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New York, New York 10004
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TO: Bill Crowell
FROM: William I. Roberts IV, Principal Investigator
RE: McDonald's Empire Blvd. Project
Proposed Archaeological Studies
DATE: June 20, 1990

90-071K

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EMPIRE BOULEVARD - McDONALDS -
BLOCKS 1306A - LOTS 1, 12, 13, 14, 17, 18 AND 19

Introduction

This documentary research study was designed to determine whether any archaeological testing or further documentary research would be recommended for the McDonald's Empire Boulevard project area in Flatbush, Brooklyn, New York. Such testing or further documentary research would be warranted if it could be proven that one or more lots within the project area had been occupied for a minimum of 25 years during the nineteenth century or earlier by one family or one homogenous group of people, or that this location was important in local, regional or national history. This study includes a brief history of Flatbush to place the project area in its local context, and a study of the deeds to determine ownership and therefore provide insights regarding the occupation of these lots through time.

Brief Description of Project Area

The project area is surrounded by a fence and there are no buildings on the immediate boundaries. The entire block is level with the sidewalk and is covered by concrete and asphalt. The block contains patches of foliage on the west end and small trees on the north end. There are two small structures on the site including a small rectangular frame building with a very shallow foundation. The structure appears to be made mostly of wood with stone or concrete at the base. Behind this building is a small metal fence with a set of metal steps in front of it. The surface of the property is fairly level, with only a slight slope at the north end. There are small amounts of lumber and fragments of metal scattered throughout the property. Until recently, the property was used as a parking lot for the car dealer across the street.

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History

In 1800, Brooklyn, one of the six towns of Kings County, had 2,400 people. The remaining towns (including the town of Flatbush) had 3,000 people in total (Ment 1979:25). Brooklyn's population increased throughout the first half of the nineteenth century and was given the status of a city in 1834 (ibid.: 28). The rest of Kings County did not exhibit the population increase and thus remained rural in character. By 1860, Brooklyn had 267,000 people, but in 1865 the combined population of the rest of the County was still under 15,000 (ibid.: 39). The rural towns of Kings County (Flatbush included) had a prosperous agricultural economy which developed in response to population growth in Brooklyn and in New York City (Manhattan).

During the 1880s and 1890s, (Flatbush in 1894), the smaller towns of Kings County were annexed to the city of Brooklyn (ibid.: 62). In 1898, the city of Brooklyn (now all of Kings County) became consolidated with New York as the Borough of Brooklyn (ibid.: 67).

There was some real estate development, circa 1870, but it was not until the 1890s that it began to transform Flatbush from a rural town to a suburban community (Fisher 1901:82). In the late 1860s and early 1870s a real estate developer, A.S. Robbins, whose name is connected with the project area (Dripps' 1878; Robinson's 1890), opened up Lenox Road (south of the project area). He paved it with asphalt, built curbed gutters and constructed sidewalks with shade trees (Fisher 1901:82). By the 1890s better transportation made it possible for more people to move to Flatbush with rapid development following as a direct result (ibid.: 82-87).

The project area lies in the northwest part of old Flatbush. During the nineteenth century the project area was to the immediate east and south of the boundary line separating the city of Brooklyn from the town of Flatbush (Watson's 1876). Today the area is on the boundary of Prospect Heights and the Flatbush section of Brooklyn.

Conveyances In the Nineteenth Century (Block 1306)

LOT #1

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Grantor</u>	<u>Grantee</u>	<u>Liber</u>	<u>Page</u>
February 23, 1839	Gerritt Vandever	L. Cortelyou	80	115
December 17, 1842	Simon Cortelyou	G. Vandever	109	302
June 12, 1852	Cortelyou	John Halsey	284	496
March 4, 1868	J. Halsey	John A. Monsell	804	414
February 23, 1869	Oliver and Mary Ann Monsell	J.A. Monsell	874	118
May 3, 1869	John and Anna Monsell	Lloyd Bowers	894	68
May 11, 1871	Bowers	Arthur Graves	996	435
March 11, 1871	Graves	Anna Monsell	1311	270
May 18, 1878	A. Monsell	A.S. Monsell	1319	45
May 22, 1913	Robbins (Serena, Clarence, Aaron)	Eliery Pollard	3426	369



LOTS #12 and #14 - no nineteenth century information.

