

**STAGE IA ARCHAEOLOGICAL DOCUMENTARY STUDY
FLATLANDS RETAIL CENTER
BLOCK 8152, LOTS 300 AND 301
BOROUGH OF BROOKLYN
CEQR #99-DME-005K**

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. Background

This report presents the results of a Stage IA archaeological documentary study of the site of the proposed Flatlands Retail Center (CEQR #99-DME-005K). Its objective is to document the history and prehistory of the site and assess its potential for containing significant archaeological remains.

The project site is located in the northeast portion of the Canarsie section of the Borough of Brooklyn. It consists of approximately 80000 square feet now designated as Block 8152, Lots 300 and 301. The site's southern boundary extends along Farragut Road for some 325 feet west of East 105th Street and its eastern boundary runs north along East 105th Street for approximately 320 feet from Farragut Road to the MTA right of way. Its northern boundary extends approximately 355 feet along the right of way. On the west the site boundary runs for some 170 feet along the line of property now occupied by a community center operated by the New York City Department of Social Services.

It should be noted that prior to the 1960's the block and lot designations for the land within the project site were different that at present, as shown on the various maps included in this report as Figures 13-18. At that time East 104th Street extended north of Farragut Road to the MTA right of way and its former location is now within the project site. The portion of the site east of 104th Street was then designated as the southern portion of Block 8154. The portion of the site west of East 104th Street comprised Lots 1 and 18 on Block 8153.

The project site now consists of a vacant lot approximately at the grade of the bordering streets and approximately three feet above the grade of the MTA tracks. The northern and western boundaries of the site are marked by a chain link fence. The eastern and southern boundaries adjacent to East 105th Street and Farragut Road are not fenced. The northwestern portion of the lot is a hummocky area covered with weeds. This surface vegetation has been scraped off the remainder of the property and deposited in several piles. The surface soil includes imbedded rocks, concrete and other debris (see Plates 1-5).

B. Prior Archaeological Studies

During the course of research for this project, we examined the files of the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission to identify previous archaeological studies in the vicinity of the project site. The author has conducted one such survey, which was limited to an evaluation of prehistoric archaeological resources, for a 13 square block area located approximately 2400-3800 feet northeast of the project site (Pickman 1995). The study area was bounded by Linden Boulevard; and New Lots, Pennsylvania and Van

Sinderen Avenues. The study concluded that this area had a low to moderate sensitivity for the presence of prehistoric Native American sites.

There have been no other archaeological studies conducted in this portion of Brooklyn within the past 10 years and only a few earlier studies. The closest study area to the present project site consisted of Block 3871; bounded by Linden Boulevard, Van Sinderen Avenue, DeWitt Avenue, Avenue D, and the Long Island Railroad tracks, some 2000 feet north of the project site (Bankoff et al. 1988). Geismar (1988) conducted a study of property on the north side of Linden Boulevard between Sheffield and Pennsylvania Avenues, approximately 3200 feet northeast of the project site. This property is also located within the boundaries of the 13 block study area noted above (Pickman 1995). However, the Geismar study also included an assessment of historic period archaeological resources. The two 1988 reports concluded that neither of the subject properties was sensitive for the presence of possibly significant archaeological sites.

Geismar (1987) also conducted a study of a portion of the old Canarsie cemetery, located at East 91st Street south of Avenue J, some 4000 feet southwest of the project site. This study was primarily concerned with the historic period utilization of this property.

II. DOCUMENTARY RESEARCH - NATIVE AMERICAN SITES

A. Study Area Environment

Twentieth century land modifications, discussed further below, have obscured the original environmental setting of the study area. However, by reference to a series of maps dating from the 18th through the late 19th century (see Figures 6-12), it can be seen that it was situated in the vicinity of Fresh Creek, one of the tidal creeks which bordered the shoreline of Jamaica Bay, and its adjacent tidal marshes.

Maps dating to the late 19th century (see Figures 11 and 12) show these physiographic features in relationship to the street grid, which enables the study area to be located with regard to Fresh Creek and the associated marsh area.

