

## **Good-bye to the Waterfront**

The selection of one of the last open waterfront sites in Brooklyn for the relocation of the Fort Greene meat market is a clear illustration of New York's planning jinx at work. Every responsible official on the city's administrative and planning levels knows that putting the market on that potentially choice 13-acre stretch between the Brooklyn and Manhattan bridges along the East River is the wrong use for waterfront land. New York is officially and properly committed to a policy of reclaiming its waterfront for its proper role as a human and urban resource.

The city is equally committed to better the plight of its black communities. The removal of the old, substandard meat market has become an incendiary issue with the residents of the Atlantic Terminal renewal area. Unless the city keeps its promise to move the market quickly so renewal can proceed, trouble will follow. Therefore, immediate availability of land has become the primary site requirement. Given this familiar pattern of social and political pressure, of crisis and conflict of interest, the kind of compromise "solution" that consistently hoodoos the city's best planning effort has led to a tragically wrong decision.

What this decision does is to doom the potential development of a catalytic site that could serve constructive purposes for all of the surrounding neighborhoods. It throws away the chance for several thousand units of new housing with splendid water views and minimum relocation. It sacrifices the opportunity to build the one decentralized, integrated school that a New York neighborhood has actually requested.

The crux of the problem is obviously immediate satisfaction of the city's promise to the Atlantic Terminal community, which, ironically, might be better served by construction of new waterfront housing. Since what everyone is after is better living conditions, this housing might be allied on a priority basis to the Atlantic Terminal plan to compensate for delay in moving the market to a better place. An even greater irony is the reason why the market cannot go to a logical location, the Brooklyn Navy Yard. The land is not yet available, and it is not known when it will be available, because the Federal Government, which had completed sale negotiations with the city, has reconsidered and is demanding lengthy renegotiation from scratch.

Unless an alternate course is found, New York is foreclosing the appropriate future of irreplaceable waterfront land. Losing it now locks in error forever.