

PHASE IA ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT  
BLOCK 493 - LOT 30  
BOROUGH OF MANHATTAN



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April 19, 2018

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## I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report assesses the potential archaeological sensitivity of Block 493, Lot 30, the "Project Site", located between Mott Street (west), Elizabeth Street (east), Spring Street (south) and Prince Street (north). The Development Site on this block is the through-block Lot 30 (199-207 Elizabeth Street / 222-230 Mott Street), currently occupied by the Elizabeth Street garden. The conclusions and recommendations offered in this report are based on maps and other primary data sources such as City Directories, Tax Assessments and government reports as well as secondary sources including local histories and other studies. The results of the investigation may be summarized as follows:

Block 493 was probably already developed by ca. 1811. The Mott Street side of the Project Site was occupied by a Public School from 1821 to 1902. There is no detailed information preserved on the type or number of buildings on the rest of the Project Site before the 1857 Perris map, which depicts various frame buildings on the Elizabeth Street side of the block. However, the earliest extant Tax Assessments for the Project Site, of 1828, indicate that the lots were already built upon by that date, and that one of slaughterhouses depicted on the 1857 Perris map at 187 Elizabeth Street. In 1870-71, five-story brick tenements replaced the frame structures on the Project Site. Two had backyards wide enough to have accommodated privies or cisterns, but these potential archaeological features will have been severely impacted or destroyed when the brick buildings were demolished and Public School 21, which had a basement, was built in 1903 over all but the northeast end of the Project Site. The buildings at this address in 1857, formerly 205 Elizabeth Street, covered the entire old lot, while the five-story brick building that replaced them covered all but one foot at the rear of the lot, in both cases, leaving no space for backyard installations.

This report therefore concludes that Block 493, Lot 30 is not sensitive for archaeological remains and recommends that no further archaeological investigation be required.



## II. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT SITE AND PLANNED DEVELOPMENT

Block 493 is located between Mott Street (west), Elizabeth Street (east), Spring Street (south) and Prince Street (north) in the Special Little Italy District. The Development Site on this block is the through-block Lot 30 (199-207 Elizabeth Street / 222-230 Mott Street), currently occupied by the Elizabeth Street sculpture garden and park. It encompassing 20,110 sq. ft., with a lot frontage of 136.01 ft. on Elizabeth Street and a maximum depth of 181.516 ft. It has approximately 80 feet of frontage on Mott Street and approximately 136 feet of frontage on Elizabeth Street. The park is landscaped with planted and paved areas, shade trees and benches, and contains a few frame sheds, including a one-story structure built against the south side of 228 Mott Street.

The proposal takes into account that the activities taking place in the park, such as gardening workshops, arts performances, and wellness classes, play an important role in the community. Accordingly, the development project proposed by Penrose, LLC, Riseboro Community Partnership, and Habitat for the Humanities, preserves public garden space in its design, providing for approximately 7,680 sf of publicly accessible open space. The proposed construction is a 91,219 gsf mixed-use, seven-story building "Haven Green" that will include 121 units of affordable senior housing as well as ground floor retail and community facility space. called "Haven Green", together with retail and community facilities.

There are seven individual New York City landmarks within a two-block radius of the project site. Built in 1817, Saint Patrick's Convent and Girls' School at 32 Prince Street, formerly the Roman Catholic Orphan Asylum, is described by Dolkart and Postal (2009, 42) as the "most signification institutional building in the Federal style surviving in New York City". St. Patrick's Old Cathedral, located on Mott Street at Prince Street, was built by Joseph-Francois Mangin, the architect of City Hall, in 1809-1815. The building was extensively restored in 1866, after a fire (Ibid.). St. Patrick's Chancery Office, now Saint Michael's Russian Church, is a small Gothic Revival building erected in 1858-59 at 266 Mulberry Street. In the same style, the Fourteenth Ward Industrial School of the Children's Aid Society, designed by Calvert Vaux, was erected in 1888-

89 at 256-258 Mott Street (Dolkart and Postal 2009, 43). Additional landmarks on the Bowery are the Germania Bank Building, at 190 Bowery, the Bowery Mission, at 227 Bowery, and the Young Men's Institute Building -- YMCA -- at 222 Bowery, this last designed by Bradford L. Gilbert in a red brick Queen Anne style. Erected in 1884-85, it is the only surviving 19th century YMCA branch in the city (Dolkart and Postal 2009, 47). Although not landmarked, the Renaissance Revival style building at 209 Elizabeth Street, adjoining Lot 30 on the north, is noteworthy for the multiple rows of terracotta tiles decorating its façade. Built in 1882 by N. LeBrun & Son, it was formerly occupied by the Hook and Ladder No. 9 firehouse.

