

environmental goals. Anything good in New York comes out of a calculated and shattering tug of war. Even this shaky détente, with the changes in the economy and in the city's planning offices, now hangs in the balance.

The superdeveloper—rural or urban—is rarely an environmentalist. His response to natural or neighborhood features is usually to remove them to make the cash flow faster, and the rape of the land or the compromise of the city is the inevitable result. Conservation and exploitation are irreconcilable.

The contrast between the city's large-scale builders and the small but significant example from Suffolk County involves more than project size and a few miles. The difference is a concerned and responsible quality of mind.

Builder With Vision

A builder who is also a committed conservationist seems the answer to a Good Fairy wish. It is hard to believe in a profit-making developer who respects nature enough to create both sensitive site plans and successful sales. But the evidence exists that there is at least one such builder in Suffolk County, as reported in a recent Times story.

The necessary magic apparently consists of an exemplary cooperation among regional planning officials, county supervisors and an imaginative builder, for a planning-political mix that is conducive to the best kind of housing and environmental design. A constructive planning climate produces good plans.

If one could have another New Year's wish, it would be that something of this collaborative vision would rub off on Suffolk's city cousins. Planners and developers have been working better together in recent years in New York than at any previous time, but it has been a ruthless, hardnosed, the-city's-gain-must-be-the-developer's-profit incentive rather than any mutual acceptance of