

5 TOP ARCHITECTS VIE ON PARK PLAN

To Compete on \$5.7-Million Police Station and Stable

By ADA LOUISE HUXTABLE

Mayor Lindsay announced yesterday that five of the country's leading architectural firms would enter a \$100,000 competition to design a \$5.7-million combined police station house, stable and riding ring in Central Park.

The structures will be built by the Parks Department, which has rejected a design prepared under the previous administration in favor of the closed, or "invited," competition.

The five firms, all of which have international reputations for progressive, sophisticated work, are Edward L. Barnes, Marcel Breuer & Associates, Kelly & Gruzen, Philip Johnson, and Whittlesey, Conklin & Rossant. All have offices here.

Mr. Barnes, the architect of the Herald Tribune Fresh Air camps, is known also as a designer of suave houses and offices, and Mr. Breuer is responsible for the city's latest landmark, the new Whitney Museum, at Madison Avenue and 75th Street.

Kelly & Gruzen has initiated design advances in New York's middle-income housing, at Chatham Green and Chatham Towers, on Park Row. Mr. Johnson is the architect of the New York State Theater at Lincoln Center, the new wing and garden of the Museum of Modern Art, and co-architect of the Seagram Building on Park Avenue, with Mies van der Rohe.

The firm of Whittlesey, Conklin & Rossant collaborated

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5 Top Architects Will Compete On \$5.7-Million Park Project

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on the recently released Lower Manhattan Plan for the City Planning Commission, and are planners and architects for the standard-setting new town of Reston, Va.

"These are not men who normally compete against each other," Parks Commissioner Thomas P. F. Hoving said yesterday. "They want to give their best for the city."

"We think this is an important and interesting development in the city's architecture," said Mayor Lindsay.

The site for the new buildings is behind the present 22nd Precinct station house on the south side of the 86th Street transverse. A total of \$100,000 in entry grants and prizes is being underwritten by Stephen Currier, head of Urban America, Inc., a private nonprofit organization interested in improving the quality of American cities. Construction funds will come equally from Parks Department and Police Department budgets.

The winning scheme will replace a design for a smaller facility prepared by the firm of Eggers & Higgins that was objected to in terms of esthetics and function by some members of the City Planning Commission, tabled twice by the Art Commission, reportedly on esthetic grounds, and finally passed by the Art Commission by a 5-to-4 vote.

The design was rejected by the new Parks Department administration on the technical ground that construction bids had come in higher than the budget. The rejection sacrificed \$100,000 in architects' fees.

The design was for a squared-off white structure in modern commercial style that critics considered a violation of the park's informal and rustic atmosphere.

The program for the new structures specifies that the natural grade of the land be used to put part of the buildings underground. The old station house, designed by one of the original Central Park architects, Calvert Vaux, will be preserved as part of the new scheme.

In addition to the new station house, there will be a stable for 150 police horses and 150 private horses. A multipurpose, 4,500-seat indoor ring will be used for horse shows, polo, and the training of police horses, which will be watched by schoolchildren as part of Parks and Board of Education programs.

The new construction will re-

place existing shop buildings, a parking lot and part of a lawn. The Parks Department cites several justifications for breaching its own rule of keeping buildings out of the park.

It points to present construction on the site; the desirability of on-the-spot police headquarters, already there, combined with recreational facilities that could bring the police and children closer; the appropriate nature of equestrian entertainment for a park and the fact that early park plans specified a stable on the site.

The department also considers the facility needed because the last of the city's private riding stables will be demolished for West Side urban renewal and the police and polo stabling was lost with the demolition of the armory at 94th Street and Madison Avenue.

Each of the invited firms will receive \$15,000 to participate in the competition for the new buildings. As a guarantee that the winning design will be constructed, a cost estimating firm will work with the architects to be sure the designs are within the budget.

Any over-the-budget entry will be rejected, and the fee forfeited. First, second and third prizes will be \$10,000, \$8,000 and \$5000, with the contract awarded to the winner.

The judges of the competition will be Commissioner Hoving; Police Commissioner Howard R. Leary; Mr. Currier; Arthur Rosenblatt, architect and design consultant to Mr. Hoving; William Berger, Lewis Davis and Paul Rudolph, architects of New York, and M. Paul Friedberg, landscape architect here.

The competition will close in late December and be judged in January. Construction is to follow immediately.