In 2010, the thirty-eight block Chinatown and Little Italy Historic District, listed on the State and National Registers, was created. It includes the project site block, encompassing the area approximately bounded by Baxter Street, Centre Street, Cleveland Place and Lafayette Street on the west; Jersey Street and East Houston on the north; Elizabeth Street to the east, and Worth Street to the south (National Register 2009).

Because of its location in a historic district, and its proximity to the individual landmarks described above, the Landmarks Preservation Commission recommended that a Phase IA Archaeological Assessment be prepared to trace the development history of the project site and assess whether the proposed construction might impact historically significant archaeological resources whose integrity has not been seriously compromised by successive construction episodes in the past.

### III. DEVELOPMENT HISTORY OF THE PROJECT SITE

Maps depicting the project site prior to development show it as meadowland. The nearest notable features in the landscape were a cluster of knolls rising roughly along the line of Grand Street around Mott Street, Mulberry Street, and near Broadway (Viele 1874; British H.Q. 1782). The fortifications built during the Revolutionary War took advantage of these eminences in the siting of a defensive wall and forts (British H.Q. 1782).

Further south, along present-day Centre Street south of Canal Street lay the Collect Pond. Bolton recorded a Native American site here known as Warpoes or Werpoes, which he described a "space of cultivated land" north of the pond, marked by shell heaps (Bolton 1920, 79). This, and an Indian station / landing place at Corlears Hook are the nearest Native American sites to the Project Site. Otherwise, prehistoric Native American uses of the land at the southern end of Manhattan Island are poorly documented. European settlement had a significant impact on the topography of this area, especially of the locations most likely to have been favored by prehistoric peoples such as the shores of ponds, or along watercourses, or on elevated tracts of land. By 1811, the Collect Pond and the surrounding marshy areas and streams were filled in with soil from the leveling of the hillocks in the area, which also served to create suitably flat tracts for streets and houses.

During the 17th and 18th centuries, the Project Site was initially part of Bouwery #8, whose "first known occupant", ca. 1638, was Dr. Hans Kierstede, the Dutch West India Company's surgeon (Stokes vol. 5, 73). Over the following decades, several individuals leased this land until Col. Nicholas Bayard purchased it (before 1707). The tract was incorporated into "Smith's Hill Farm", which was located "almost entirely south of Prince St." (Stokes 70-71). The 1767 Ratzer map depicts only meadowland on the project site -- then still part of Bayard's extensive holdings. A short distance away was The Bowery, the main transport artery out of the city, then known as the "High Road to Boston". As development moved northward during the 18th century, houses were built along the line or a short distance from the road. The 1797 Taylor Roberts plan already records a small building approximately in the middle of the Mott Street side of the block, for which,

unfortunately, we have no further data. In the ensuing decade the city grew apace: by 1811, Block 493 was well within the developed part of the city, which by then extended to present-day Great Jones Street (Commissioner's Plan 1811).

By 1828, the Elizabeth Street side of the Project Site was divided up into five house lots with the addresses, from south to north, of 185 to 193 Elizabeth Street (Tax Assessments). The 1851 Cross Directory confirms that the Project Site was occupied by buildings that housed one or possibly two families as well as slaughterhouses shops at 185, 187 and 191 Elizabeth Street owned by William Chivois, William Granger, and James Brogan, respectively. Maria Chivvis (*sic*) widow of John, presumably William's father, could be traced back to 1830 at 189 Elizabeth Street (Longworth's 1830). The other occupants of 185 to 193 Elizabeth Street were mostly Irish working class as their listed professions or businesses indicate: laborer, washing, and polisher. The Irish migration from the 6th Ward into the 14th Ward to the north evidently began before ca. 1850, the conventional date for the start of this movement (Gabaccia 1984, 66). Their arrival precipitated the exodus of the native-born residents, who often retained their properties to lease them to the newcomers or to builders (Grabaccia 1984, 67).

