

Topics

To Market, To Fair

Manhattan Salad

The proposal to construct a market and restaurant complex, to be known as the Bridgemarket, in the steel and stone vaults under the Queensboro Bridge has been approved by the City Planning Commission, with a lot of useful strings attached. Agreement to lease the space to a developer came after what the commission calls "extensive review" of such factors as the cost to the city of relocating Fire and Traffic Department facilities now located in the arches, the market's impact on the congested 59th Street area, and a sanitation plan. Among the city's stipulations are continued ownership and management by the developer for at least seven years, and the right to review the design as it affects traffic patterns.

Bridge buffs have always liked the handsome stone arches under the Queensboro's roadbed and the tiled Guastavino vaulting, a kind of construction developed in this country in the late 19th century that is to architecture fans what a Stutz Bearcat is to car collectors. For a while there were rumors that these turn-of-the-century vaults and arches, while great in Piranesian drama, were structurally

unsound. That fear has now been laid to rest by the Department of Highways and the project will proceed.

But while uncertainty about the bridge's solidity held up the gourmet proposal, a correspondent, Polly Anne Graff, sent us a recipe for Manhattan Salad:

*Queensboro Bridge is falling
down, falling down, falling
down,*

*Queensboro Bridge is falling
down — so says the
engineer.*

*Let it fall on market greens,
Lettuce, fennel, parsley,
beans,*

*Ruby beet and jade snow
pea,
Cauliflower of ivory.*

*Then with herb and spices
flavor*

*One small pinch of smog for
savor,*

*Add your taxes, finely diced,
One big apple, thinly
sliced—*

*And serve it up for company.
For me and thee, and thee
and thee,*

*Serve it up for company,
Manhattan salad tossed.*

It takes a heap o'tossing to make a salad for 1,456,382 Manhattanites, but whatever is served, it will be in one of the city's most striking, and previously secret, architectural spaces.



1977

Among the books barred from the Moscow Book Fair because they were found "to contradict the spirit of the exhibition" was George Orwell's novel, "1984." That is understandable, for "1984" was the work which introduced the world to such basic ingredients of totalitarianism as Doublethink, and such principles as Ignorance Is Strength. In such a society, Orwell explained, when facts interfere with doctrine, then the facts must be altered: "This day-to-day falsification of the past, carried out by the Ministry of Truth, is as necessary to the stability of the regime as the work of repression and espionage carried out by the Ministry of Love." George Orwell would have had no trouble understanding the explanation that it was the Department of Customs, not Censorship, that kept him from the fair.