MEMORANDUM

TO: Stephen D. McCarthy
Forest City-Metrotech Associates

FROM: William I. Roberts IV, Principal Investigator

DATE: 17 July 1989

SUBJECT: Metrotech, Brooklyn
Summary of Research on 184-188 Duffield Street, Present Lot 38, Block 2058.

Background research was conducted on the lot to the north of Saint Boniface's Roman Catholic Church, presently designated Lot 38 on Block 2058. Deed records were consulted at the Brooklyn Borough President's Office and a chain of title established for 1847 through 1922. Since the block and lot references within Brooklyn are not consistent for this time period, we cannot at this time state whether these deed references apply to all three of the former lots that now make up this parcel or possibly one or two of them.

Chain of Title for Lot 38 in Block 2058

1847       Finch to Swalm
1854       Swalm to McGee
1867       McGee to Gutman
1879       Gutman to Sterling
1890       Sterling to Davison
1922       Davison to Davison

The earliest reference is to the Finch family. It appears likely that they were responsible for the construction of the structure(s).

Maps and plans were consulted at the Brooklyn Historical Society. The earliest map we have found to date illustrating these lots and their structures is the Perris Atlas of 1855. This map predates the construction of St. Boniface's Church, but clearly shows three lots along the west side of Duffield Street in the same relative position as the later maps examined. The street numbers are 128 – 132 Duffield in 1855. By 1886 they have changed to 184-188 Duffield, as shown on the Robinson Atlas of 1886. The Perris Atlas shows one building on each of the three lots. The buildings in the northern end and central lots cover at least
half of the available area and are set back approximately 10 feet from
the street. Both are marked as frame structures. The southern lot
contains a building covering just under half of the lot. It is also set
back about 10 feet from Duffield Street and is labelled brick or stone
with a first class slate or metal roof. There is no information on the
number of floors. The Robinson atlas shows the three lots with one
structure on each just to the north of St. Boniface Roman Catholic
Church. The southernmost (#188 Duffield) has a structure covering about
40 percent of the lot set back about ten feet from Duffield Street. The
central and northern lots (#184 and #186 Duffield) each contain a single
structure covering about fifty percent of the lot also set back
approximately ten feet from the street. The 1904 Belcher and Hyde atlas
shows one structure on each of the three lots to the north of St.
Boniface's Church. These appear to be the same three buildings. The
southernmost is labelled "Brick and Frame" and the other two "Frame".
The 1941 Hogan and Platzker plan show the same three lots. The
southernmost is labelled "Brick and Frame, 3 floors" and the other two
"Frame, 4 floors, 4 apts". It is our interpretation that this implies
that the northern two structures were tenements with one apartment per
floor, and would have been occupied by more than one family at any given
time. Unfortunately, no similar information exists in these sources for
the southernmost lot immediately to the north of the church. It is
evidence from an examination of these four nineteenth and twentieth
century maps that the same three buildings are consistently depicted.
They were not expanded or replaced during this period (1855-1941).

Additional information regarding 188 Duffield Street was obtained from
New York State census records published in 1905 and evidently collected
during 1901. At that time the building was occupied by 18 persons.
These included the Lamb, Moran, Morell, Rooney and Valley families, each
with three members as well as three lodgers (Matilda Clark, George
Mitchell and Patrick Monahan). The occupations of these people included
housekeepers, truck driver, dry goods salesman, tailors, railroad
switchman, waiter, waitress, bottler and day laborer. Both the large
number of families involved and their types of occupations indicate a
tenement or boarding house occupied by working class residents.

It is our conclusion that all three of these lots that now make up the
Duffield Street parcel were multiple apartment tenements and therefore
occupied by more than one family at any given time. Even if the owners
lived in one of the apartments, any features found in the yards could not
be attributed to any specific family. This conclusion is based on
twentieth century descriptions of the number of apartments or families
per structure, and a comparison of the nineteenth and twentieth century
cartographer sources which do not indicate any structural changes from
1855 through 1941. Therefore, we recommend that subsurface testing will
not be necessary in these lots.
Figure 1: Taken from Perris' 1855 Maps of the City of Brooklyn, Vol. 1.
1 inch = 75 feet.
Figure 2: Taken from Robinson's 1886 Atlas of the City of Brooklyn, New York, Plate 2. Approximate Scale 1 inch = 120 feet.
Figure 3: Taken from the Sanborn Map Company's 1887 *Brooklyn, New York*, Vol. 2, Sheet 42. 1 inch = 60 feet.
Figure 4: Taken from the Sanborn Map Company's 1904 Borough of Brooklyn, City of New York, Vol. 2, Sheet 28. 1 inch = 75 feet.
Figure 5: Taken from Hogan and Platzker's 1941 plan, part of the Downtown Brooklyn Neighborhood Study by the Mayor's Committee for Property Improvement. Not to Scale.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

---
1905 New York State Census, Albany, N.Y.
   On file at Borough Hall, Brooklyn, N.Y.

---

n.d. Various Deeds
   On file at Borough Hall, Brooklyn, N.Y.

Stiles, Henry Reed
1884 History of Kings County Including Brooklyn, N.Y.,
   Volumes I & II, Munsell, New York, N.Y.

Maps and Atlases:

Hogan, Bernard and Joseph Platzker
1941 Downtown Brooklyn Neighborhood Study by the Mayor's
   Committee on Property Improvement, New York, N.Y.

Hyde, E. Belcher
1904 Atlas of the Borough of Brooklyn, City of New York,
   Vol. 2, Brooklyn, N.Y.

Perris, William
1855 Maps of the City of Brooklyn, Vol. 1,
   J. H. Higginson, New York, N.Y.

Robinson, E.
1886 Atlas of the City of Brooklyn, N.Y.,
   New York, N.Y.

Sanborn Map Company
1887 Brooklyn, N.Y., Vol. 2, Pelham, N.Y.

1904 Brooklyn, N.Y., Vol. 2, Pelham, N.Y.