

# The World's Capital - The United Nations Headquarters

The story of the development of the United Nations (UN) headquarters is fascinating. We will discover how and why the headquarters ended up on an 18 acre site in the middle of Manhattan, New York City.



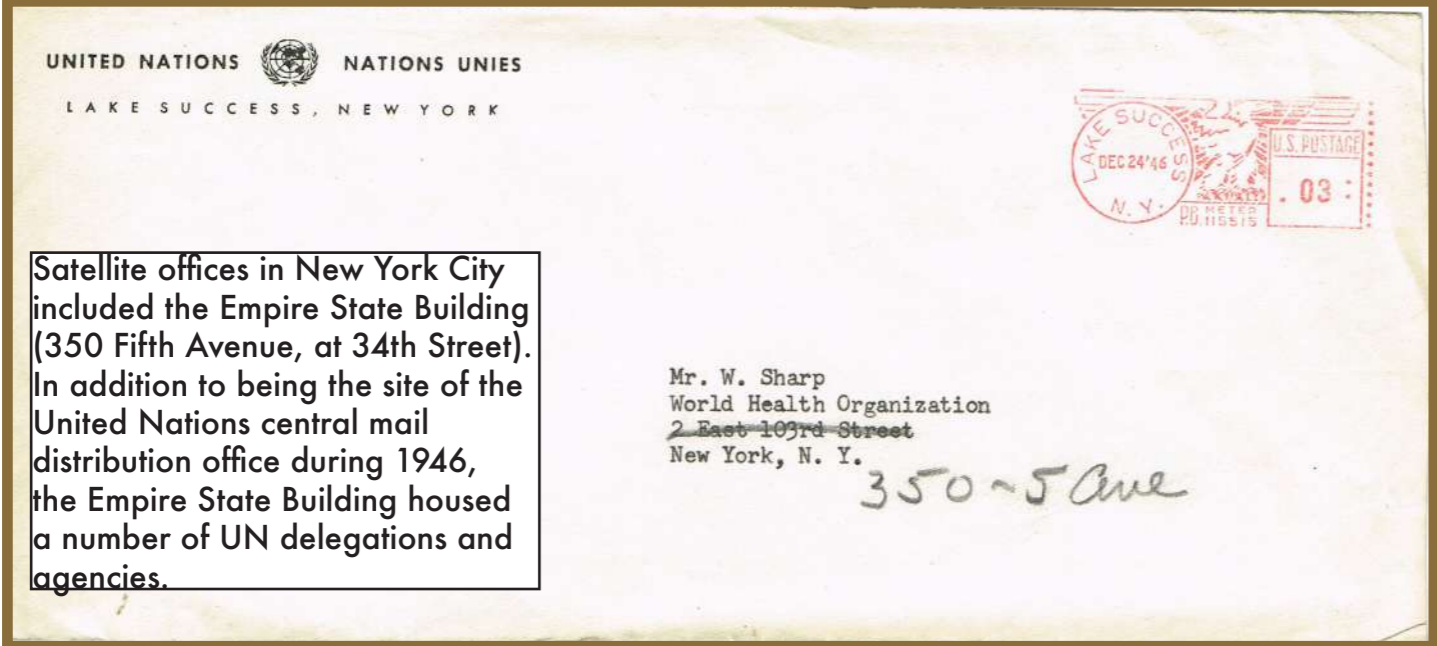
Cordell Hull - Father of the United Nations. US Representative to the UN-CIO and chief architect of the UN Charter.



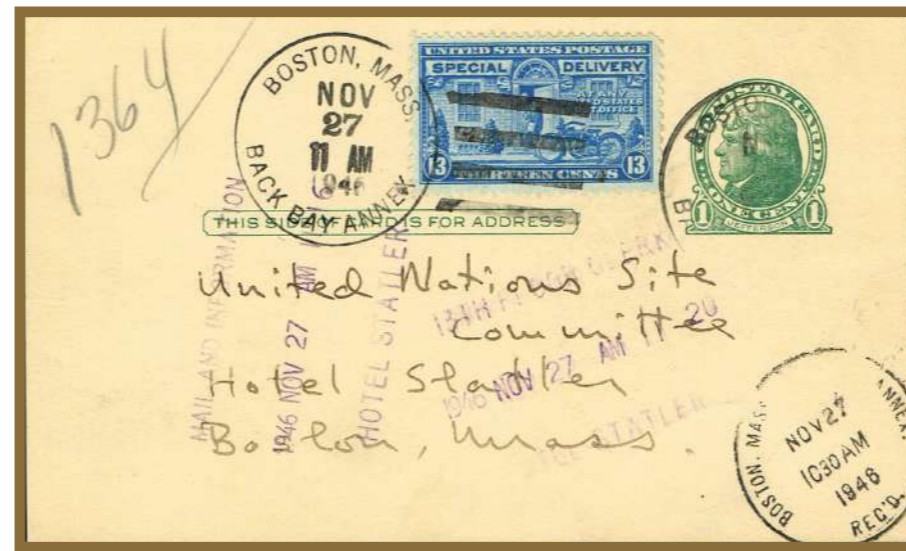
The United Nations Conference on International Organization convened in San Francisco, CA. on April 12, 1945. Sixty-one nations participated with the principle goal of the meeting to develop the Charter of the United Nations. Discussions on where to permanently house the UN were widespread but no decisions were made other than to temporarily establish the UN in New York City.