On the 1857 Perris map, William Chivois' butcher shop at 185 Elizabeth Street was marked in green for hazard. This building completely covered the lot. At 187, 189, and 191 Elizabeth Street, there were frame buildings on the front of the lots leaving an alleyway on the south side of each to reach a yard in the middle of the lot and a frame building at the rear. The Cross Directory also already recorded a rear building at 191 Elizabeth Street, probably the same structure as shown on the 1857 Perris map, which labels both buildings at 189 and 191 Elizabeth Street as "Slaughterhouse". The lot at 193 Elizabeth Street was completely covered by a building that was frame construction in the front and brick at the rear. Although not very detailed, the 1867 Dripps map appears to depict the same building footprints on the project site. All these buildings were demolished ca. 1870 and replaced with five-story brick structures, which were in turn destroyed ca 1902-03 to make way for a new Public School building (New York City Tax Assessments and see below).

The erection of the new five-story tenement marked the end of the butcher shop era on the Project Site block. The origin of these businesses may be traced back to the 18th century, when Nicholas Bayard's descendants obtained a permit from the Common Council to operate a slaughterhouse on the east side of the Collect Pond, where several tanneries -- "nuisance industries" were already established. Since the butchers were required to slaughter their animals only in the licensed slaughterhouse, they moved into shops and dwellings nearby, renting their premises from the Bayards, who expected their property values to rise (Day 2008, 183-184). In the late 18th century, the main road to market was down Mulberry Street, also known as "Slaughterhouse Street" (Day 2008, 187). In spite of their mandate, the Bayards did not pursue butchers who illegally butchered cattle on their own premises, and by the early 19th century, butchers increasingly set up their own stalls and markets without obtaining the council's approval. From the 1840s, the laws restricting the unlicensed sale of meat began to loosen and, supported by the public, "shop butchers" could operate independently of the markets (Day 2008, 196). By the time of the 1857 Perris map, the butchers on the Project Site would have been able to sell their meat directly to the public and their by-products to the "Soap & Candle Manufactory" conveniently located on the opposite side of Elizabeth street.

On the Mott Street side of the Project Site block, the 1857 Perris records "Ward School No. 5. This was one of the earliest public schools in New York City. It opened on October 28, 1822 (Boese 1869; Palmer 1905, 49). Between 1897 and 1902, "Gram. Sch. No. 5" [Grammar School] was renamed Public School No. 106 (Bromley 1902). The building in which it was housed occupied an approximately 75.6 ft. wide by 98.0 ft. deep section of Lot 30, leaving small vacant or yard areas at the sides and in the back (Bromley 1879 map; old lot number 911 on the 1879 Dripps map).

The school was erected to serve the rapidly expanding, working-class population, many of whom were immigrants, that was moving into formerly owner-occupied residences converted into boarding houses, or into the new, multi-occupancy tenement buildings. With only two exceptions, at 261 Mulberry and St. Patrick's Old Cathedral rectory at 263-5 Mulberry Street, all the late 18th and early 19th century Federal style and Greek Revival townhouses in the Chinatown and Little Italy Historic District were transformed into tenements or commercial buildings during the 19th

century, beginning approximately in the 1820s (National Register, Section 7, p. 3). In fact, the tenement house was first introduced in this Historic District, the building at 65 Mott Street being perhaps the first of this type in the city (National Register section 7, p. 4) Most of the streets in this Historic District are still lined with five- and six-story brick tenements like those that formerly stood on the Elizabeth Street side of the Project Site (National Register section 7, p. 3). These last, however, did not replace the earlier frame buildings until 1870-71, as already noted (New York City Tax Assessments).

