

MANHATTAN PROMENADE *

AN URBAN PLANNING PROPOSAL
PREPARED BY:
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November 12, 1979



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The essence of this proposal is the conversion and re-use of the existing 1.4 mile overhead track right of way on Manhattan's west side, into an elevated pedestrian promenade extending from Greenwich Village to the proposed Convention center site at 36th Street and West Street.

This right of way, formerly owned and used by the Penn Central R.R. as a freight spur serving the docks and markets of the westside. As shipping declined, so too has the need for warehousing and support services. Thus the entire area has fallen into disuse and decay along with the freight spur. At the southern terminus, in Greenwich Village, many buildings have been undergoing transformations into residential loft and co-op apartments under the aegis of the J-51 program spawning a revitalization of the West Village area.

The structure of the track consists of steel columns and beams with a concrete roadbed on top of which is typically two track beds. The overall width of the structure is typically 30' - 35' but it widens at several points to 60' and more. The track is 20' above street level and is presently accessible by several steel stairways located along its length. It is also accessible from many buildings which formerly employed loading docks on the track itself. In addition, there are some buildings which are built right over the track forming enclosed open areas at track level. One of these buildings, Westbeth, the housing co-op built for artists, is the southern terminus of the track, and another Manhattan Refrigeration is being converted to 300 + residential units.

° The right of way extends north along Greenwich St. then swings to the west at Fourteenth St. then runs north between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues terminating at the Penn Central yards at 35th St.

An interesting aspect of this right of way is that it runs through the middle of the blocks offering a very unusual panorama of the city surrounding it. Spectacular views of the Hudson River

occur at the northern end.

This proposal envisages the creation of a jogging path, bicycle path, and pedestrian promenade to be used by visitors and residents in a park like setting above the noise and traffic of the streets. We propose to create plazas at locations where the promenade widens with dining facilities, small shops and landscaping. Access ramps would be built at strategic locations (2 or 3) along the promenade. We envision the possibility of installing an antique steam train to serve as a restaurant and historic exhibit, in or near the village area of the promenade.

We believe that the implementation of this proposal would serve the needs of a great number of people, residents and visitors, and help to revitalize the entire area.

We feel that the first step towards implementation of this proposal would be the securing of a funding grant which would enable us to prepare an analysis and survey of the project scope to determine program requirements and economic feasibility study to calculate costs and methods of financing. Our initial belief is that this project should be financed as a combination of private capital and government grant funds.

This proposal has been conceived, prepared, and submitted by the firm of Noah Greenberg Architects, and all rights pertaining to it are reserved.

























