# **BRONX ECOLOGY**

BLUEPRINT FOR A
NEW ENVIRONMENTALISM



## Allen Hershkowitz

Foreword and Original Designs by
Maya Lin

#### CONTENTS

Foreword, by Maya Lin xi Acknowledgments xv

#### INTRODUCTION

The Hopes behind the Bronx Community Paper Company 1

The Seeds of Discontent 6 • The Rise and Fall of the National Recycling Act 8 • A New Beginning 15 • The BCPC 17

 A New Blueprint: The Practical Side of Idealism 27

Why Government-Dependent Advocacy Is Inadequate 30 • The Prevailing Green Strategies 37 • An Industrial-Ecological Approach 40 • Eco-Realism 46 • Conclusion 51

2. The First Step: Choosing a Target 57

A Dreadful Record of Damaging Impacts 59 • The Enormous Surge in Paper Consumption 61 • Upstream Burdens 62 • The Problems with Tree Plantations 72 • Downstream Impacts 76 • The Influence of Government Subsidies 77 • Conclusion 80

3. The Keys to a Better Ecological Bottom Line:
Raw Materials and Siting 87
Using Recycled Raw Materials 89 • Why a Brownfield Site
Makes Sense 96 • The Challenge of Infrastructure Issues 102 •
Conclusion 117

4. Confronting the Technical and Economic Facts 121

The High Cost of Brownfields 122 • Cleanup 124 •
Permitting and Zoning 129 • Construction-Labor Costs 146 •
Managing Water 151 • Coping with Energy Expenses 159 •
The Difficulties of Using Recycled Raw Materials 162 •
Conclusion 167

### Designing the BCPC

INTRODUCTION
Working with Maya Lin
CONCEPT DESIGN
COLLAGES

5. Clearing the Social Market 171

Understanding the Social Forces Shaping Market
Possibilities 172 • The Challenge from Existing Businesses 174 •
The Difficulties of Working with Community Groups 176 •
The Interests of Local Political Leadership 178 • Litigation
Intimidation from Construction Companies 183 • The
Impediments That Color Dealing with Unions 185 • Dealing
with the Culture of Business 188 • Old-Guard Resistance to
Environmentalists in Business 191 • Conclusion 193

6. Getting Practical: Implementing Industrial Ecology 197

Guidelines for the New Industrial Developer 197 • Understanding Systemic Barriers to Sustainability 205 • Building Bridges: The Power of Collaboration 209 • Conclusion 212

7. Forming Partnerships: Moving Past the Roadblocks 215

Creating a Development Partnership 220 • Choosing Construction and Engineering Partners 225 • Working with Investment-Banking Firms 228 • Encouraging Community and Environmental-Group Participation 232 • Fostering Mutual Respect among Collaborators 245 • Conclusion 248

8. Getting Started: What Is to Be Done? 251
What Environmentalists Can Do 257 • Allies Who Can
Help 261 • Establishing Mutual Respect and Trust 266

Index 269