



RICHARD GRUBB & ASSOCIATES
Historic Architecture • Archaeology • Historical Research

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December 13, 2024

Robert F. Panepinto
Senior Cultural Resources Specialist
Environmental, Health & Safety
New York Power Authority
123 Main Street-5E
White Plains, NY 10601

Re: Letter Report, Unanticipated Discovery, 1763 86th Street, Brooklyn Borough, Kings County, New York (PO Number: 4500371572)

Dear Mr. Panepinto:

Richard Grubb & Associates, Inc. (RGA) is pleased to submit this letter to document an unanticipated discovery located at 1763 86th Street in Brooklyn Borough, Kings County, New York (Figure 1). The project involves the installation of Electric Vehicle (EV) infrastructure facilities on the property of the New Utrecht Branch of the Brooklyn Public Library. RGA understands that during excavation for installing EV chargers the contractor uncovered brick foundation wall remains and terra cotta pipe. It was assumed that these remains belong to the former public school (PS #101) that was located on the property. We understand that the unanticipated discovery took place on or before November 26, 2024.

Consultation with the New York Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) and New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) was initiated by the New York Power Authority (NYPA) on November 26, 2024. The construction work around the discovery was halted until documentation took place. We understand that the project requires no federal funding or permitting and that it does not officially fall under the review authority of the OPRHP. However, consultation with Timothy Lloyd of OPRHP and Amanda Sutphin of the LPC determined that some level of documentation of the unanticipated discovery should be completed. The documentation was performed as requested by the OPRHP and LPC (in emails dated November 26, 2024). This work was completed in general accordance with the Standards for Cultural Resource Investigations by the New York Archaeological Council (1994). This work was performed under the direction of a 36 CFR 61 qualified archaeologist.

This letter was prepared by Paul J. McEachen, MA, RPA and archaeologist Edward McFadden.

Background Research

A search of NY CRIS indicates that no prior archaeological surveys have been carried out on the property. Also, no resources listed or eligible for listing in the National and State Registers of Historic Places fall on the property. The eligibility of the New Utrecht Branch-Brooklyn Public Library (Resource 04701.017372) is undetermined. No New York City Landmarks fall in the project area.

A review of the archaeological site files on CRIS indicates that no registered sites fall in or within 500 feet of the project area.

Public School (PS) #101 was depicted on the 1889 E. Robinson map of New Utrecht (Robinson 1889) and occupied the project area into the 1950s (NETR 1954). A ca. 1954 historic aerial photograph suggests that the school may have been in the process of being dismantled by the mid-1950s. Upon the removal of the school, the New Utrecht Branch of the Brooklyn Public Library was built on the project area by at least 1966 (NETR 1966). Existing documentation of the school includes several historic photographs.

Archaeological Documentation, December 2, 2024

On Monday, December 2, 2024, archaeologists Olivier Vansassenbrouck, MA, MSc., RPA and Edward McFadden were on site to complete archaeological documentation (Figure 2; Plates 1 to 7). The goal of this work was to document the unanticipated finds in a roughly 65-foot by 3-foot trench that was excavated within a parking lot to the southeast of the New Utrecht Branch of the Brooklyn Public Library. GPS points were taken of the trench corners and extent of the brick wall with a Trimble unit (Figure 3). The trench was oriented roughly north/south and had three metal pipes and a brick footing in the first 19-foot section that was documented. The three pipes ran east-west in the trench and nearly stretched from trench wall to trench wall. Some of the metal pipes appear to have been partially displaced. Rubble that caved in from the excavation of the area made it difficult to see the pipes in full. The pipes were surrounded by brick and concrete within the trench walls. No historic or otherwise cultural material besides modern paper and plastics were observed within the trench. A brick footing was documented about 6 feet from the end of the last metal pipe. This brick footing ran east-west along the floor of the trench and took a sharp turn upwards in both walls creating a clear break from what on the inside of this section to the rest of the trench to the south. There was another metal pipe directly against the brick footing that ran parallel with the wall along the excavation floor. An approximately 14-foot section with of the west wall of the trench contained an intact brick wall. The trench extended to a depth of 4-feet below grade. A sketch plan was drawn as well as a profile drawing of the brick wall. Documentation also included digital photography. Field notes are on file at RGA in Cranbury, New Jersey. Rough archaeological sketches are provided.

