



Courtesy of the Olin Partnership, Philadelphia

Figure 8.30 The site in 1977 with the World Trade Center towers in the left background.

Manhattan 20 piers that had once busily handled produce had fallen into disuse and became decayed. They were owned by the city and run by its Department of Marine and Aviation. The river could legally be land-filled to pierhead-line and the 37-hectare (92-acre) site so created used for development (see Figure 8.30). The Department wanted to build a new shipping terminal with an industrial esplanade along the edge, with housing blocks behind (see Figure 8.31). These blocks were proposed to be located, in the Modernist manner, as objects in space. This plan, presented in 1962, was poorly received by the press, the public and by government officials.

A series of alternative proposals followed. The governor of the state, Nelson Rockefeller, wished the development to be a comprehensive community built over a base of light

industry. He asked Wallace K. Harrison of Harrison and Abromowitz, who had worked for him before, to prepare a plan. In 1966, the firm produced a poorly received orthodox Bauhaus/Le Corbusian scheme (see Figure 8.32). Like the 1962 plan no implementation procedure was designed along with the urban design. Implicit in both proposals was that they were total urban designs to be implemented by a single developer. Proposed funding procedures were never worked out.

The City responded to the State's plan with one of its own. Mayor John Lindsay hired the firm of Concklin and Rossant to do the job. As a compromise the firm worked with Harrison and Abromowitz (and with Philip Johnson as a broker of ideas), to propose another scheme. It was presented in 1969. The conflict between the city and the state over control of the project was finally