In 1831, ten years after it opened, School No. 5 had 479 pupils (Williams 1831, 176). By 1849, the number had grown to 1,975 students (some of these may have been attending on a part-time basis; Annual Report 1849). In 1863, the 1,908 students were organized into Boys, Girls and primary "departments" and managed by a staff of twenty-five teachers and one janitor (Annual Report 1864, 104). Among other courses, they received instruction in drawing, music, and German (Board of Education 1864, 57). The students continued to be accommodated in the twelve classrooms of the original school building until 1902, by which time the neighborhood and the school were crowded with the Italians immigrants who settled into the tenements on Mulberry Street (*NY Times* 1902). Most of the children, however, only attended school until the age of fourteen and then went to work in factories (Grabaccia 1984, 91).

Although Italians from northern Italy began arriving in New York City in the early- and mid-19th century, along with Germans and Irish, the major influx of south Italian immigrants dates from ca. 1880 and most of those who settled on the Project Site block were Sicilian. A survey conducted by the Immigration Commission averred: "all the people who live on the west side of Elizabeth Street between E. Houston and Prince Street are Sicilians." (survey of homeworkers, quoted in Grabaccia 1984, 54). No doubt the erection of the new tenement buildings in Little Italy between 1860 and 1900, including on the Project Site, in 1870, was promoted by the wave of Italian immigrants who, by ca. 1900, had "completely taken over the ward" (Grabaccia 1984, 67).

The new P.S. 21 was designed by C.B.J. Snyder, the prolific architect and administrator who was responsible for the construction of nearly 350 new schools during his tenure as the Department of Education's Superintendent of Buildings from 1891 to 1922. Snyder's most

outstanding contribution was the development the H-shaped building, which improved light and ventilation in mid-block sites off the main avenues, as well as reducing street noise and providing protected school yard space (NYC DOE 2018). P.S. 21 extended over the entire area of the Project Site between Mott and Elizabeth Streets, south of old lot 22, incorporating the area of the former lots 24 to 26, whose five-story buildings were demolished (Bromley 1902, 1911 and 1921). Since a large portion of the site was occupied by the old school building, which the students needed to continue using until the new one was completed, it was necessary to proceed with the construction in "two distinct building operations" (Snyder 1910, 50). When completed, in 1903, the building was fronted by a large courtyard built over an auditorium reached by entrances from the street (Snyder 1910, 50). The basement, which extended under the entire five-story building, also contained baths, lockers, offices, a workshop and cooking facilities (Snyder 1910, 57; Bromley 1921). Renamed Public School 21, the new building was equipped with sixty classrooms and could accommodate a total of 2,350 students (*NY Times* 1902, Snyder 1910, 57).

The remaining portion of the Project Site on Elizabeth Street, adjacent to P.S. 21, was occupied by a five-story building that covered all but the rear five feet of the lot (1879 Tax Assessments, formerly 193 Elizabeth Street). Erected in 1870, this building subsumed the area of the two old Lots 964 and 965, formerly 191 and 193 Elizabeth Street. The address was changed to 205 Elizabeth Street between 1880 and 1885 (Bromley 1879; Bromley 1885). This building was demolished between 1927 and 1955 and the area not subsequently built upon. In 1972, P.S. 21 had no students and was being used as a warehouse (Farber 1972). By 1977, it was demolished and Lot 30 became vacant.



#### IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the lot coverage of P.S. 21, which also had a basement extending under its entire area, and the virtual complete lot coverage of the adjacent building at 205 Elizabeth Street, erected in 1870, any potential backyard features associated with the former five-story brick buildings or their frame predecessors on Elizabeth Street will have been severely impacted and probably destroyed. No remains of the original 1821 school building -- which would have been of historic significance -- will have survived the construction of the 1903 building. This assessment therefore concludes that Block 493, Lot 30 is not sensitive for archaeological remains and that no further archaeological investigation be required.