LOT# 13

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Grantor</u>	<u>Grantee</u>	<u>Liber</u>	<u>Page</u>
January 9, 1891	A.S. Robbins	Jacob Roth	2022	438
January 12, 1891	Robbins	Edward Eggers	2022	440

LOT# 17

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Grantor</u>	<u>Grantee</u>	<u>Liber</u>	<u>Page</u>
January 12, 1850	Stephen Haynes	James Dougherty	208	346
April 30, 1851	James and Bridgett Dougherty	Rem Hegeman	318	323
Gaps in the records				
March 8, 1870	Walter Anthony	Charles Cooper	937	518
April 30, 1872	Widow of Ch. Cooper	Executor of Ch. Cooper	1047	423

LOT# 17

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Grantor</u>	<u>Grantee</u>	<u>Liber</u>	<u>Page</u>
Gaps in the records				
October 25, 1881	Sara and Andrew Powell	Amanda Ahlquist	1442	135
December 1, 1890	A. Ahlquist	Gustaf Dahlberg	2016	109
July 12, 1899	G. Dahlberg	Peter McNulty		

LOT# 18

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Grantor</u>	<u>Grantee</u>	<u>Liber</u>	<u>Page</u>
January 12, 1850	St. Haynes	James Dougherty	208	346
June 1, 1853	William Allgeo	Rem Hegeman	444	487
November 19, 1855	Hegeman	Frank Brown	410	287
Gaps in the records				
October 15, 1891	A. Ahlquist	Mary Fowler	2072	270



LOT# 19

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Grantor</u>	<u>Grantee</u>	<u>Liber</u>	<u>Page</u>
June 1, 1853	William Allgeo	Rem Hegeman	444	487
Gaps in the records				
March 8, 1870	Walter Anthony	Ch. Cooper	437	518
April 30, 1872	Widow of Ch. Cooper	Executor of Ch. Cooper	1047	423
February 13, 1873	Frances Shannon	A.S. Robbins	1089	344
Gaps in the records				
August 4, 1893	G. Roberts	A. Ahlquist	2194	484
March 27, 1896	Alfred Ahlquist	Hans B. Johnson	4	518
September 28, 1915	Ahlquist	Waldo R. Blackwell	3570	202

The names Robbins, Monsell, Bower and Cortelyou appear frequently on Lot #1 during the second half of the nineteenth century. A.S. Robbins appears on William C. Dripps' Map (1878) and on Robinson's Atlas (1890). Bowers shows up on Dripps' Map (1878). Toward the latter portion of the century, A.S. Robbins is mentioned in connection with Lot #13. The records show that this same individual was also in possession of Lot #19 in 1873. The Ahlquist family seems to have been Grantors and Grantees of Lots # 17, #18 and #19 during the 1890s.

The lots were conveyed from one owner to another during the second half of the nineteenth century. There is no evidence that any one family or individual owned or lived on any of the parcels for any extended period. There is no evidence that A.S. Robbins, whose name is connected with the project area over a long period of time, had ever built anything on his property. Robinson's Atlas (1890), the only record of structures and property names, does not show any buildings on A.S. Robbins land. Robbins, as noted above, was a real estate developer and was most likely purchasing property for business purposes.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The documentary research conducted on the McDonald's Empire Boulevard project area has proven that there is no possibility that the various lots that make up Block 1306A could have been occupied for 25 years or longer prior to the twentieth century. The evidence from the deeds and maps indicate that this location was held as large lots by real estate developers including the Robbins and Ahlquist families until subdivision during the 1890s. No evidence was found that indicates any buildings were constructed within the project area prior to the subdivision. We can now conclude that continuous occupation of any of these lots by one family or a particular group of people prior to 1900 could only be possible for a maximum of ten years. It is our recommendation that no archaeological testing or further documentary research is necessary for the McDonald's Empire Boulevard project area.