The brick wall was located within the western trench wall directly below the asphalt laid for the existing parking lot. The brick portion of the wall was a little over two feet at its deepest point and was abutted by concrete directly below it. The concrete underlying the brick wall was just under a foot thick. The brick portion was not a perfectly square section and had sharp, clear boundaries. At least six courses of brick was documented. Disturbance was observed south of the brick wall. Soil was observed beneath the asphalt in locations where the brick wall had been removed. The soil consisted of a brown (10YR 4/3) sandy to silt loam that was mixed with cobbles and rubble. Some cobbles of various sizes were observed. A brick wall traversed the trench (perpendicular) and could represent the remnants of a former partition wall. The brick wall extends beyond the trench for an unknown distance further east toward the library.

It is possible that the brick represents the remnants of an exterior wall to PS #101. Based on an examination of historic photographs of PS #101, the section of wall exposed during construction may be near the base of the school building, perhaps just above or associated with the foundation. A review of historic aerials suggests that the brick wall could represent the lower portion of the eastern façade of the school. If that were the case,

the existing grade may be slightly higher than when the school was in operation. The exposed sewer or water lines likely connected the school to existing utilities infrastructure. The utility lines are certainly not recent.

No pre-Contact or historic artifacts were present. Recent wrappers and debris were noted in the construction trench, and their origin may have been from offsite. No cultural material was retained. No significant deposits were observed or documented.

A review of project plans indicates that further excavation will be necessary to extend the EV charging facilities to the library (Stantec 2024). Excavations are anticipated to uncover additional remains related to the school. However, photographic recordation of the school exists, and it is unlikely that significant archaeological resources will be uncovered as part of the additional excavations between the existing trench and library.

Recommendations

Archaeological documentation was performed on behalf of NYPA as part of due diligence to study an unanticipated discovery. This documentation included recordation of a brick wall associated with PS #101 which lay on the parcel until at least the 1950s. Utility lines were also documented. While building remains associated with PS #101 could indeed be present in subsequent trench excavation for the EV facilities, it appears unlikely that archaeologically significant resources will be identified. As such, RGA recommends that construction resume and that no further consideration of archaeological resources is warranted. No further documentation is recommended.

Please contact me 609-655-0692 ext. 1309 or pjmceachen@rgaincorporated.com if you have any questions.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Paul J. McEachen". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'P' and 'M'.

Paul J. McEachen, MA, RPA
Director/Principal Senior Archaeologist

Encl.

PJM:em

References

Nationwide Environmental Title Research (NETR)

1954 Historic Aerial Photographs. Electronic Document, <http://www.historicaerials.com/>, accessed December 2024.

1966 Historic Aerial Photographs. Electronic Document, <http://www.historicaerials.com/>, accessed December 2024.

New York Archaeological Council

1994 *Standards for Cultural Resources Investigations and the Curation of Archaeological Collections in New York State*. On file, New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation, Waterford, New York.

Robinson, E.

1889 Atlas Map of Part of the Town of New Utrecht, Kings County, New York. E. Robinson, New York, New York.

Stantec

2024 Sheet No. C-2, Civil Demolition Plan. On file, New York Department of Transportation, New York, New York.

United States Geological Survey (USGS)

