

Acceptable Compromise

Paranoia is no substitute for planning. Although suspicion is a justifiable way of life in New York, the changes made in the city's air rights agreements with the York Avenue medical, educational and research institutions that caused an uproar at a recent Board of Estimate meeting were in favor of the community, not a secret plot against it. But neither can one deny that community pressures, added to the city's careful negotiations, brought about some of these changes, and that the community dialogue, while it ranges from extremely knowledgeable to hysterical, is a useful and necessary planning tool.

In the case of the York Avenue institutions, many neighborhood questions are legitimate and some still remain to be resolved. What has not been generally acknowledged is that these invaluable city institutions have both the right and the need to build, and that the air rights scheme is a thoughtful and appropriate solution. Like all such complex solutions it is a compromise, and less than ideal in its waterfront use. But this is a conscientious attempt to solve difficult planning problems, not a "fix" or "sell out" as charged. It is time to get on with it, with continued community input and assurances, for the benefit of all.