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Fig. 1. Tax map of the Project Site



Fig. 2. Views of P.S. 21 ca. 1910 (Snyder 1910, 54, fig. 13)





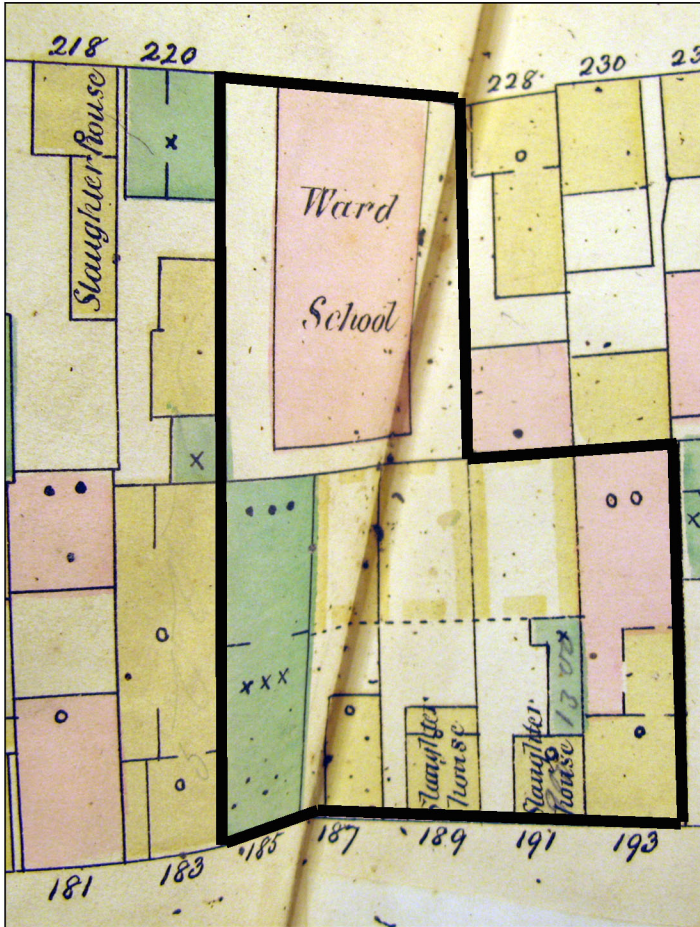


Fig. 3. 1857 Perris map showing the location of the Project Site

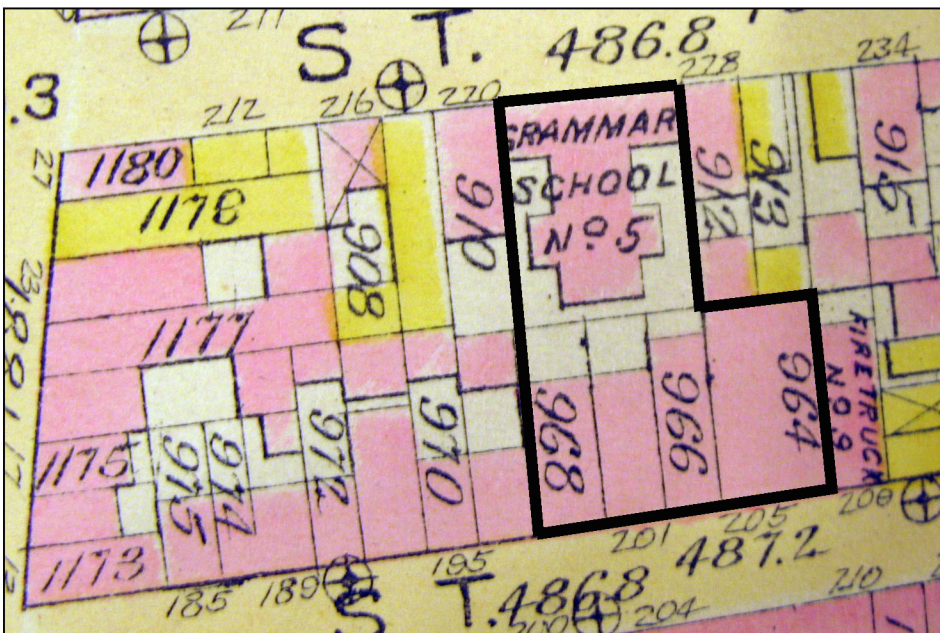