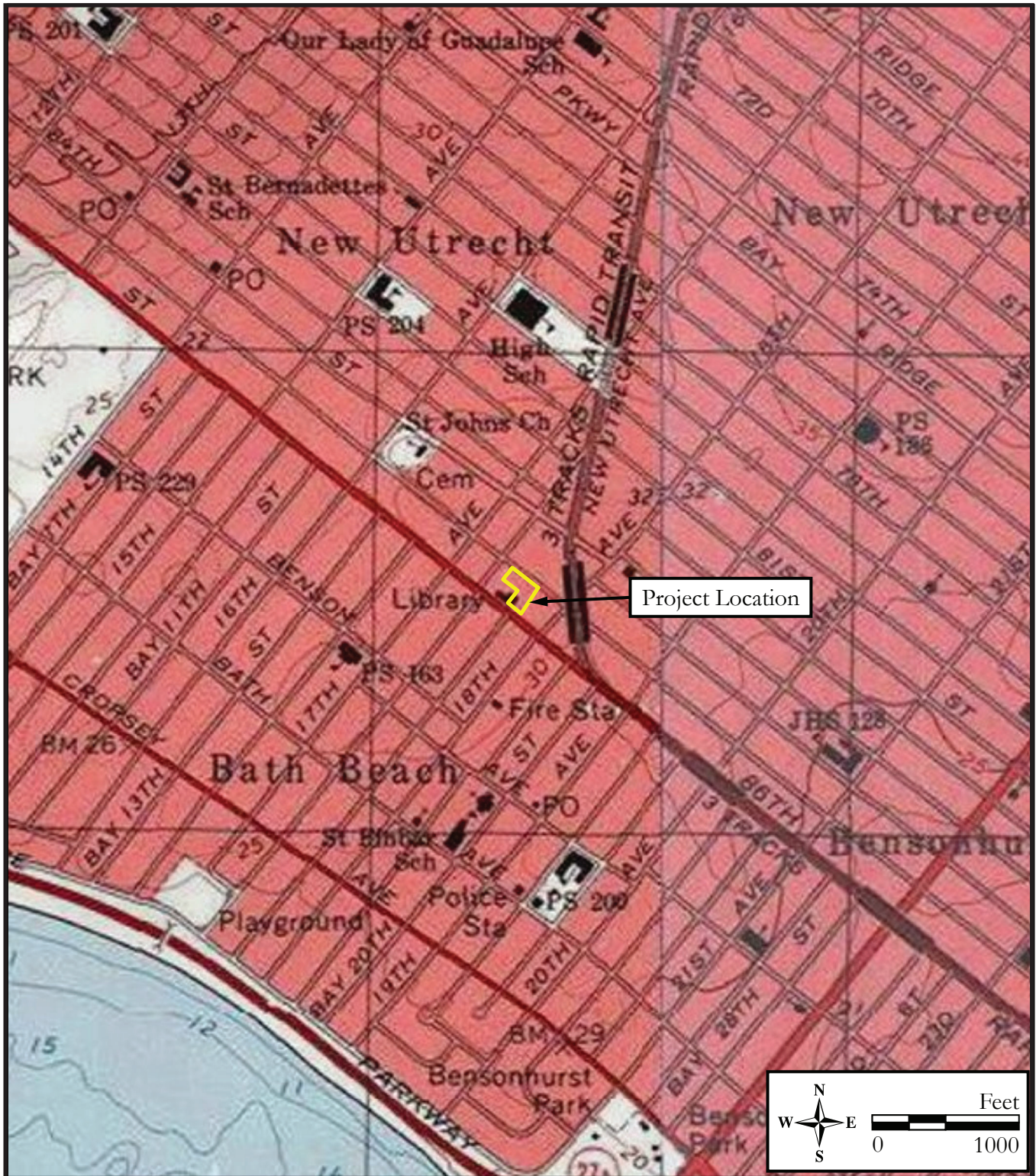
1995 USGS 7.5' Quadrangle: Coney Island, NY.

1995 USGS 7.5' Quadrangle: The Narrows, NY.

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Figures and Photo Plates

In Field Plan and Profile Drawings



Project Location Map
(from 1995 U.S.G.S. 7.5' Quadrangles: The Narrows, NY and Coney Island, NY).

