

NEW YORK POST

ALL ABOARD MOYNIHAN STATION

LET'S SEIZE THIS CHANCE, NEW YORK

By **CHRISTINE C. QUINN**

December 8, 2007 -- IN 1964, the original Pennsylvania Station, an imposing edifice embodying the grand vision and fortitude of our great city, was demolished in an unfortunate concession to the economic demands of the time. New York now has a singular and fleeting opportunity to right this historic wrong, but we must act decisively.

Eighteen years after the original Pennsylvania Station fell, the late Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan introduced a bold proposal to restore the grounds to their former glory. Today, after years on the drawing board, the plans are finally undergoing the preliminary stages of the public-review process. The coming months will bring more public hearings; community groups and local, state and federal officials will all have the chance to weigh in.

Historically, this has been a perilous process, derailing many large developments as differences over issues of funding, land use and neighborhood preservation prove irreconcilable. This cannot be allowed to happen with this project. Consensus that balances needs must be found.

Each year, millions of travelers take their first and last steps in New York City in Penn Station - which, in its current configuration, does little to impress or compel visitors to return. The plans for Moynihan Station, on the other hand, envision structures truly worthy of the great senator's name: two grand railroad stations facing one another from across Eighth Avenue, replete with broad skylights and large, open public spaces.

Much hangs in the balance of the negotiations that will take place among community stakeholders and government leaders: critical economic stimulus to an underdeveloped area of the city, millions of dollars of projected tax revenues from the new design's expanded commercial space - and a portal truly worthy of the greatest city in the world.

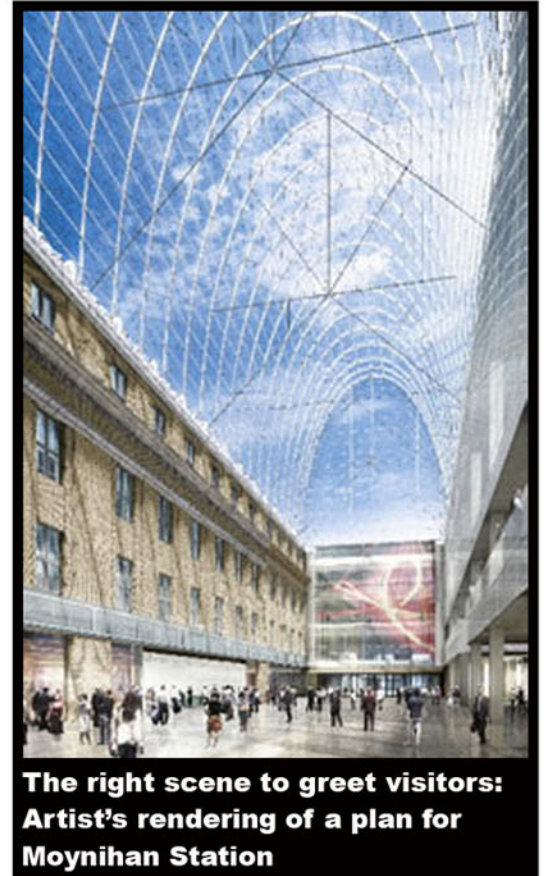
As it stands now, the project enjoys a rare convergence of public support, private support and economic viability. As it moves forward, it is critical that we remember the elements of the plan that have made such extraordinary consensus possible. All interested parties should enter negotiations with the understanding that compromise will be a critical element of the plan's success.

Disagreements will inevitably arise - important ones - but whatever they may be, we must do what we can to keep the project from becoming mired in acrimony.

The stars have aligned to give New York City a rare second shot: We now have a chance to build a new rail station that honors the one that was lost nearly a half century ago and to bring economic development in an appropriate manner to a part of our city that needs it.

It is up to us to strike while the iron is hot to build consensus and a grand entrance to our great city.

Christine C. Quinn is the speaker of the City Council.



**The right scene to greet visitors:
Artist's rendering of a plan for
Moynihan Station**