This tidal creek extended northward from the shore of Jamaica Bay to the vicinity of the present location of Farragut Road (previously named Avenue F) and Williams Avenue. This portion of the Creek was bordered by an area of tidal marsh which extended somewhat north of Avenue F, to what was then known as Avenue E (now Foster Avenue). The creek and marsh area at this location was approximately 1250-1500 feet east of the project site. At this point the creek curved toward the northwest, crossing the present location of Avenue D between East 105th and East 106th Streets, approximately 1500 feet north of the project site. It would appear from the maps that a fresh water stream may have joined the tidal creek near this location with the head of this stream further to the northwest.

As shown on some of the maps (see Figures 6, 8, 10, 12), a smaller creek flowed into Fresh Creek near its mouth. This tidal creek is labeled "Lotts Creek" on the 1852 map (Figure 8). A "neck" of drier land apparently extended southward between the marsh areas adjacent to these two creeks.

Street grades shown on maps dating to the end of the 19th century and early 20th century provide an indication of the study area topography prior to the subsequent land filling, which is discussed further in a subsequent section of this report. Elevations of five feet are shown on these maps at what is now Farragut Road and East 105th Street and extending east to the marsh bordering Fresh Creek as well as westward to East 100th Street. South of Farragut Road the five foot grade extended to Avenue K, with lower elevations shown further to the south. North of Farragut Road the grade sloped upward to Foster Avenue, with the grade at Foster Avenue and East 105th Street at 8.17 feet. From this point the grade along Foster Avenue sloped downward to the east, with an elevation of 6.2 feet at the Creek, and it sloped upward to the west with an elevation of some 9.6 feet at East 103rd Street. These data suggest that the land was flat south of the project site and that a gentle upgrade to the northwest began at about the present location of Farragut Road.

B. Overview of Prehistoric Native American Site Locations

Indications of prehistoric Native American activity have been reported in the vicinity of most of the tidal creeks along the Jamaica Bay shoreline of southern Brooklyn and Queens. Bolton (1920, 1922, 1934) produced site maps and brief descriptions of most of the Native American site locations known in the late 19th and early 20th century (see Figure 3). However, most of the information about these sites comes from reports made at that time by collectors and avocational archaeologists. Thus, in most cases, only limited data are available as to their exact location, extent, functional nature and/or temporal affiliation.

Two of these sites, in the vicinity of Gerritsen Creek in Brooklyn and Hawtree Creek in Queens, have been reported in sufficient detail to indicate that they represent permanent or semi-permanent occupation sites. The Gerritsen Creek site, more frequently referenced as the Ryder's Pond site, is indicated on Bolton's maps (Figures 3 and 4) as #50. The site included occupational refuse as well as burials uncovered during the grading of Avenue U (Bolton 1922). Artifacts collected from this site in the late 19th and early 20th century have been analyzed and reported in the literature (Lopez and Wisniewski 1971; 1972). As reported by these authors (1971) the site was bounded by the present location of Avenue R, East 32nd Street, Avenue W and Stuart Street. The artifact collection suggests that the site was occupied during the Archaic and Woodland portions of the prehistoric period and into the period of Native American - European contact in the early 17th century. The area occupied by the site as noted above would have extended for a considerable distance on a spit of land on the west side of Gerritsen Creek, from the southern portion of the spit to a location closer to the head of the Creek.

The other probable village site is the Aqueduct site, located near Hawtree Creek in Queens County. Excavations at this site were conducted in 1939 by a field survey party of the Flushing Historical Society. In addition to refuse middens and pits, a burial pit was encountered and excavated (Solecki 1947). Based on his analysis of material from the site, Smith (1950) assigned its occupation to the terminal prehistoric, Classons Point, focus of the Late Woodland Period. The portion of the site excavated was apparently immediately south of North Conduit Avenue. Examination of Belt Parkway plans and historic period maps, as well as the results of archaeological borings taken in 1980 (Pickman 1980a), indicate that the ground at this location was approximately at the 16 foot contour, sloping downward to the northern edge of the marshes bordering Jamaica Bay. These marshes began immediately north of the Belt Parkway, some 200 feet south of North Conduit Avenue. The ground also sloped downward to the east to a location near the head of Hawtree Creek which, as shown on early 20th century maps, was located several hundred feet east of the site boundaries as defined based on the 1980 borings (see Pickman 1980a). However, it is possible that the site was actually closer to the Creek as it existed in prehistoric times. The results of the 1980 archaeological borings provided indications of the presence of refuse midden deposits overlying the marsh surface at the northern edge of the Belt Parkway. These prehistoric deposits are now overlain by some 11 feet of fill. The data suggest that the occupation area was located on the higher ground

to the north and that the site occupants disposed of refuse in the lower-lying ground at the edge of the marsh (Pickman 1980a).

