

# Planning for the City

The Board of Estimate's rejection of Mayor Lindsay's proposed test of the Madison Avenue Mall is a setback to the idea of progressive city planning for the long-range public good. The Lindsay administration has brought many innovative advances in zoning, preservation and urban design to New York City in recent years. The visible result is that new theaters have been built, neighborhood character and quality have been protected, and essential services and amenities provided in areas of speculative construction.

The Madison Avenue Mall concept was not without problems, as all change is disruptive in an impacted city; but it had great promise. It was a logical extension of the city's manifold planning activities, of which the latest example is a highly important proposal for zoning reform, affecting the quality of New York housing, that deserves immediate, aggressive support. Let us hope that Controller Abe Beame, who was instrumental in defeating the Madison Avenue project, will show more vision and more understanding of the long-range needs of the city in his approach to the projected new zoning law.

Without a creative and courageous planning policy, New York cannot be a fit place to live or work, but only a place to flee from. Air standards, street scale and quality, comfort, convenience, utility and pleasure are not just words or abstractions; they are the currency of a successful city in human and concrete terms and the product of professional planning. We trust that Mr. Beame and his colleagues on the Board of Estimate will recognize that the physical crisis of the city is as legitimate an issue as law and order.