselves had very little input into these decisions. It would be at least another decade before planners were compelled by law or any sense of professional ethics to “consult” with individuals who might be affected by their decisions.⁸¹

Dock Street was at the leading edge of national trends in market redevelopment. Four of the nation's largest and most active urban food markets were displaced or demolished between 1960 and 1968: Dock Street Market and the San Francisco Produce Market were demolished in 1960; Washington Street Market in New York and Boston's Faneuil Hall Market district were gradually displaced or demolished between 1965 and 1968. For the construction of new terminal markets, USDA economists and city planners recommended large segments of land that could be obtained cheaply and enclosed entirely, sites ideally adjacent to existing or proposed transportation

infrastructure.⁸² Trash dumps, swamps, and underperforming industrial areas at the urban periphery or in suburbs were often recommended, as were low-income neighborhoods that could be displaced at relatively minor costs and with little anticipated organized resistance.⁸³

Although the issue merits additional research, several pieces of preliminary evidence suggest that the disruption of these wholesale markets may have led to profound changes in the food system, in particular, the rapid disappearance of neighborhood grocery stores. The total number of wholesale food distributors in the United States began to plummet after World War II, at just about the same time they were being forcibly relocated from central cities. Smaller local wholesalers have declined steadily in the postwar era. Meanwhile, between 1987 and 2000, the number of regional and national firms with annual sales in excess of US\$10 million increased nearly 40 percent.⁸⁴ Those that remain today tend to serve not grocery stores but institutional clients and restaurants. Small- and medium-sized local distributors tended to service smaller and independent retail grocery stores. The decreasing number of smaller distributors is clearly correlated with a decline in the number of smaller grocery stores.

The USDA's vision of central and unified terminal markets never came to fruition. Supermarkets continued to develop their own vertically integrated system of wholesale distribution, bypassing the centrally located, publically initiated terminal markets championed for so long by the USDA.⁸⁵ Advances in motorized truck technology after World War II increasingly enabled chain stores to transport commodities using their own fleet of trucks, delivering to their newer decentralized warehouses, which were "strategically located" within their chain store networks.⁸⁶

There are multiple interrelated reasons for the decline of the local grocery store and it is likely impossible to tease apart the data to assign orders of magnitude to each possible cause. However, their rate of survival could not have been helped by the disruption of distribution sources that resulted from the demolition of urban wholesale markets. Much has been written about the traumatic social and economic impacts of neighborhood displacement caused by urban renewal.⁸⁷ We know much less about how urban displacement effected specific industrial sectors like the food industry.⁸⁸ Economic census statistics indicate the total number of retail grocery stores has declined steadily since World War II. In the case of Philadelphia, local newspapers and industry journals began to write in the late 1960s and 1970s about the dwindling number of inner-city grocery stores. Philadelphians were traveling farther and farther to buy fresh food, especially in poorer, predominantly black neighborhoods.⁸⁹ The relationship between wholesalers and retailers seemed to make a difference for the few stores that managed to survive in the inner city.⁹⁰

The history of mid-century attacks on distribution holds important insights for planners who have begun to document the existence of urban areas with insufficient access to fresh food. The federal government, working with an earlier generation of planners, contributed to the suburbanization of the food system by displacing wholesale markets, rupturing decade-old socioeconomic relationships among farmers and wholesalers, wholesalers, and retailers. Redevelopment was motivated by fears of contamination related to the class of food workers and locations of markets as much as it was by rhetorical appeals to efficiency and economy.