In addition to the Aqueduct site (listed as site #136), Bolton also notes a site closer to the head of Hawtree Creek. This site was listed by Bolton as the Hawtree site (see Figure 3 - #137), "on Hawtree Creek Reed, at Flynn Avenue, where pottery sherds and a stone dish or mortar were found."

Less thoroughly reported indications of prehistoric occupation have been noted in the vicinity of the other Jamaica Bay tidal creeks. East of the Aqueduct site, Bolton's site #138 (see Figure 3) was located "at the head of Bergen Creek." It was described by Bolton (1934:151) as "probably a fishing station." There was apparently another site near Bergen Creek closer to Jamaica Bay. The Nassau County Museum Site files indicate a site (#154x) at Bergen's landing (approximately 1/2 mile south of the Southern Parkway). Eleven whole or fragmentary projectile points were recovered from this location (reported by Harris in Rothschild and Pickman 1978). This latter site was apparently located on an "island" of drier ground within the extensive area of marsh along the north shore of Jamaica Bay. Bolton's site #139 was located near the head of Cornell Creek (near the present Baisley's Pond). Although Bolton (1934:51) describes the site as "probably a fishing or oystering place" it should be noted that the location given by Bolton (1934:151) would place it north of the Jamaica Bay marshes and west of the Creek.

Another site (#140) was located at the head of Hassock Creek (also known as Thurston's Creek). "Pottery, stone implements and knives, [and] pitted hammer and flaked stones" were reported as recovered from this site (Bolton 1934:151). This site would also appear to have been north of the marshes.

Bolton does not indicate any sites on Spring Creek, on the Brooklyn-Queens border. However, survey notes dated 1938, which have been previously supplied to the author by Dr. Ralph Solecki (see Pickman 1980b), indicate that a concentration of shells and several prehistoric artifacts were found near Spring Creek at the end of Crescent Avenue at Fairfield (now Flatlands) Avenue. This location was near the southern end of a spit or neck of land projecting into the marshes west of Spring Creek, similar to the one which extends south of the study area.

C. Prehistoric Native American Sites Near Fresh Creek

The major site in the vicinity of Fresh Creek would appear to be the one indicated on Bolton's map (Figure 3) as #51. The site is also shown in relation to the street grid on Bolton's more detailed map published in 1922 (Figure 4). The site was also noted by Parker (1922) and is included in the files of the New York State Museum as site #7390. The approximate location of this site and others in the Museum's files located near Fresh

Creek were plotted on a map by the Museum's staff for a previous study conducted by the author (Pickman 1995). This map is included here as Figure 5.

Bolton (1934: 146) described this "Canarsie" site as "a village site, and extensive planting field, "which extended back from Canarsie Beach Park as far as Avenue J, centered on East 92nd Street." Bolton (1920:89) noted that "grooved axes and other artifacts" have been recovered from the site. He states that this site was "probably the principal village-site of the tribe of the same name." However, there is no data which confirms that this site was actually occupied during the period of Native American - European contact.

The eastern portion of the overall site area indicated by Bolton would appear to be approximately 4-5 blocks west of the marshes adjacent to the western side of Fresh Creek. The site would have been situated on a large spit "neck" of dry ground which extended southward between the marsh areas adjoining Paerdegat Creek on the west and Fresh Creek and Lott's Creek on the east.

As indicated on Bolton's 1922 map (Figure 4) the site (including the "Canarsie planting land") extended from the vicinity of Seaview Avenue on the south to Avenue J on the north and from East 85th Street on the west to Rockaway Parkway on the east. The location as shown on Bolton's map would place it some 3000 feet southwest of the project site at its nearest point. The map provided by the New York State Museum (see Figure 5), shows the site covering a somewhat larger area than indicated by Bolton, extending northward to Flatlands Avenue and East 100th Street, some 1800 feet southwest of the project site.

