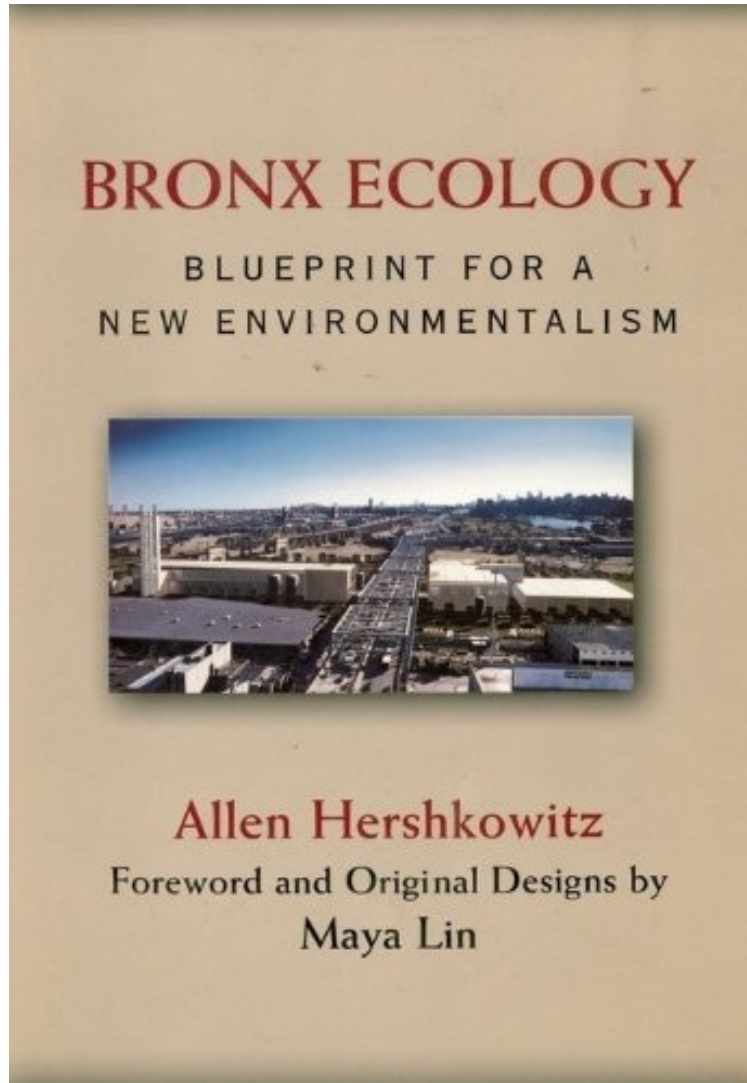


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Bronx Ecology: Blueprint for a New Environmentalism

Allen Hershkowitz

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Allen Hershkowitz : Bronx Ecology: Blueprint for a New Environmentalism before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Bronx Ecology: Blueprint for a New Environmentalism:

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. The politics of land-useBy George J. MyersI would have liked to think, as a resident of the Bronx, that where this proposed project was, nearby where the US Capitol Dome was forged during the Lincoln administration, would have been welcomed in NYC.I had somewhat been connected with the cultural resources evaluation for another project, the "Oak Point Rail Link" back in the early 80s in the neighborhood. It involved the rail transport of fresh produce loaded into special containers from trailer trucks parked near the Tappan Zee bridge, eliminating heavy truck traffic. By rail into the South Bronx, transferred off the rail-cars and then carried on designed trucks off the flatcars that would fit under any bridge or overpass into Manhattan, decreasing it was