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Notes

1. Sam L. Rogers, *Municipal Markets in Cities Having a Population of Over 30,000* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1919).
2. Gregory Alexander Donofrio, "Feeding the City," *Gastronomica: The Journal of Food and Culture* 7, no. 4 (Fall 2007): 30–41.
3. See, for example, Henry E. Erdman, *American Produce Markets* (Boston: D.C. Heath and Company, 1928), 226–34.
4. William C. Crow, *Wholesale Markets for Fruits and Vegetables in 40 Cities*, (Washington, DC: USDA, 1938), 2–3.
5. William C. Crow, et al., *The Wholesale Fruit and Vegetable Markets of New York City* (circular no. 463, Washington, DC: USGPO, 1940), III.
6. James E. Vance, Jr., *The Merchant's World: The Geography of Wholesaling* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1970), 131.
7. A widely cited article asserts that by 1970 only about 340 farmers markets existed in the entire United States, and those that remained were struggling; see Allison Brown, "Counting Farmers Markets," *Geographical Review* 91, no. 4 (October 2001): 655–73.
8. For a review of this literature, see Alfonso Morales, "Marketplaces: Prospects for Social, Economic, and Political Development," *Journal of Planning Literature* 26, no. 1 (2011): 3–17.
9. For further definitions and examples, see A. Whelan, N. Wrigley, D. Warm, and E. Cannings, "Life in a 'Food Desert'," *Urban Studies* 39, no. 11 (2002): 2083–100; and E. A. Baker, M. Schootman, E. Barnidge, and C. Kelly, "The Role of Race and Poverty in Access to Foods that Enable Individuals to Adhere to Dietary Guidelines," *Preventing Chronic Disease* 3, no. 3 (2006): A76. Some scholars also note that the term "food desert" has problematic racial connotations; see for example Julie Guthman, "Bringing Good Food to Others: Investigating the Subjects of Alternative Food Practice," *Cultural Geographies* 15 (2008): 426.
10. Helen Tangires, *Public Markets and Civic Culture in Nineteenth-Century America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003) and her articles "Feeding the Cities: Public Markets and Municipal Reform in the Progressive Era," *Prologue: Quarterly of the National Archives and Records Administration* 29 (spring 1997): 19–26; and "Contested Space: The Life and Death of Center Market," *Washington History* 7 (spring–summer 1995): 46–67; see also Robert A. Sauder, "Municipal Markets in New Orleans," *Journal of Cultural Geography* 2 (Fall–Winter 1981): 82–95; and William J. Novak, *The People's Welfare: Law and Regulation in Nineteenth-Century America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), chapter 3, "Public Economy: The Well-Ordered Market," 83–114.
11. Susanne Freidberg, *Fresh: A Perishable History* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2009).
12. Although the dates and details varied from place to place, the general trend in the second half of the nineteenth century was toward the privatization of retail food sales; see Tangires, *Public Markets and Civic Culture in Nineteenth-Century America*. For a detailed examination of this transition in New York City specifically, and a comprehensive review of the literature on this topic more generally, see Gergely Baics,