The UN first temporary headquarters was established at Hunter College, Bronx Campus, but only lasted for a few months as classes resumed in the Fall of 1945. The UN moved to Lake Success in Queens, New York and occupied the old Sperry-Rand Facility for several years before the permanent HQ was constructed.



Satellite offices in New York City included the Empire State Building (350 Fifth Avenue, at 34th Street). In addition to being the site of the United Nations central mail distribution office during 1946, the Empire State Building housed a number of UN delegations and agencies.



Many Cities including Boston, Chicago, San Francisco, New York, and even Saint Louis fought to lure the UN to their cities. New York City Mayor Dwyer even commissioned a study to show that Flushing Meadows would be a wonderful permanent location. The UN Site Selection Committee traveled to many of these locations to study how well they could accommodate the organization and its international work force. Ultimately a large tract of land near Stamford, Connecticut was chosen.

A large public hearing was convened during the summer of 1946 where a significant number of citizens argued against the plan. The room was so crowded, it was estimated that nearly 1000 additional citizens had to listen from outside the auditorium.

The UN had no where to go!

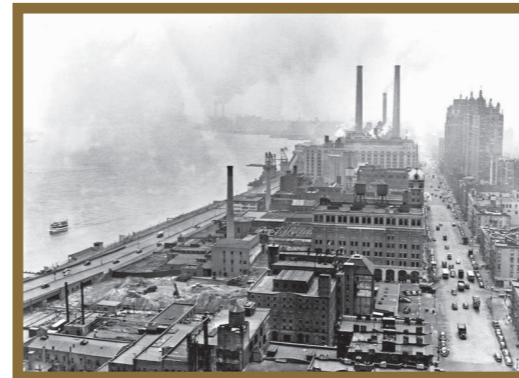


Photo of X-City Turtle Bay site looking southward prior to the demolition of the slaughterhouses and vacant tenement apartments and office buildings.

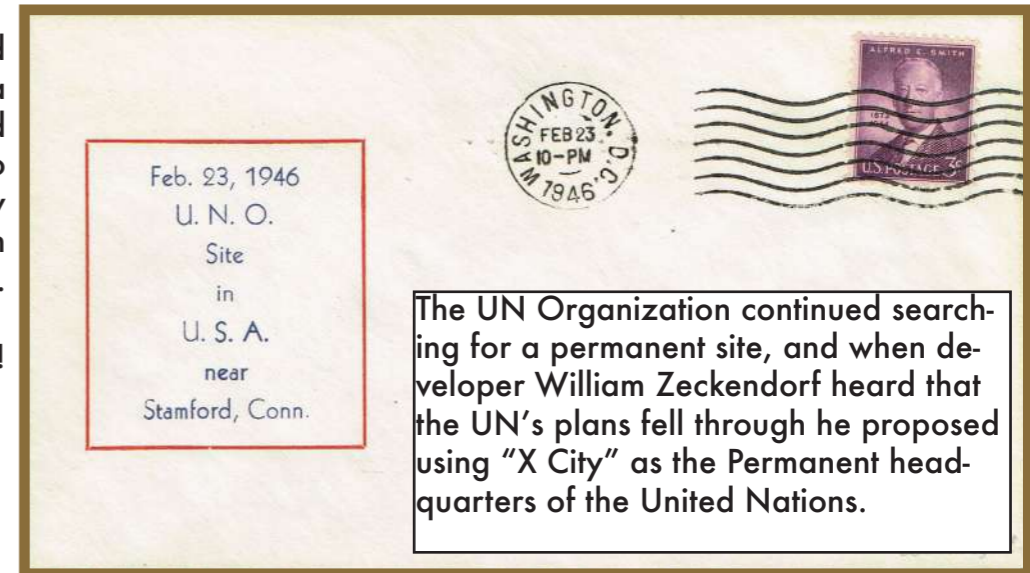
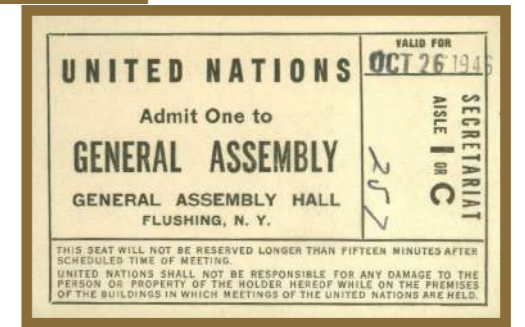


J.D. Rockefeller sent a letter to Dr. Eduardo Zuleta Angel, Chairman of the Permanent Headquarters Committee, offering a gift of \$8,500,000 to purchase the land proposed by Zeckendorf on the East River. The UN Officials quickly accepted the offer.



Philadelphia, cradle of liberty, almost got selected as the permanent home.

Publicity label



The UN Organization continued searching for a permanent site, and when developer William Zeckendorf heard that the UN's plans fell through he proposed using "X City" as the Permanent headquarters of the United Nations.

An international committee of engineers, architects, and designers quickly began developing designs for the HQ. Charles Le Corbusier, France, Oscar Neimeyer, Brazil, are credited with the final design.

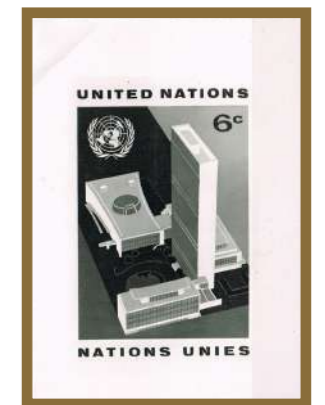


Photo-essay of the UN HQ completed in 1952. Design used for 1968 letter rate definitive issue.