

FOR A BETTER BRONX!

Railroad and Bus Terminal at 138th St. Nearer Reality

By THOMAS F. BRENNAN

The Bronx may soon realize its long-cherished hope of becoming a railroad passenger transportation center, according to a prediction made by Borough Pres. Lyons at a special meeting of the Board of Directors of the Bronx Board of Trade, 349 E. 149th St.

Assisted by Borough Engineer Arthur V. Sheridan, Lyons presented the details of a proposed railroad and bus center at 138th St. and the Concourse, a project which he said "has the possibilities of becoming the greatest development ever brought to the Bronx."

The site will be a converging point of the borough's network of express motor highways, some of which will be under construction this year, and the station will be so easy to reach from major airports and from all points in the Bronx, upper Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, New Jersey, and Westchester County that railroad officials, previously indifferent to the proposal to have crack trains stop in the Bronx, have now become "genuinely interested," he said.

Numerous other projects for the Bronx were discussed at the meeting. They included the proposed deep-water docks and covered pier at Tiffany St., to provide a Bronx berth for ocean-going freighters. Lyons also talked of his vast plan for the complete rehabilitation of Park Ave., which project he said "looks very hopeful."

May Replace 125th St. Stop

On introducing the proposed railroad and bus station, Lyons said that the whole idea is "still predicated on the railroads' consenting to stop the trains at 138th St.," but that recent changes are such that it would be greatly to the advantage of the railroads to make an express stop of the 138th St. station.

"When we went to railroad officials in the past, with our requests for an express stop in the Bronx, they told us that they didn't want to stop the trains at 138th St. and 125th St.," he said.

"But now, I feel that 125th St. has completely outlived its usefulness, and I think the railroads see the possibilities in this Bronx project. They are looking upon it with more favor than they ever did in the past."

He said he felt it will be of such importance that "it might even compete with Grand Central Terminal." With the new highways to be built, he pointed out, it will be more convenient for train passengers to get off in the Bronx than to go to Grand Central.

Shows Architect's Sketches

Sheridan exhibited an architect's and engineers' conception of the project and explained some of the details. The station would be built adjacent to the present Mott Haven (138th St.) station of the New York Central main line. There would be a large bus terminal, to accommodate fast express buses to Westchester, Brooklyn, New Jersey, and other points, and there would be a large garage and other storage facilities for private automobiles. All traffic into and out of the station would flow in a rotary plan, with no turn-arounds necessary at any point in the area.

Sheridan said that 138th St. would be developed in connection with the project and pointed out that there would be ample space surrounding the station for the construction of hotels and business buildings. The area close by the station could be landscaped, he said, and there is a possibility that

part of it might be turned into a park.

The station would be skirted on the south by the Deegan Memorial Highway, which is a main approach to the Triborough Bridge and which will figure as a major link in the borough's express highway system. The Putnam Express Highway, a no-light route along the Harlem River, for which funds have been appropriated and on which work will start this year, will cut into the Deegan Highway a short distance west of the 138th St. station. The improved Bruckner Boulevard express highway will run into the Deegan Highway at the Triborough Bridge a short distance east of the proposed station, and will be linked with the improved Boston Rd. express thoroughfare at Hunts Point.

Convenient to LaGuardia Field

Sheridan pointed out that the highway routes will make it possible to get through the entire borough in 12 minutes by automom-

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BUS TERMINAL FOR 138TH ST.

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bile and that the 138th St. station would be only a few minutes from LaGuardia Airport.

Passengers getting off the trains at 138th St. would find quick transportation to widely scattered points in the metropolitan area, he said, pointing out that a train passenger could get to Brooklyn quicker by bus from 138th St. than by subway from Grand Central.

"When these highways are finished," he said, "no borough will be as suitable as the Bronx for a railroad passenger station."

Turning to a discussion of his Park Ave. development project, Lyons said he has had considerable studies made and that the plan "is not only feasible, but also quite attractive to people who can help accomplish it."

Rail Cut to Be Covered

The plan, which was announced some time ago in the Home News, entails the complete rehabilitation of a strip two blocks wide, running the entire length of Park Ave., from 168th St. to Fordham Rd. The railroad cut running down the middle of Park Ave. would be covered over and the avenue would be converted into a boulevard. A highway would be continued from 158th St. down to 149th St. and, if the 138th St. railroad station is built, the highway will probably be developed south as far as that point.

Every building north of 168th St. would be razed and high-class apartment houses would be constructed on both sides of the boulevard.

Lyons told the directors of the board that he has "had some of the biggest financial groups" in to consider undertaking the project.

"One of them is studying it very seriously," he said. "One of them feels that it would want relief from assessments for a period of time, but the other wants no help at all."

Reveals Dewey Is Interested

He said that Gov. Dewey has shown great interest in the project and has referred it to New York Housing Authority Commr. Stiehm, "who is also very much interested in it."

Lyons told the conferees that the boulevard "would be the finest in the country—in fact, the finest in the world."

On the subject of the Tiffany St. docks and pier, the directors heard a report from its Industrial Committee, pertaining to the need for the project and the benefits it would bring to the Bronx. Plans were made to seek pledges guaranteeing \$30,000 annual revenue from the use of the pier.

City officials in charge of such projects have informed the Borough President's office and the Board of Trade that it would not be practical to dredge the docks and build a covered pier unless the City could be assured of a revenue of \$30,000 a year.