Other data indicate that there were additional Native American remains in the Fresh Creek area outside of the area indicated on Bolton's map. Solecki (1994) reports that during his ca. 1930's surface explorations in the vicinity of the Canarsie site he noted "a site at East 107th Street and Flatlands Avenue." However, Solecki provides no further information about this site. The location was approximately 200 feet west of Fresh Creek and immediately adjacent to the marshes adjacent to the Creek. The site location is at the end of a smaller neck of land, bounded on the west by the marshes associated with Lott's Creek, immediately northeast of the larger neck on which Bolton's Canarsie site was located. The site reported by Solecki may actually be an extension of the Canarsie site, or it may represent a separate occupation. The location noted by Solecki would place this site some 1800 feet southeast of the project site.

In addition to the Canarsie site, the files of the New York State Museum indicate the presence of three sites near Fresh Creek as reported by Arthur C. Parker in 1922 (see Figure 5 and Pickman 1995). One of these is a "camp" site on the west side of Fresh Creek (NYSM Site #3610). This site may be the same one noted by Solecki. Two other sites were reported east of Fresh Creek. One of these was noted as "village" site (NYSM Site #3609) and the other consisted of "shell middens" (NYSM site #3607).

D. Discussion of Study Area Sensitivity for Prehistoric Utilization

Although the Native American sites along the southern shore of Brooklyn and Queens have only been sketchily described, the reported locations suggest that sites were situated in order to exploit the subsistence resources to be found in tidal marshes and the adjacent open bay waters. The marshes would have provided a convenient nearby source of shellfish and a habitat favored by waterfowl. In addition, the freshwater creeks and smaller open water channels which penetrated the marshes would have provided access by canoe to open water fishing. It would appear that most of the major creeks extended well north of the high tide line. These creeks probably had their origins in fresh water springs. Over the years runoff from these springs would have eroded channels in the soil. As sea levels rose, the southern portions of these channels would have been inundated by the tides, with the tidal scour widening and deepening the channels. Occupation sites, which require a nearby source of fresh water, would most likely have been located above the tidal portion of the creeks, where fresh water was available, and at locations which were also in proximity to the resources of the marsh areas. Smith (1950:101) has noted that in coastal New York "nearly all of the permanent settlement sites are situated on tidal streams and bays on the second rise of ground above the water." However, as noted above, deposits associated with such sites have also been noted on lower ground.

Other sites were located on the spits or necks of land extending southward into the marshes. Unless fresh water springs were located on these necks, such sites would not have been in proximity to a fresh water source. These were most likely shellfish gathering stations, as suggested by Bolton. Two extensive site areas, west of Fresh Creek and Gerritsen Creek, may have incorporated both functional site types, with occupation areas closer to the Creek heads and shellfish gathering areas further south on the land spits extending into the marshes.

While most of the sites noted in the southern portion of Brooklyn would appear to have been on the west side of the various tidal creeks it is uncertain whether this is significant, given the limited nature of the available data. In fact, as noted above, sites have been reported east of Fresh Creek. It is possible that most areas in the vicinity of the tidal creeks were utilized at various times during the prehistoric period. The reported site locations as discussed above may be an artifact of the locations of cleared land, activities of 19th and early 20th century collectors, and the effects of 20th century construction which led both to exposure and destruction of sites.

Despite the reported recovery of Archaic period artifacts from the Ryder's Pond site, it would appear that most of the remains recovered from the sites noted above date to the Late Woodland period. Earlier in the prehistoric period, when sea levels were lower, shoreline sites would necessarily have been located further to the south. Such sites would now be at the location of the tidal marshes, or even further to the south on the drowned Continental shelf.

As noted above, sites have been reported from areas near the heads of tidal creeks and adjacent salt marsh areas, and from spits or necks of land extending southward into the marshes. One of these necks extended into the marshes south of the study area and a larger neck of land was located to the southwest. However, reported locations of the sites on these necks are at least 1800 feet from study area. These sites would appear to have been situated on relatively low-lying ground closer to Jamaica Bay prior to 20th century land modifications. The project site was located at the edge of this flatter ground in an area which sloped upward gently to the north and west. As noted above, the higher ground further to the north, which may have been closer to a fresh water stream which entered Fresh Creek may have been a likely locus of occupation sites, while the area closer to the marshes may have been the locus of resource procurement sites.

