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Bridgemarket, James A. Farley Building [PLACEMARK Award: Hugh Hardy]

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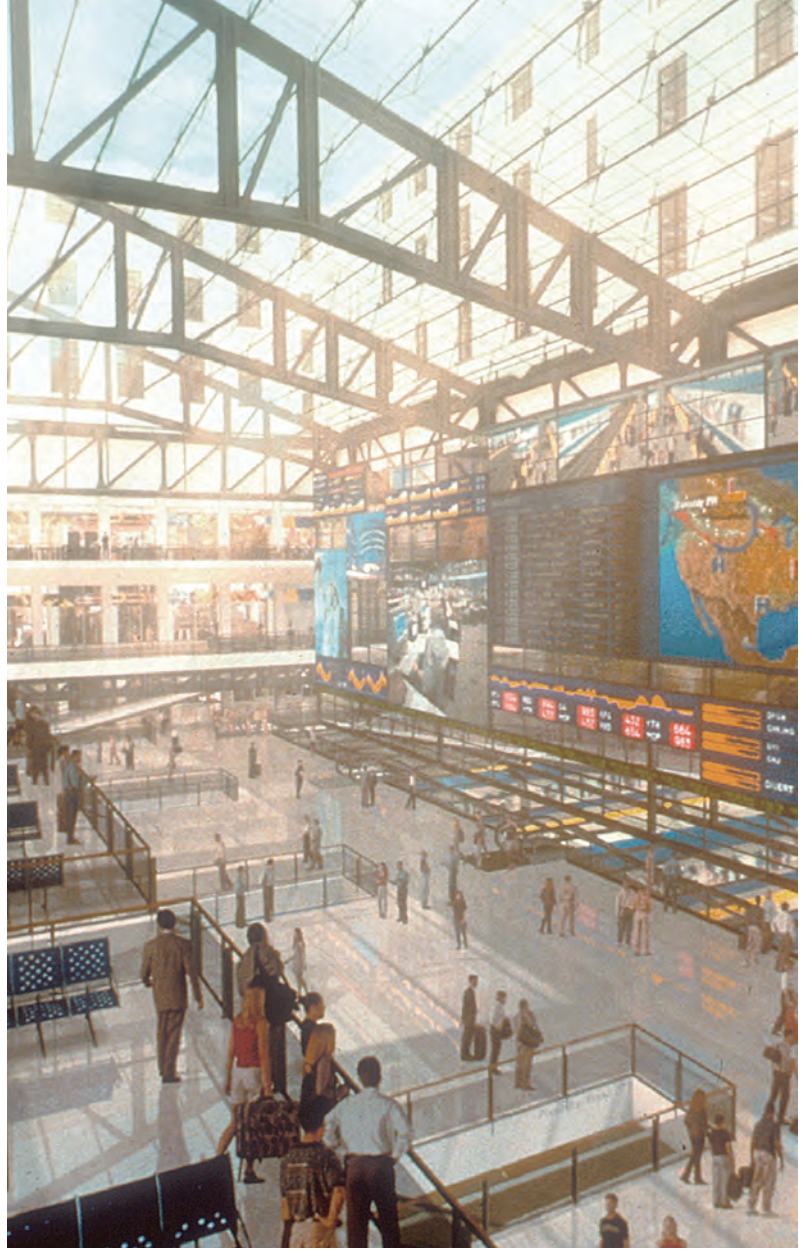
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**Bridgemarket,
James A. Farley Building—Pennsylvania Station**

Architectural visions inspire the transformation of bypassed spaces into civic and neighborhood amenities, and keep the projects on course through lengthy approval processes.



Amtrak's new station in New York would recreate the qualities of space and light, and the experience of moving between concourse and platform, that characterized the historic Penn Station. Rendering by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill. Courtesy Pennsylvania Station Redevelopment Corporation.

Above: The James A. Farley Building/General Post Office Photo © Farley Post Office Archives

The renewal of New York's signature streets, parks and public spaces has given the city the courage to consider how a wide range of bypassed, abandoned, or never accessible places can be added to the public realm. Hardy has helped the city rediscover abandoned spaces, such as Bridge-market, or re-imagine how space that have historically been off limits, such as the work areas of the James A. Farley Building/General Post Office, could be reconfigured for public use.

The Farley post office has been chosen as the site for relocating Amtrak's Pennsylvania Station—a project with incomparably high architectural stakes for the city. The demolition of McKim, Mead and White's classic terminal struc-

ture and the burial of the station beneath an office complex and arena was regarded as a civic disaster from the get-go, while the public is demanding that the \$300 million the transformation of this building (also designed by McKim, Mead & White as a companion to the lost station) must be more than an act of architectural atonement.

The architectural design for the conversion of the Farley post office into a new version of Pennsylvania Station is being headed by Skidmore, Owings and Merrill, while HHPA is serving as a consultant on historic preservation, restoration and design. This is a collaboration of the highest civic order, occurring at the interstices of memory, tradition, myth and the desire of



architecture to embody the spirit of the day. This conversation has been terribly polarized at its worst, and at its best remains stilted and uneasy. The Farley Building will likely win accolades as a visionary new transportation center, but its greater significance may lie in demonstrating the possibility of architectural collaboration in dynamic, yet historic, environments.

Bridgemarket, which included the creation of restaurant and shopping space under the Queensboro bridge, restated the public's claim to a long-lost market space. When the steel-frame bridge was built in 1909, the exterior of the Manhattan approach was covered with a granite and terra cotta veneer, the bridge's structural supports were

sheathed in terra cotta, and the vaults were turned into a tile-colored canopy. For decades, the space flourished as a public market (part of the city's efforts to clear pushcart vendors off the streets) until a city agency commandeered it for garage space and workshops.

HHPA's involvement in the project spanned more than twenty years, working with various development teams and merchants, and the project was shaped by market demands, the community review process and landmark preservation oversight.

—Todd W. Bressi

Bridgemarket, created under and adjacent to a bridge connecting Manhattan to Queens, attracts people from different neighborhoods to its supermarket, restaurant and furniture store. The place is now a transition point between different communities, rather than a barrier.

Top left: Gustavino's restaurant. Photo © Georgia Glynn Smith.

Top right: Food Emporium supermarket. Photo courtesy Great Atlantic & Pacific Tea Co.

Above: The Terence Conran Shop. Photo © Peter Aaron, ESTO.