Bibliography

- Fisher, Edmund D.
 1901 Flatbush Past and Present. Flatbush Trust Company: Brooklyn, New York.
- Ment, David
 1979 The Shaping of a City: A Brief History of Brooklyn. Brooklyn Educational and Cultural Alliance: Brooklyn, New York.

Maps and Atlases

- Dripps, William C.
 1878 Atlas of the Townships of New Utrecht, Gravesend, Flatbush, Flatlands, and New Lots, Kings County, New York. William C. Dripps.
- Hyde, E. Belcher
 1898 Part of Ward 29, Brooklyn Borough, New York City. Volume 2, Plate #8, E. Belcher Hyde.
- 1929 Brooklyn Borough, New York City. Sections 1-7, Volume I, E. Belcher Hyde.
- Ment, David
 1979 The Shaping of a City: A Brief History of Brooklyn. Brooklyn Educational and Cultural Alliance: Brooklyn, New York, (Map originally from Joshua Brown).
- Robinson, E.
 1890 Robinson's Atlas of Kings County, New York. Plate #1, E. Robinson.
- 1898 Atlas of the 29-32 Wards, Borough of Brooklyn. E. Robinson.
- Watson, Gaylord
 1876 Watson's New Map of New York and Adjacent Cities. Gaylord Watson.

Others Sources

- Index to Deeds - Block 1306A
- Brooklyn Historical Land Conveyances (1306)
- New York State Census - 1880 and 1892 (Flatbush)
- Directories (Lain and Healy) - City of Brooklyn

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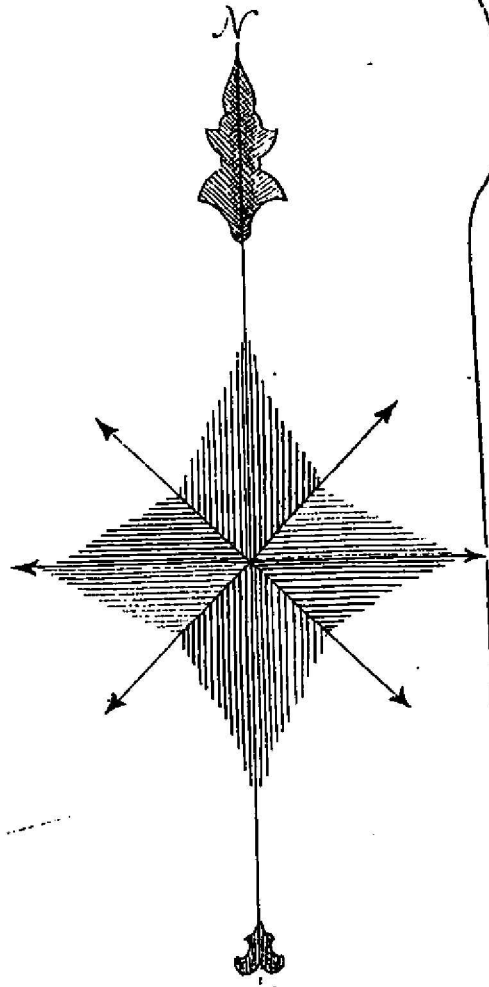
Places Visited

