Eye Army Terminal As ‘Industrial Giant’

By MATTHEW MELUCCI

Mayor Edward Koch launched plans last week to transform the colossal, yet almost vacant Brooklyn Army Terminal in Sunset Park into an “industrial giant.”

A kick-off ceremony for the $33 million project took place last Tuesday within the 97-acre city-owned terminal on Second Avenue between 54th and 58th streets. The Terminal’s two buildings once played a vital role in the mass movement of military goods and troops immediately after World War I when it was built in 1918, and throughout World War II.

Koch spoke from a podium located in the terminal’s 740-foot long, skylit atrium, which from inside looked like a great but gloomy castle in a Steven Spielberg movie.

Cass Gilbert, designer of the Woolworth Building, designed this tremendous complex as well. Hanging high above and behind the platform that seated many local and state officials like Borough President Howard Golden, Deputy Mayor of Economic and Financial Development Alair Townsend, and Public Development Corporation President Steven Spinola, was a bright blue banner that read, BROOKLYN ARMY TERMINAL: NEW YORK CITY’S PREMIER INDUSTRIAL CENTER. The decoration colored the hollow and gray atmosphere.

"Today’s announcement is good news not only for Brooklyn, but for all of New York City," Koch said. "Through this project, we will be able to create a new, first-rate, modern industrial center capable of housing thousands of jobs," he added.

The gigantic complex contains nearly five million square feet of space in two main concrete-reinforced buildings and three enclosed piers. "We believe this facility will be especially attractive to the graphic arts industry, a very important part of the city’s manufacturing base," Koch told the standing-room-only crowd.

The city’s graphic industry is second only to the garment industry in size. In recent years the industry has moved out of the city and into New Jersey where costs are cheaper.

The Mayor said that the move demonstrates the mass maneuver. It houses hundreds of passenger and freight elevators which will be restored, and railway tracks run through and about the building.

Other renovations will include the installation of utilities, plumbing, paving, lighting and landscaping. The solid concrete construction is ideal for supporting heavy equipment. When the overhaul is complete, each floor will provide 125,000 square feet of space. There will be additional room for expansion based on demand.

Koch introduced Golden, who said the revitalization of the Army Terminal "is the crowning jewel of our efforts to reinvigorate Brooklyn’s economy. This project has the best future of all Brooklyn projects," he added.

Its first phase is expected to create and re-

(Listened to a presentation last week at the Brooklyn Army Terminal announcing plans for use of the facility by the graphics arts industry are Councilman Tom Cuite, left; Borough President Howard Golden, center, and Mayor Ed Koch, right. Behind them are the District Managers of Community Boards Seven and Ten—Andy DiOrio and Mary Sempesos.

Mayor Ed Koch announces plans at Army Terminal ceremonies last week.)