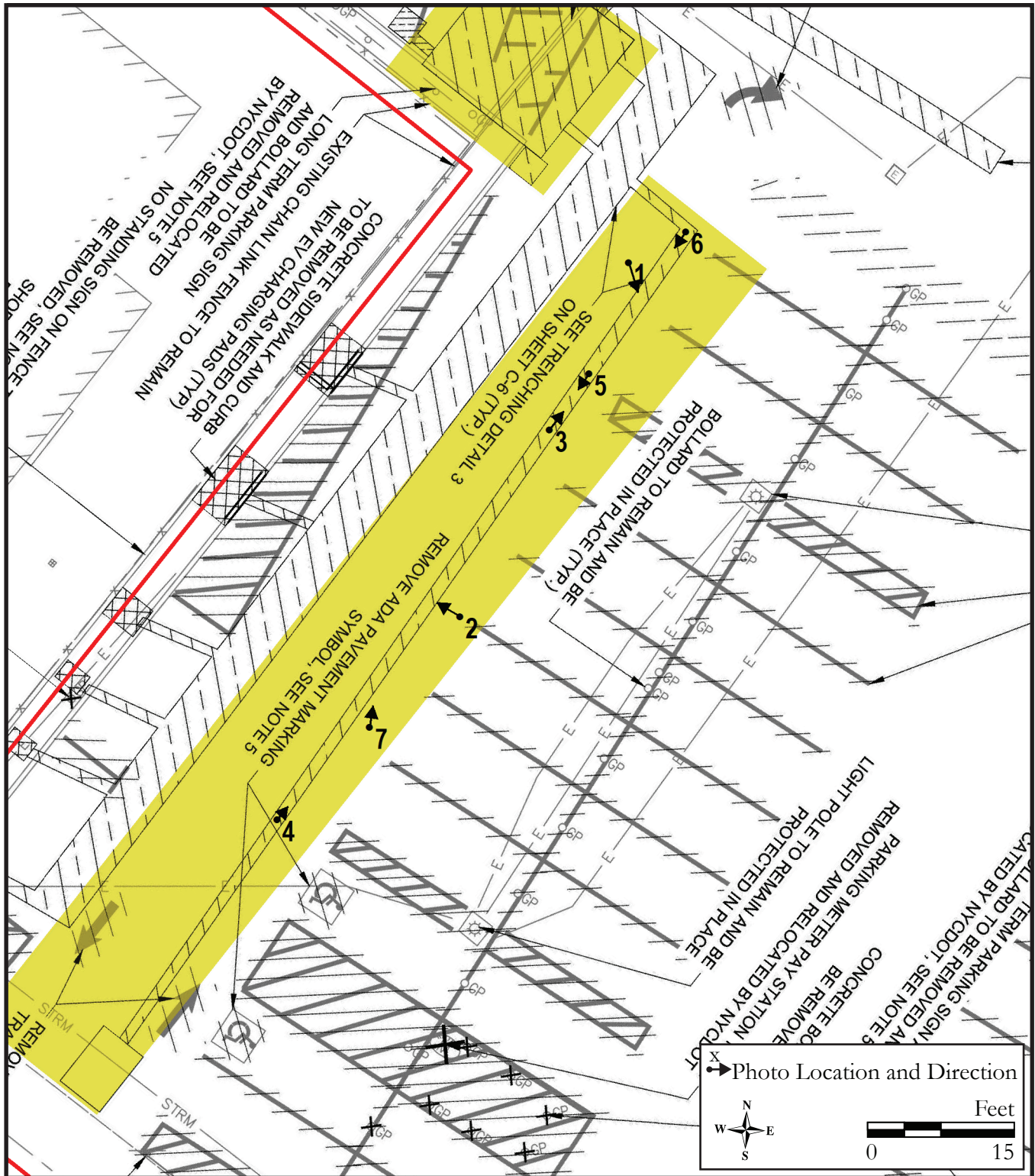


Figure 2: Construction Plan showing photograph locations.