- "Feeding Gotham: A Social History of Urban Provisioning, 1780-1860," (PhD dissertation, Northwestern University, 2009).
13. Helen Tangires, "Provisioning Everyday Meals: Wholesale Produce Markets and the Ethics of Food Distribution," in *Time for Food: Everyday Food and Changing Meal Habits in a Global Perspective*, ed. Patricia Lysaght (Abo, Finland: Abo Akademi University Press, 2012), 305–18.
 14. This transition was known to some late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century agricultural marketing experts; examples of primary sources include Horace Capron, "The Market Systems of the Country, Their Usages and Abuses," in *Report of the Commissioner of Agriculture in the Year 1870* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1871): 241–54; and Harry E. Crouch, "Developing a New Type of City Market," *The Cornell Countryman* 24, no. 6 (March 1927): 161, 163, 172.
 15. Tangires, *Public Markets and Civic Culture in Nineteenth-Century America*, 105. For additional architectural history and description of the city's earliest market houses, see Agnes Addison Gilchrist, "Market Houses in High Street," in *Historic Philadelphia: From the Founding until the Early Nineteenth Century*, ed. Luther P. Eisenhart (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society: 1953); and Harold Donaldson Eberlein and Cortlandt Van Dyke Hubbard, *Portrait of a Colonial City, Philadelphia, 1670-1838* (Philadelphia, New York [etc.] J.B. Lippincott Company, 1939): 3, 17, 213–4.
 16. See both Tangires, *Public Markets and Civic Culture in Nineteenth-Century America*, 108–9; and R. B. Donaldson, *Philadelphia Wholesale Fruit and Vegetable Markets*, Bulletin 349 (Pennsylvania Agricultural Experiment Station, 1937): 4–5.
 17. Dock Street residents petitioned municipal and state governments to build a market in their neighborhood in 1803, but were apparently unsuccessful, according to Margaret B. Tinkcom, "The New Market in Second Street," *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 82, no. 4 (October, 1958): 388; the "Delaware Avenue Market," located on Dock Street, appears on Philadelphia maps as early as 1858; see Hexamer and Locher, "Maps of the City of Philadelphia, 1858-1860," Vol. 1, Map Collection, Free Library of Philadelphia, accessed May 10, 2012, [http://www.philageohistory.org/tiles/viewer/? Selected Layers=Overlay, HXL1860](http://www.philageohistory.org/tiles/viewer/?SelectedLayers=Overlay,HXL1860).
 18. Donaldson, *Philadelphia Wholesale Fruit and Vegetable Markets*, 5. My research into the history of other US markets suggests that the transition from public markets as sites of retail trade to wholesale distribution was a common pattern, but was also difficult to delineate in absolute terms. Markets like Dock Street, Washington Market in New York City, or Faneuil Hall in Boston facilitated different types of trade simultaneously, or some transactions were more prevalent at different times of the day. These markets were often described in newspapers and government studies as "wholesale markets" by the late nineteenth century; however, retail trade was never banned, and in fact it continued at many markets until they were demolished in the 1960s. While the greatest volume of food was sold through wholesale transactions, retail sales persisted well into the twentieth century, perpetuated by buyers who were adventuresome enough to patronize Dock Street. See Greg Donofrio, "The Container and the Contained" (PhD dissertation, Cornell University, January 2009).
 19. Dana Frank, "Housewives, Socialists, and the Politics of Food: The 1917 New York Cost-of-Living Protests," *Feminist Studies* 11, no. 2 (Summer 1985): 256. For the connection between markets and the high cost of living, see Cyrus C. Miller, "Municipal Markets in Their Relation to the Cost of Living," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 48, no. 137, special issue on "The Cost of Living" (July, 1913): 140–48; and J. W. Sullivan, *Markets for the People: The Consumer's Part* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1913).
 20. "Where the Problem Lies: Conclusions of Three Commissions Investigating the High Cost of Living," *Housewives League Magazine* 1, no. 1 (1913): 17–9.
 21. Donofrio, "Feeding the City."
 22. Ibid.
 23. The best descriptions of these related middlemen and their respective functions as they were understood before WWI can be found in Cyrus Miller, John P. Mitchell, and George McAneny, commissioners, *The Report of the Mayor's Market Commission of New York City* (New York: J. J. Little & Ives Co., 1913).