estimated the cost of their produce there by 5%-10% and truck traffic around impediments. There were different rail modes proposed, one a whole new line out from the shore on stanchions in part of the trip, avoiding current rail travel. Produce would be moved quickly and efficiently. It was started I think, and said to have been stopped by then Governor Cuomo over pension investment overview by the feds or something, I think some of the material was stockpiled down there for it. I lived as a child in the Patterson Houses projects for awhile attending the poorest parish in the city St. Rita's. Maybe someone should write a book about it too. My father, his father a real estate reporter, said that the South Bronx was a landowner plot, next door to Manhattan with the its street grid continued into it, allowed to diminish and demolished, with the promise of new development which stopped by larger economic forces, i.e., economic depression and recession. Janes and Kirtland and the Mott Foundry, were once both there and their ironworks still in use around the world (bridges in Central Park, plaza fountain (Peru,US) garden sculpture (Japan) cast iron stoves (California, NY in the Rufus King Manor Park who was the "last Federalist" and first US Ambassador to England, is in the city park in Queens, NY) the US Capitol Dome, and assembled by Janes and Kirtland (for just over \$1 million for President Lincoln, replacing the "hat box") and other structures in Washington, DC (the Library of Congress was once all iron). Would anybody be surprised that politics comes to play there? 5 of 8 people found the following review helpful. I'm Right and Everyone Else is Too Stupid and Too Corrupt By A Customer This was a painful read for me. I had high hopes that Hershkowitz had learned something valuable to share with the rest of us. Instead he gives us his pontification and a virtual blame-fest for his failure to carry through execution of this project. In this telling everyone involved is faulted except the author. Yet in the estimation of many of those receiving the blame, the project was poorly conceived from the start, the author was deaf to suggestions and naive in his understanding of urban and paper industry economics (to say nothing of politics, culture, logistics and technology). Are any of these views fairly presented? Do we actually get a "Blueprint for a New Environmentalism?" No and no. Consider this test of clear thinking: You need to build a gigantic, complex heavy manufacturing facility, a paper mill, for the Bronx. Whom do you hire to design it? Answer: Maya Lin, designer of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. And it gets worse. Hershkowitz tells us that Mayor Giuliani was among those to blame for finally hammering the death blow to this project. The Mayor should be commended for having the clear vision to cut our losses before this turkey ate our lunch. I have read other books on failed projects (most recently Project Orion by Dyson - highly recommended) and battles (Argument Without End: In Search of Answers to the Vietnam Tragedy by McNamara) that were enlightening, because we learn how the leaders' went wrong from their own introspections. These can help the world. Here we just get lectured on how the author was and is right and the rest of us are wrong. OK, author, so why is there no paper mill in the Bronx? It takes much more than a dream, self-promotion and some fuzzy ideas to achieve such a goal. It takes understanding of others' interests and needs and a willingness to learn.

"The Bronx Community Paper Company teaches us that we have the power, if we muster the will, creativity, and cooperation, to recover lost pieces of America's environment, return them to good health, protect other lands and resources from being destroyed, and even create environmentally friendly jobs in the process." — President Bill Clinton In 1991, frustrated by the failure of lawmakers to produce meaningful progress on environmental issues, Allen Hershkowitz, a scientist with the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) opted for an innovative approach. Resolving to put market forces to work for the environment, Hershkowitz devised a plan to develop a world-scale recycled-paper mill on the site of an abandoned rail yard in the South Bronx. Created in collaboration with colleagues at NRDC, the private sector, government, unions, and community groups, and with a building designed by renowned architect and designer Maya Lin, the Bronx Community Paper Company (BCPC) was intended to put the ideas of industrial ecology to work in a project that not only avoided exacerbating environmental problems but actually remediated them. One of the primary goals of the project was to show that environmental protection, job production, social assistance, economic development, and private-sector profitability can work together in a mutually supportive fashion. Unfortunately, it didn't quite turn out like that. In Bronx Ecology, Hershkowitz tells the story of the BCPC from its earliest inception to its final demise nearly ten years later. He describes the technical, economic, and competitive barriers that arose throughout the project as well as the decisive political and legal blows that doomed their efforts to secure financing, ultimately killing the project. Interwoven with the BCPC tale is Hershkowitz's vision for a new, engaged environmentalism, complete with principles for a new era of industrial development that combines social and environmental responsibility with a firm commitment to profit-making. As Hershkowitz explains, while the project was never built, its groundbreaking collaboration can hardly be considered a failure. Rather the BCPC, in the words of veteran environmental journalist Philip Shabecoff, "can be seen as the beginning of a learning process for entrepreneurial environmentalism, a pathway to a new approach in the 21st century." Bronx Ecology offers a compelling vision of that exciting new pathway.

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Clinton About the Author Allen Hershkowitz is senior scientist with the Natural Resources Defense Council in New York City.