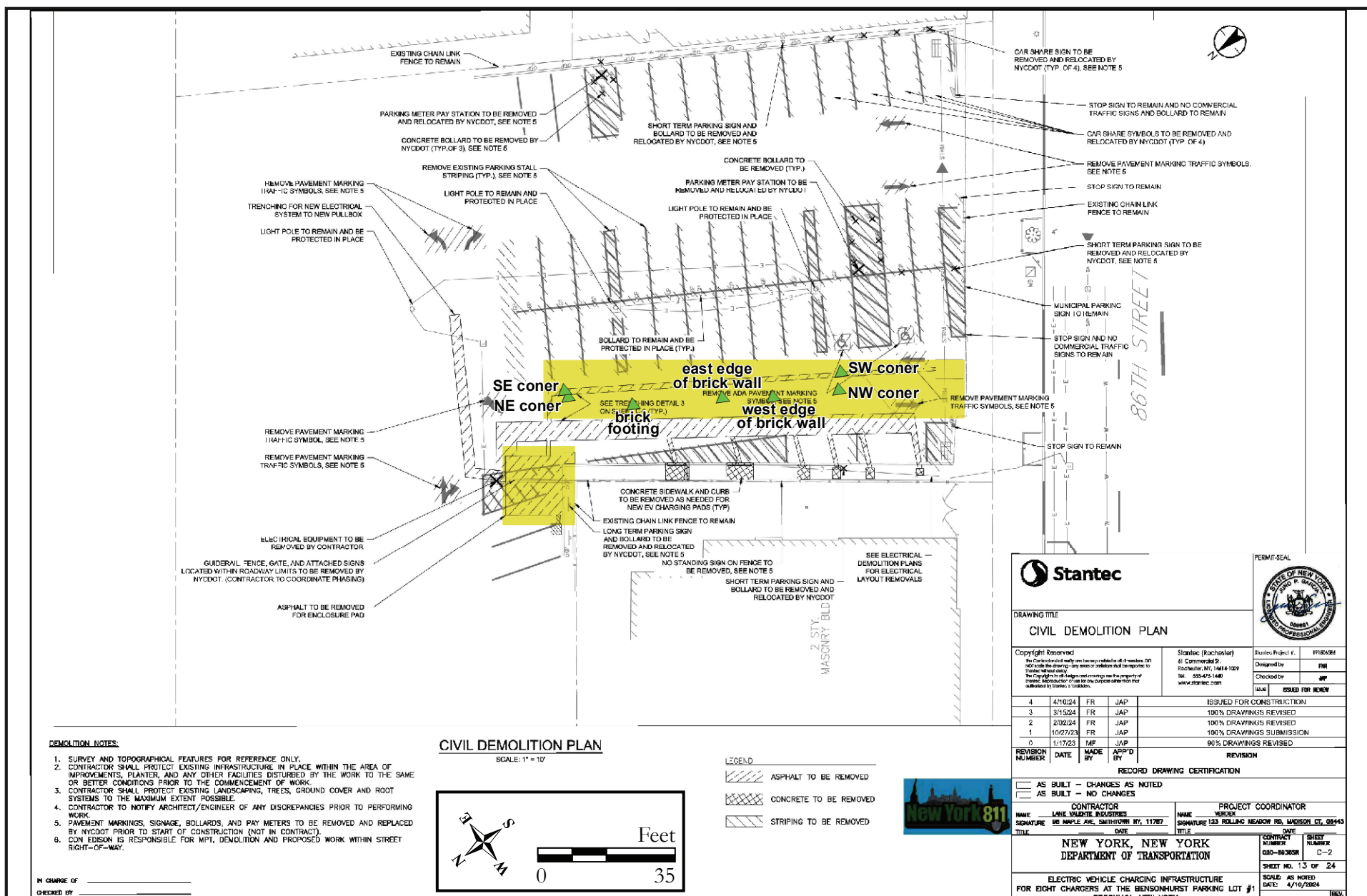


Figure ' : Construction Plan showing the GPS Points



Plate 1: North edge of trench, closeup of three pipes within the rubble.

Photo view: East; Photographer: Edward McFadden; Date: December 2, 2024



Plate 2: Profile view of intact brick wall section in the western trench wall.

Photo view: West; Photographer: Edward McFadden; Date: December 2, 2024



Plate 3: Brick footing with pipes in background.

Photo view: North; Photographer: Edward McFadden; Date: December 2, 2024

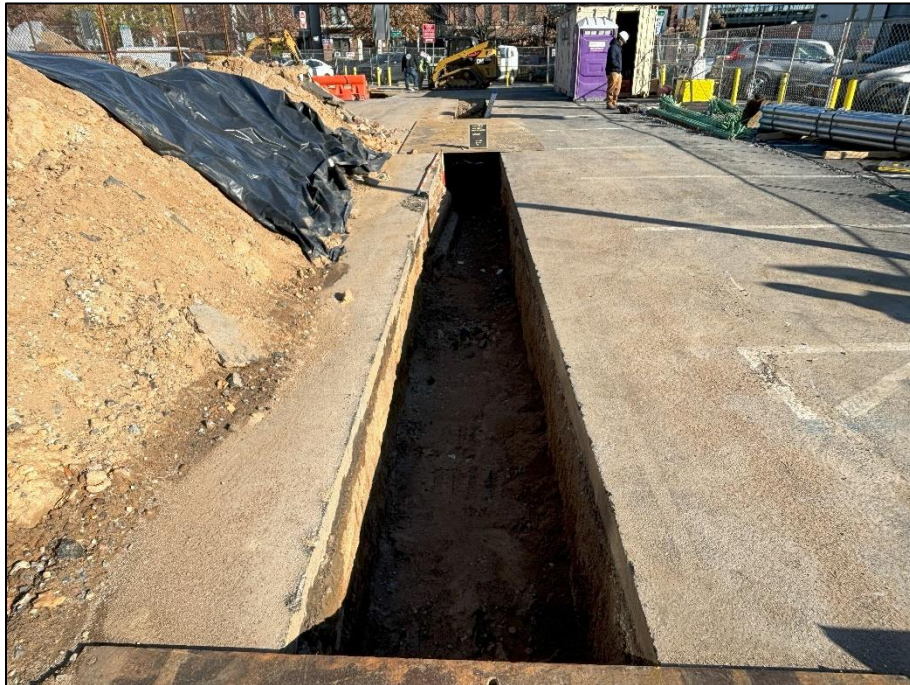


Plate 4: Full trench plan view/ overview of area.