Brooklyn Borough Hall
Block and Lot Room
Topographical Bureau
Census Department

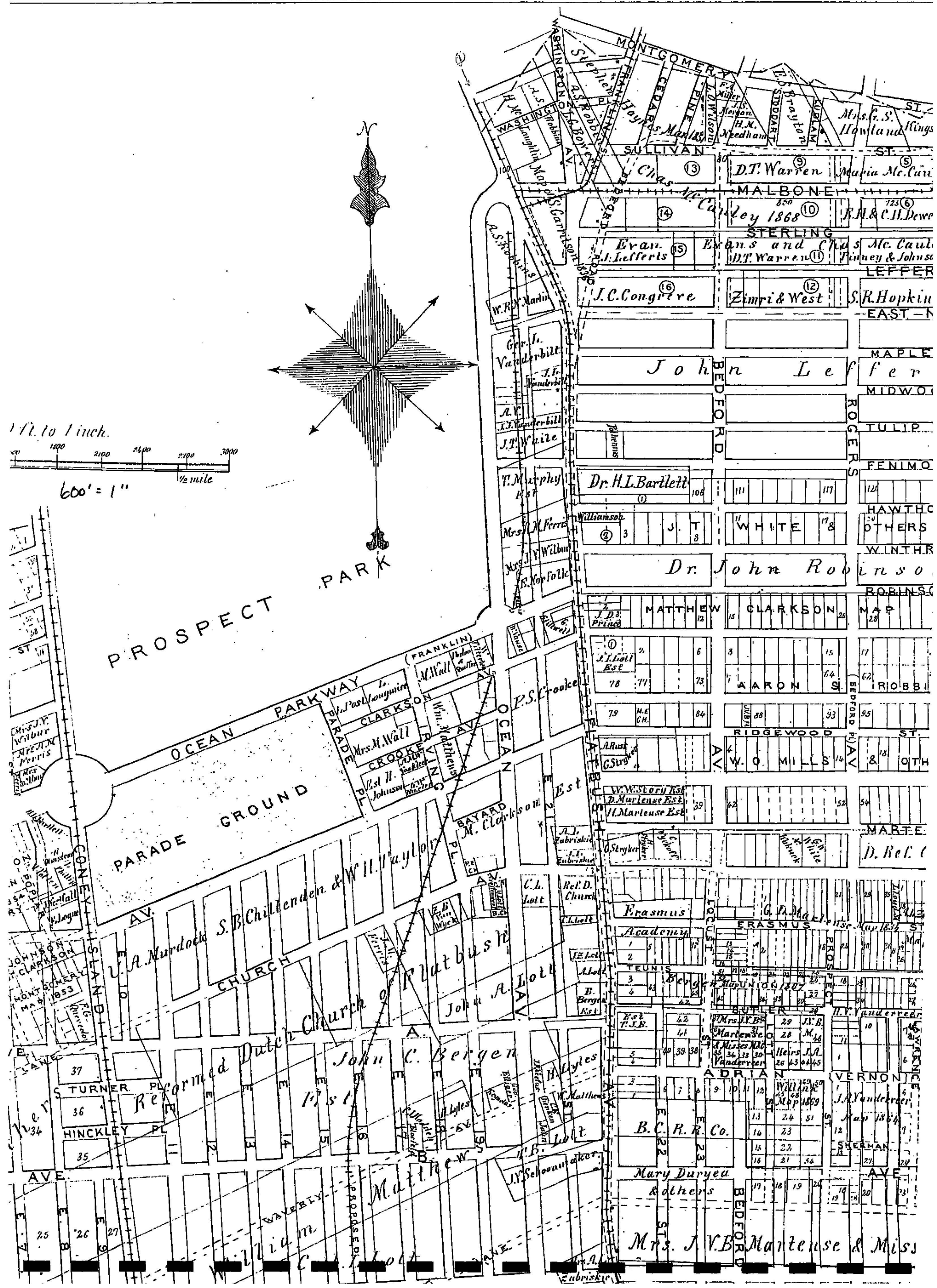
New York Public Library
Map Division

Brooklyn Historical Society

ATLAS OF THE TOWNSHIPS OF
 NEW UTRECHT, GRAVESEND, FLATBUSH,
 FLATLANDS AND NEW LOTS, KINGS COUNTY, N.Y.
 WILLIAM C. DRIPPS, PUBLISHER (1878)