24. Donofrio, "Feeding the City."
25. See, for example, Eliot Lord, "Wholesale Terminal Markets," *American Architect* 112 (July 4, 1917): 15–18; Mrs. Elmer [Madeleine] Black, *A Terminal Market System, New York's Most Urgent Need; Some Observations, Comments, and Comparisons of European Markets* (New York: Willett Press, 1912); Frank H. Mason, "Markets of Paris," *Municipality* [Madison, WI] 12, no. 6 (1912): 150, 152–56; and for a bibliography that includes dozens of citations to sources on foreign markets and marketing, see *A Summary of the Market Situation in Boston*, 142–70. The Bronx Terminal Market was the first modern facility of its kind in the United States when it opened in 1925; for a discussion of its design and European influences, see Tangires, *Public Markets and Civic Culture in Nineteenth-Century America*, 197–201.
26. Erdman, *American Produce Markets*, 99–101; he enumerated six factors that made moving markets difficult: (1) dealers did not know how they would fare in a new location and present customers might find a new location to be inconvenient; (2) there were costs and logistical hassles associated with moving; (3) dealers often disagreed among themselves on the choice of a new market location; (4) various factions or "special interests" within the market were adversely or favorably affected by every new market plan, which further complicated decision making; (5) dealers held different leases that ended at different times; and (6) any new plans would undoubtedly have to meet the approval of a city planning commission or equivalent agency, which "would involve further difficulties of a political nature." The Bronx Terminal Market described in the note above arguably failed because New York merchants refused to relocate there; see Donofrio, "The Container and the Contained," 105–7.
27. It is unclear why the USDA chose Philadelphia as the first city to conduct an urban market analysis; its marketing problems were considered no more acute than those of Boston or New York. Rather, it may have had something to do with the fact that Wendell Calhoun worked for the USDA in the Philadelphia Market News Office; Calhoun expressed an early interest in the problems of urban markets and would go on after WWII to become an influential marketing expert in the Midwest and Western United States. See his early article, "Fruit and Vegetable Depots Facilitate Distribution in Big City Markets," *Yearbook of Agriculture*, 1932 (USDA): 233–36; and the acknowledgments to USDA, *The Philadelphia Wholesale Fruit and Vegetable Market*.
28. The highlights of his career can be found in *Marquis Who's Who on the Web*, accessed March 15, 2011, under the name William Cecil Crow.
29. James C. Malin, "The Background of the First Bills to Establish a Bureau of Markets, 1911-12," *Agricultural History* 6, no. 3 (July 1932): 107–29; and Caroline B. Sherman, "The Legal Basis of the Marketing Work of the United States Department of Agriculture," *Agricultural History* 11 (July 1937): 289–301.
30. James C. Malin, "The Background of the First Bills to Establish a Bureau of Markets, 1911-12," *Agricultural History* 6, no. 3 (July 1932): 107–29.
31. *Ibid.*
32. Crow, *Wholesale Markets for Fruits and Vegetables in 40 Cities*, 1–3.
33. R. O. Been and F. V. Waugh, *Price Spreads between the Farmers and the Consumer*, US Bureau of Agricultural Economics (USDA, 1936); Waugh was the most senior USDA economist and principal investigator on the 1935 Philadelphia market study.
34. See table on page 138 of Crow, *Wholesale Markets for Fruits and Vegetables in 40 Cities*.
35. For additional discussion of these developments and their motivations, see William E. Folz and Alden C. Manchester, *Chainstore Merchandising and Procurement Practices: The Changing Retail Market for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables* (Washington, DC: USDA, 1960); Max Zimmerman, *The Challenge of Chain Store Distribution* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1931), 248; and David A. Revzan, *Wholesaling in Marketing Organization* (New York: Arno Press, 1978, reprint of 1961 edition by John Wiley), 586.
36. R. B. Donaldson, *Philadelphia Wholesale Fruit and Vegetable Markets* (Pennsylvania Agricultural Experiment Station, Bulletin 349, 1937), 19.
37. *Ibid.*, 8–9.

