

The City of New York

Department of Sanitation



125 Worth Street
New York, NY 10013

Norman Steisel
Commissioner

August 5, 1985

William Dean, Esq.
Atkinson Dean & Dana
845 Third Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10022

Dear Mr. Dean:

On August 15th, the Board of Estimate will cast the final vote on the Brooklyn Navy Yard waste-to-energy project. The vote will mark an historic occasion: New York City has been running out of landfill space ever since we stopped ocean dumping fifty years ago; in spite of an almost continuous succession of planning efforts, no new waste disposal facility has been developed within the last twenty-five years. The implementation of the Navy Yard project -- an earlier incarnation of which was proposed, as you probably know, in 1967 -- will signify the end of years of environmental reviews and the beginning of a new waste disposal program.


I would like to invite you to join me before the Board of Estimate on the 15th to help express the rich historical context of this decision. By drawing together some of the threads that have led up to this important decision by the Board of Estimate -- by focusing on the contributions that a number of individuals and organizations such as the members of the Civic Affairs Forum have made -- we can present a meaningful perspective on this stage in our development of a rational solution to this city's most pressing environmental problem, and thus help to focus the political commitment necessary to take the next steps in implementing a citywide network of resource recovery facilities and recycling programs.

Since 1929, when New York City first began planning the development of new waste disposal capacity to replace our outlawed ocean dumping, 78 waste disposal facilities (incinerators, resource recovery plants, landfills, marine transfer stations) were planned but never got off the drawing board. The last new waste disposal facility that was actually developed in this city was the Southwest Brooklyn Incinerator, which opened in 1961. Approval of the Navy Yard project by the City's ultimate policy-making body, therefore, would be cause for historically significant celebration. If you can

join me in commemorating this moment -- and thereby help us to channel attention on the next steps in solving this problem, I would like to arrange a meeting within the next week so that you and I and several other individuals who have also been involved in this process can compare notes and coordinate the remarks that we will make before the Board of Estimate on the 15th to provide an interlocking perspective on the history of this project.

I hope that you will be able to join me in marking our achievement. Because time is of the essence, please give me a call at 566-5010, or call Benjamin Miller or Jim Meyer of our Public Policy Unit at 566-0922, to let us know if you can join me on the 15th.

Sincerely,



Norman Steisel
Commissioner