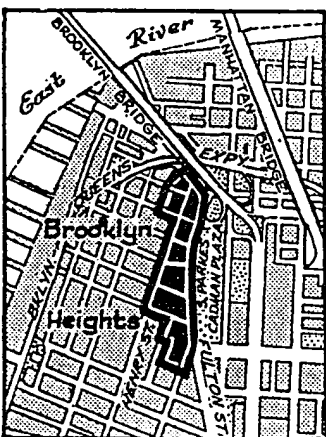


# The Cadman Plaza Project

The Cadman Plaza Redevelopment Plan for a seven-block area in Brooklyn (indicated in black on the accompanying map) is, after six years of controversy and compromise, still surrounded by hostility and confusion.

Part of the explanation lies in the fact that this particular project has inherited several strikes against it from the early days of Title I. It still suffers in the public mind from the questionable slum-clearance procedures of that time. But many of its controversial features have since been corrected, both by laudable changes in the board's own policy and procedures, and by compromise in response to community protest.

Nevertheless, some groups feel strongly that an alternate scheme, based largely on rehabilitation of existing sound structures and spot clearance, would have been more amenable than the total



razing and rebuilding originally proposed and still scheduled. They protest the destruction of old buildings, including the one in which Walt Whitman printed "Leaves of Grass," and they object to tall towers adjacent to the historic, intimately scaled streets of Brooklyn Heights.

These points do not hold up on close examination. The Cadman Plaza area, while it borders immediately on the charming, historic section of Brooklyn Heights, is already insulated from it by existing large structures. The Mayor's Preservation Committee reported, quite correctly, that the Whitman building is of no particular architectural distinction and retains no vestiges of its literary role. Nor would towers, much modified in the present plan, endanger a scale that has already been breached by the far more massive St. George Hotel and other nearby structures.

Although the present scheme is certainly not the only possible solution for the site, there is exceptional promise in the provisions for diversified income levels, the introduction of low houses to balance the tall towers, and the closing of streets for promenades. It is the best plan yet put forward by the Housing and Redevelopment Board.