1 ft. to 1 inch.
 1000 2000 3000 4000 5000
 600' = 1" 1/2 mile





TO: Dr. Sherene Baugher
 New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission

FROM: William I. Roberts IV
 Principal Investigator

DATE: 9 July 1990

RE: McDonald's Empire Boulevard Project
 Flatbush, Brooklyn, New York
 Addendum to Documentary Research Report

McDONALD'S EMPIRE BOULEVARD PROJECT

During June 1990 Greenhouse Consultants prepared a background research report on the McDonald's Empire Boulevard Project in Flatbush, Brooklyn, New York. This report covered the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission raised a question regarding possible eighteenth century use of the project area. This addendum is an attempt to answer that question.

Additional research was conducted at both the Brooklyn Topographical Bureau and the Brooklyn Historical Society. The former institution does not possess any maps of this section of Flatbush from the eighteenth century. The Historical Society was able to provide several maps, including the project area, made during the eighteenth century. Descriptions of these maps are presented below.

Wheeler's map (1776) shows the western part of the town of Flatbush and the town of Brooklyn. Natural features and roads are indicated on the map. The project area lies midway between the area designated "Bedford" and the section marked "Flatbush", within the northwest corner of the Town of Flatbush. This map shows a moderately wooded area. No roads or structures are indicated within the project area on Wheeler's map (1776).

The map of Reinhard Jacob Martin (1776) depicts Revolutionary War activity in the vicinity of the project area. The project area is situated between "Chemin de Bettford" (Bedford Road) and "Chemin de Flatbush" (Flatbush Road). The area is depicted as moderately forested. There was some military activity near the project area and the quarters of General Howe were shown to the northeast.

George Colbert's map of the Battle of Long Island (1776) reaffirms the presence of Revolutionary War activity in the vicinity of the project area. Military action is shown to the south of the location noted as "Bedford" where General Sullivan's troops are indicated to the east and northwest of the project area. Sullivan Place appears in later maps of the project area.

The Ewing map of Brooklyn, Long Island (1776) is a rough sketch of the military engagements in Brooklyn. The roads leading from Brooklyn to Flatbush are indicated, but the diagram is too vague to identify the



The map of Jeremiah Lott (1797) is another sketch. It show a much larger overview including the County of Kings. This diagram indicates a few select natural and people-made features, but nothing appears on the project area. The project area is to the north of Flatbush Road which runs from the Town of Brooklyn to the west. It is intersected by a north-south road at "Erasmus Hall" and the building designated as "Court House".

The evidence from the above maps leads to the conclusion that the project area was moderately wooded, remote from any marshes and/or bodies of water, and within the sphere of Revolutionary War activity. None of the maps show any structures on the project area during this time, though General Howe's quarters were not far to the north east. At least two roads were nearby, but did not cross the project parcel.

It is our conclusion that the McDonald's Empire Boulevard Project Area did not include any roads or structures during the latter portion of the eighteenth century. During the Revolutionary War military activities took place nearby, but no evidence was found to suggest that the project area served as a fortification or campsite. The only use of this location suggested by the cartographic evidence is as a woodlot. We recommend that no further documentary research or archaeological testing is necessary.



MAP BIBLIOGRAPHY

Colbert, George
1979 The Battle of Long Island. Williamsburg Savings Bank:Brooklyn,
New York.

Ewing, J.
1776 Brooklyn Long Island, 1776. J. Ewing.

Lott, Jeremiah
1797 A Map of the Town of Flatbush. Jeremiah Lott, Copy produced in
1902, Albany New York.

Martin, Reinhard Jacob
1776 Atlas Des Environs de Brookland et de Bettford. William
Clements Library:Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Wheeler, Thomas
1776 A Plan of That Part of Long Island Which Lyes Between Flatbush
and Brookland Ferry. Thomas Wheeler.

Note: All of the above maps are on file at the Brooklyn Historical
Society.