38. "Urban Land Institute on Dock Street and Old City Area," Report of Proceedings, January 12, 1951, 3.
39. See for example Eugenie Birch, "The Planner and the Preservationist: An Uneasy Alliance," *Journal of the American Planning Association* 50, no. 2 (Spring 1984): 194–207; and Neil Smith, *The New Urban Frontier: Gentrification and the Revanchist City* (New York: Routledge, 1996): 116–35.
40. "Urban Land Institute on Dock Street and Old City Area," 5.
41. *Ibid.*, 29.
42. *Ibid.*, 8.
43. *Ibid.*, 35.
44. Joseph F. Herrick, Jr., "The Efficient Use of Labor," in the USDA's *Yearbook of Agriculture*, special edition on marketing (Washington, DC: USDA, 1954): 369–72.
45. Raymond Vernon, *The Changing Economic Function of the Central City* (New York: Area Development Committee of the Committee for Economic Development, 1959), 49.
46. American Society of Planning Officials, "Wholesale Produce Markets," Information Report No. 70 (Chicago: ASPO, 1955): 9; see also Leo Adde, *Nine Cities: The Anatomy of Downtown Renewal* (Washington, DC: ULI, 1969), which describes how planners, empowered by urban renewal funds and laws, were making use of market sites like Dock Street and the San Francisco Produce Market.
47. Urban Land Institute, *The Dock Street Area, Philadelphia Pennsylvania: Report and Recommendations* (Washington, DC: ULI, 1951).
48. An organization founded in 1949 and comprised of business leaders primarily from the emerging service and financial sectors, the support and influence of the Greater Philadelphia Movement was critical to the completion of the city's most ambitious planning achievements, including not only the relocation of Dock Street and the revitalization of Society Hill, but also the development of Penn Center and Market East; see Guian McKee, "A Utopian, A Utopianist, or Whatever the Heck It Is: Edmund Bacon and the Complexity of the City," in *Imagining Philadelphia: Edmund Bacon and the Future of the City*, ed. Scott Gabriel Knowles (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), 52–77. Crow also endorsed the GPM plan; see "Crow Says Philadelphia Should Get new Market; Attends Heated Meeting," *The Produce News*, August 8, 1954, 4.
49. See *A Tribute to the Philadelphia Food Distribution Center 1955-1980: 25 Years* (Philadelphia: n.p., 1980), Temple Urban Archives, call number: HD9008.P5T8x 1980.
50. See, for example, Paul Groth's *Living Downtown: The History of Residential Hotels in the United States* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), which argues that residential hotels were demolished during urban renewal in the 1960s and 1970s due, in part, to social and cultural biases against their low-income residents.
51. "Incantation" and "mantras of urban renewal" from Alison Isenberg, *Downtown American: A History of the Place and the People who Made It* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 170.
52. See, for example, USDA, "Agricultural Marketing Service, Wholesale Food Distribution Facilities for Philadelphia, PA," Marketing Research Report No. 201 (Washington, DC: USDA, 1958), 53–59.
53. Vernon D. Northrup, "An Appeal to the Honorable Curtis Bok," unpublished and undated (1957?) typescript, Temple Urban Archives, Greater Philadelphia Movement, Collection 083, Series III, Box 12, folder FDC. Philadelphia newspapers also deployed similar themes, such as "Police Pick up Vagrants before the Big Wash," *Evening Bulletin* (Philadelphia), August 22, 1953, Dock Street Merchants Association Folder, Temple University Urban Archives. The public market on Delaware Avenue at Dock Street was a reputed attraction for prostitutes, vagrants, and alcoholics in the nineteenth century, although such accounts may reflect prevailing middle-class sensibilities and perceptions as much as fact; see Tangires, *Public Markets and Civic Culture in Nineteenth-Century America*, 96–97.
54. This claim is made at the end of Redbook's 1957 promotional film "In the Suburbs" produced by On Film, Inc., which vividly captures the magazine's white, middle-class, suburban editorial position and intended audience.
55. Howard Whitman, "Filth in Our Food: Our Medieval Market Places Still Do Business in Unspeakable Squalor," *Redbook* 99, no. 1 (May 1952): 36.