Photo view: North; Photographer: Edward McFadden; Date: December 2, 2024



Plate 5: Close up of brick footing and pipe.

Photo view: South; Photographer: Edward McFadden; Date: December 2, 2024

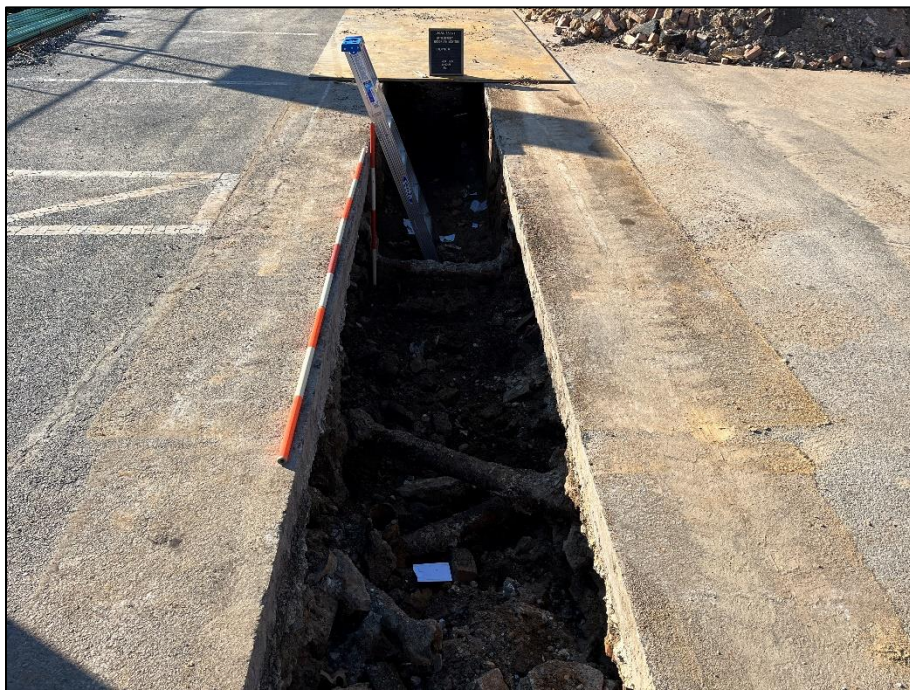


Plate 6: Trench overview.

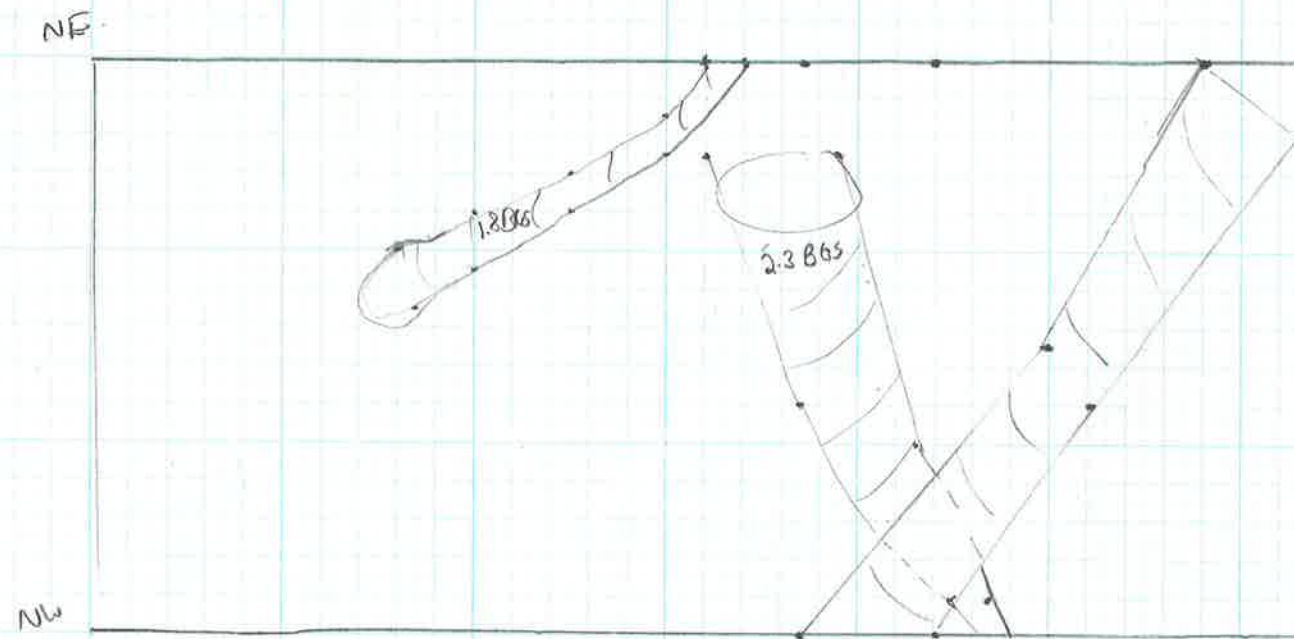
Photo view: South; Photographer: Edward McFadden; Date: December 2, 2024






