

Planning Commitment

If the rites of politics occasionally include finding the best man for the job, Mayor-elect Beame would be well-advised to keep John Zuccotti as chairman of the City Planning Commission. The fact that the position is considered a comparatively well-paid political plum makes its disposition a particular temptation and danger.

The significant fact is that Mr. Zuccotti and his predecessor, Donald Elliott, have been men of exceptional ability and concern for the city's future who have set a course for the commission virtually unequalled by any other city. With Mayor Lindsay's warm encouragement, their commitment has been to planning, above and beyond political accommodation. The record shows extraordinary advances for New York in everything from the sophisticated art of urban design to the democratic art of community participation.

The process has been strengthened further by Mayor Lindsay's appointment this week of a highly qualified architect and urban planner, Alexander Cooper, to the commission's one remaining seat. To break stride now, or change direction, could only be a disservice, or a disaster, for the city.