56. For example, Harry G. Clowes, page one of the USDA's report "Wholesale Food Distribution Facilities in San Francisco" (USDA Marketing Research Report No. 226, Washington, DC: USGPO, August 1958) prominently cited the "Parsley and Progress" series by the *San Francisco Chronicle*. See also ASPO, *Wholesale Produce Markets*, 14; and Harry G. Clowes, *New York City Wholesale Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Market* (Washington: USDA, 1960), 1 and "Literature Cited," 89–99.
57. United States, 98th Congress, House of Representatives, "Filth in Our Food," *Congressional Record*, Appendix, May 7, 1952, page A2828. Harold D. Cooley still holds the record as the longest-serving chairman in the history of the US House Committee on Agriculture. A year later, Senator Guy M. Gillette of Iowa mentioned Cooley's leadership and advocacy for market reform, noting that neither the nation's elected representatives, nor consumers or representatives of consumer groups, seemed unwilling to "speak up" for market legislation that promised to improve public health and decrease food costs; see United States, 99th Congress, Senate of the United States, "A Real Break for Consumers," *Congressional Record*, Appendix, January 26, 1953, pages A288–89.
58. Ibid.; and Gaynor Maddox, "Filthy, Inefficient Wholesale Markets Pad Your Food Bill," *Reader's Digest* (November 1956): 181–86; Bill Davidson, "The Shocking Facts about the Fruits and Vegetables You Eat," *Redbook* 111, no. 3 (July 1958): 21.
59. Space in Dock Street Market was so limited in 1936 that one produce dealer could rent only sidewalk space, where he displayed merchandise and constructed a small temporary office; see R. B. Donaldson, *Philadelphia Wholesale Fruit and Vegetable Markets*, Pennsylvania Agricultural Experiment Station, Bulletin 349, 1937, 9. Storing food on streets was not unique to Dock Street; the USDA considered it a pervasive problem. For other examples, see C. J. Otten et al., *The Wholesale Produce Markets at Boston, Mass.* (Washington, DC: USDA, 1950): 26–27; Harry G. Clowes, *New York City Wholesale Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Markets* (Washington: USDA, 1960); *Wholesale Produce Market Facilities for Philadelphia, PA* (Washington, USDA, 1951); or any number of the dozens of other USDA studies of older markets undertaken following passage of the Agricultural Market Act of 1946. Newspaper articles from other cities reiterate the USDA's findings; San Francisco chief sanitary inspector noted that to prohibit the storage of food on sidewalks would essentially amount to closing the city's produce market; see Richard Reinhardt, "Parsley and Progress: Produce Mart Report on Sanitation Ignored," *San Francisco Chronicle*, August 30, 1954, p. 1, c. 4.
60. One enthusiastic primary account of these new, modern supermarket environments is L. V. Eberhard, "Should Your Child Go into Food Retailing?" *Time Magazine*, September 16, 1957, 100–1.
61. For example, architectural historian Daniel Bluestone notes that motivating various proposals to ban pushcart food vendors from New York City streets between 1900 and the 1930s was a desire to "enforce middleclass patterns of internalized commerce and street decorum." See his essay "The Pushcart Evil," in *The Landscape of Modernity: Essays on New York City, 1900–1940*, ed. David Ward and Olivier Zunz (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1992), 297.
62. Whitman, "Filth in our Food," 36.
63. ASPO, *Wholesale Produce Markets*, 14.
64. Bill Davidson, "The Shocking Facts about the Fruits and Vegetables You Eat," 24, emphasis added.
65. A table of marketing activities compiled by Breimyer suggests that a 1935 study of Philadelphia's wholesale food market was the USDA's first research project of this type; in "Fifty Years of Marketing Programs," 754.
66. It is unclear how many markets the USDA studied in total during this period and beyond; for a list of cities in which studies were purportedly conducted, see American Society of Planning Officials, "Wholesale Produce Markets," Information Report No. 70 (Chicago: ASPO, 1955), 20; the list was based on letter from William C. Crow; see also "Cities Plan Terminal Markets," *Newsweek*, December 22, 1945, 76–78.
67. George Howe is perhaps best known for Philadelphia's PSFS Building, widely regarded as among the first International Style skyscrapers in the United States, which he designed in 1930 with his architectural partner William Lescaze. Howe, who died in 1955, was not known as a designer of industrial facilities, and his role in the development of the Philadelphia Food Distribution Center (FDC) is not entirely clear; sources