Plate 7: Side view of brick wall showing whole profile and floor.

Photo view: North-northwest; Photographer: Edward McFadden; Date: December 2, 2024

Pipe / Brick Footing
of Trench



Key:

-  = Brick footing
-  = metal pipe
-  = Section pipes overlap

2024-358NY
86th Street
Brooklyn Monitor
12/2/24

1=1

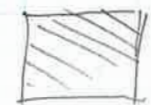
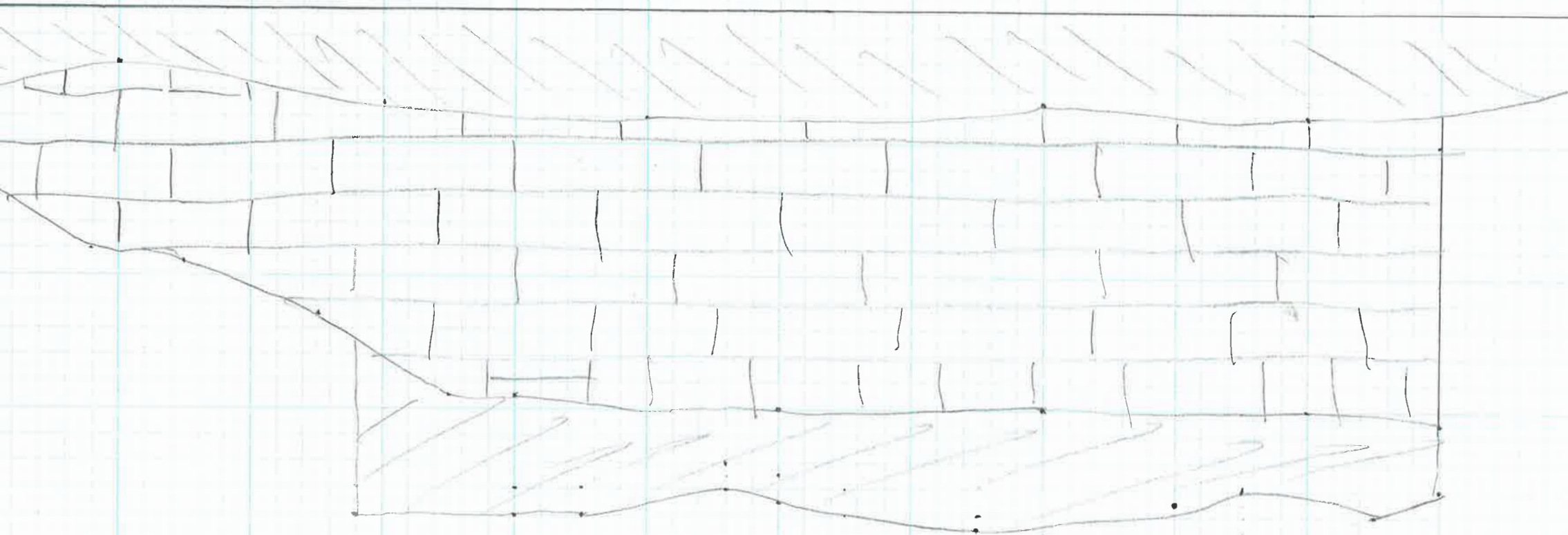
12

SE

2.7' BGS
at top

2024-358NY
86th Street
Brooklyn Monitoring
12/2/24
3.9 BGS
Trench Profile

1=1



ASPHALT



BRICK



CEMENT