Fig. 4. 1885 Robinson map showing the location of the Project Site



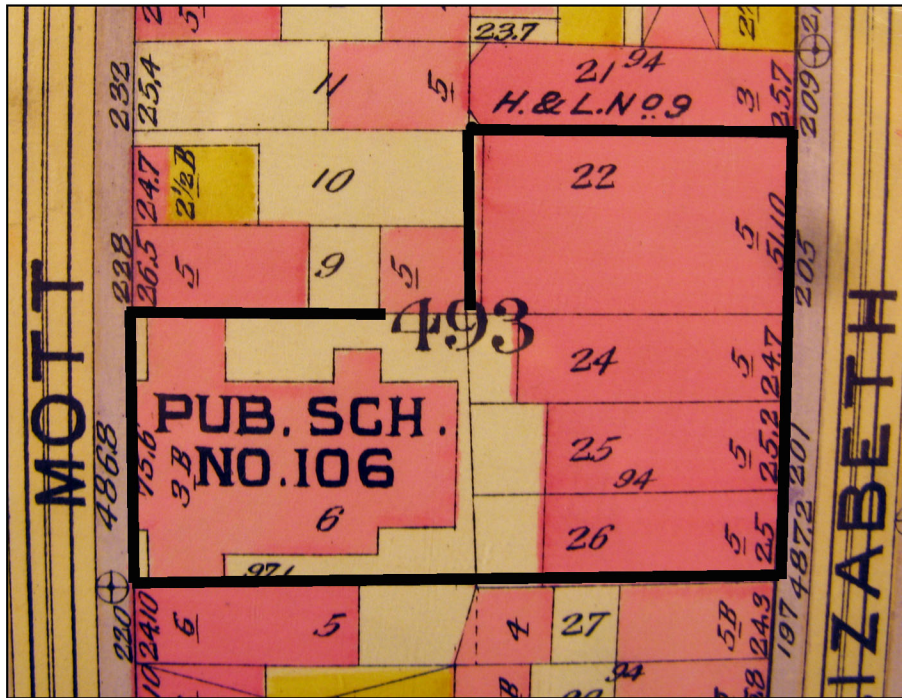


Fig. 5. 1902 Bromley map showing the location of the Project Site

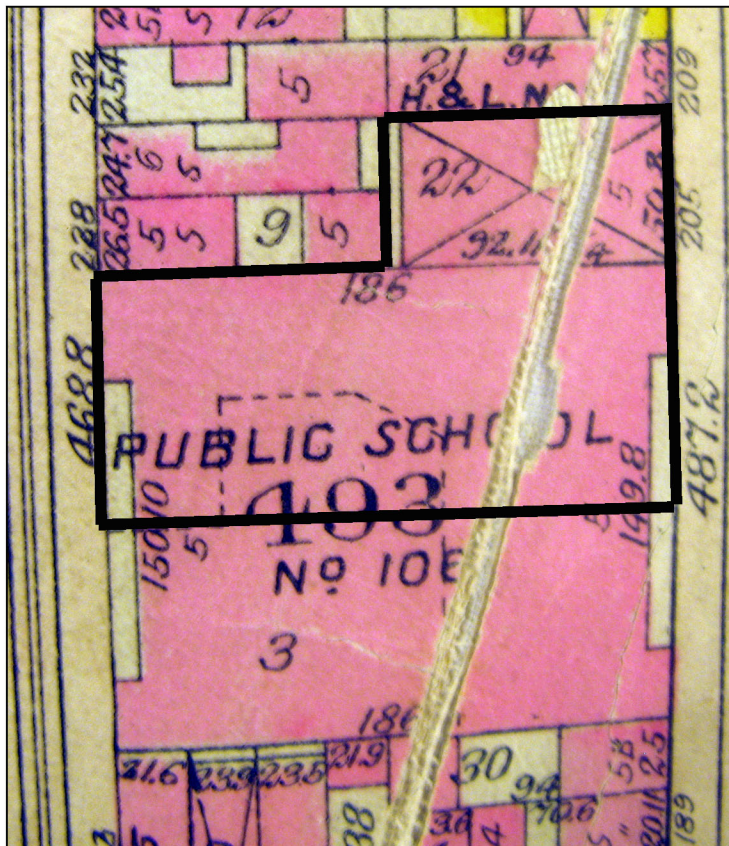


Fig. 6. 1911 Bromley map showing the location of the Project Site