- that name Howe as architect or “consulting architect” of the FDC include “Philadelphia’s Redevelopment: A Progress Report,” 125; and *A Tribute to the Philadelphia Food Distribution Center 1955-1980: 25 Years*, unpaginated.
68. Planning historian Carl Abbott examines the visual rhetoric of downtown planning in his essay “Five Strategies for Downtown: Policy Discourse and Planning since 1943,” in *Planning the Twentieth Century American City*, ed. Mary Corbin Sies and Christopher Silver (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996).
 69. On the historical development of industrial parks in general, see John M. Findlay, *Magic Lands: Western Cityscapes and American Culture after 1940* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), chapter 3.
 70. Affectionately referred to as “Mr. Produce Market” by friends and colleagues, Crow emerged in the post-war era as the nation’s leading expert on food market planning and design.
 71. James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998), 3.
 72. For more about the new labor-saving technologies utilized for food distribution after WWII, see Joseph F. Herrick, Jr., “The Efficient Use of Labor,” in the USDA’s *Yearbook of Agriculture*, special edition on marketing (Washington, DC: USDA, 1954): 369–72.
 73. Scott, *Seeing Like a State*: quotation from page 104; see also his comments on the “segregation of functions” on page 110, and page 113 for how the “wisdom of the plan sweeps away of all social obstacles.” The terminal market concept was remarkably analogous to what Scott called the called “the catechism of high-modernist agriculture,” an “absolutely hegemonic” paradigm between 1945 and 1975 in which the USDA (among others) championed the enhanced efficiency of large-scale farming, the importance of mechanization, and the superiority of monocropping over diversified production; see pages 270–71.
 74. Richard M. Clewett, “A Study of the Intramarket Locational Pattern of Firms in the Dock Street Market and Its Theoretical Implications with Respect to the Relocation of Firms in a New Market” (PhD dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1948) 36–37; Clewett exchanged several letters with Crow in course of his research.
 75. Henry E. Erdman, “Agricultural Economics: Teaching, Research, and Writing, University of California, Berkeley, 1922-1969,” an oral history transcript, University of California Bancroft Library/Berkeley, accessed online, 28 May 2012, www.archive.org/stream/agriculturalecon00erdmrich/agriculturalecon00erdmrich_djvu.txt.
 76. Deborah Fitzgerald, *Every Farm a Factory: The Industrial Ideal in American Agriculture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 35.
 77. Charles Hosmer, *Preservation Comes of Age: From Williamsburg to the National Trust, 1926-1949* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1981), 775.
 78. Wright, Andrade and Amenda Architects, *Washington Square East Urban Renewal Area Technical Report* (n.p.: Redevelopment Authority of Philadelphia, 1959).
 79. Adde, *Nine Cities*, 33.
 80. Abbott, “Five Strategies for Downtown.”
 81. Barry Checkoway, “Paul Davidoff and Advocacy Planning in Retrospect,” *Journal of American Planning Association* 60, no. 2 (1994): 139–43.
 82. See recommendations for “Planning a New Market” in ASPO, *Wholesale Produce Markets*, 12–20, which were based entirely on information provided by the USDA’s William C. Crow.
 83. An unknown number of families were forcibly displaced for the construction of the new market, part of the Pattison Avenue East Redevelopment Area; the redevelopment report noted only that “rehousing of displaced families should not be difficult,” presumably for the Redevelopment Authority, but perhaps not the families. See Philadelphia City Planning Commission, *Pattison Avenue East Redevelopment Area Plan* (Philadelphia: The Commission, 1955), 16.
 84. See Alden C. Manchester, *The Food Marketing Revolution, 1950-1990* (Agriculture Information Bulletin 627, Washington, DC: USDA, 1991).

85. Numerous sources discuss this historical development, including James Mayo's *The American Grocery Store: The Business Evolution of an Architectural Space* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1993); and for an earlier and detailed account from the industry's perspective, see Godfrey M. Lebharr, *Chain Stores in America, 1859-1962* (New York: Chain Store Publishing Company, 1963). See Sydney R. Jumper, "Wholesale Marketing of Fresh Vegetables," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 64, no. 3 (September 1974).
86. Max Zimmerman, *The Challenge of Chain Store Distribution* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1931), 248; see also David A. Revzan, *Wholesaling in Marketing Organization* (New York: Arno Press, 1978, reprint of 1961 edition by John Wiley), 586.
87. For example, Herbert J. Gans, *The Urban Villagers: Group and Class in the Life of Italian-Americans* (New York: The Free Press, 1962); and John R. Logan and Harvey L. Molotch, *Urban Fortunes: The Political Economy of Place* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 114.
88. One of the few studies to examine the issue found that roughly a third of the small businesses forcibly relocated by urban renewal in Providence, RI, closed after they were displaced; food stores had the highest failure rate (40 percent); see Basil G. Zimmer, *The Effects of Displacement and Relocation on Small Businesses* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1964); and Joel Schwartz, *The New York Approach: Robert Moses, Urban Liberals, and Redevelopment of the Inner City* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1993), chapter 9: "Blue-Collar Blight," 229–60.
89. Charles S. Goodman, "Do the Poor Pay More?" *Journal of Marketing* 32, no. 1 (1968): 18–24.
90. For two articles that discuss Philadelphia at length, see Dick Fabian and George Dickstein, "What Is Marketing it in the Inner City?" *Chain Store Age* (February 1973): 53–62; and Charles S. Goodman, "Do the Poor Pay More?" *Journal of Marketing* 32, no. 1 (1968): 18–24.

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