The study area is a substantial distance (ca. 1250 - 1500 feet) from Fresh Creek and the associated marshes and some 1500 feet from the probable location of the fresh water stream. It would appear that other locations closer to the Creek and marshes would have been more attractive locations for activities oriented toward the exploitation of the resources found in those environments.

III. DOCUMENTARY RESEARCH - HISTORIC PERIOD

A. Native American - European Contact Period

At the time of initial European settlement, the western end of Long Island was reportedly occupied by a Native American group named Keskachau, referred to by the Europeans as the Canarsie, who were most likely a sub-group of the Delaware. The Canarsie apparently had several settlements.

Based on inferences drawn from references in early colonial documents, it has been inferred (e.g. Bolton 1922, Van Wyck 1924) that a major Canarsie settlement was located at Flatlands. However, although Indian burials were reportedly found in the graveyard of the Dutch Reformed Church at Flatlands during the course of excavation for European-American graves (DuBois 1884, Armbruster 1919, O'Halloran 1950), there are no reports of Native American occupational refuse being recovered from this location (see also Pickman 1994). Bolton (1920) suggests that the principal Canarsie village sites were at Ryder's Pond and Canarsie at the site locations numbered 50 and 51 on his map (Figures 3 and 4) as discussed above. As noted previously, some contact period material was recovered from the Ryder's Pond site. No analysis of material from the Canarsie site has been reported.

The Canarsie sachems sold the land bordering the Brooklyn portion of Jamaica Bay to the European settlers in three separate 1636 transactions. This land was described as comprising three "flats", collectively called Casteteuw (other spellings are given in the literature). Tooker (1911:36) translates the term Casteteuw as 'where grass is cut or mowed.' This indicates that the sale included the marshes bordering Jamaica Bay. However, it is likely that the sale also included the areas of drier ground bordering the marshes. This is indicated by the phrase in the deed that the tracts extended "into the woods."

The boundaries of the three tracts sold by the Native American sachems are vague, and in fact the boundaries of the central tract as given in the deeds are identical to those of the easternmost (i.e. "in width from a certain valley eastward also into the woods" - Fernow 1883:XIV:2). Bolton (1922:157) maintains that this central tract "is apparently that tract which now includes Canarsie Beach Park, and is bounded on the westward by the Bestevaars Kill or Paerdegat Basin."

In 1665, the Native Americans of the area deeded a tract of land at "Canarrissen" to the town of Flatlands (then named New Amersfort). The conveyance referred to the Native Americans' use of the land for cultivation and provided that the purchasers should provide a fence for the protection for this cultivated tract (Tooker 1911; Minsky 1963). This led to Bolton's characterization of the Canarsie site as including "planting lands" as noted in the previous chapter.

B. Historic Period Land Use - Seventeenth Through Nineteenth Centuries

Prior to the latter portion of the 19th century, Kings County included five separate towns in addition to the City of Brooklyn, including the Towns of Flatlands and New Lots. The boundary between the two latter towns is shown on several of the 19th century maps, which indicate that the project site was within the town of New Lots just east of the Town boundary line (see e.g. Figure 11).

The town of Flatlands was established in the 17th century. Although the town boundaries extended to the vicinity of the study area, the town center was near the present location of Flatbush Avenue and Kings Highway, more than two miles to the west. Canarsie was a village which subsequently grew up within the Town of Flatlands. Its center was in the vicinity of the present Rockaway Parkway between Flatlands Avenue and Glenwood Road, some 2000 feet southwest of the study area.

The portion of Kings County known as New Lots was part of the Town of Flatbush until 1852, when it became a separate town. In 1886 it was annexed to the city of Brooklyn (Armbruster 1942, Landesman 1977). The town center of New Lots was along New Lots Avenue, more than 4000 feet to the northeast of the project site.

During the Revolution there was no military activity in the vicinity of the study area. the only significant event in southeastern Kings County occurred after the British army landed between the villages of Gravesend and New Utrecht in August 1776. The main body of the British army under Lords Percy and Cornwallis marched from Gravesend along what are now Kings Highway and New Lots Avenue on their way to Jamaica (Bailey 1840; Landesman 1977). This route passed approximately one-half mile north of the study area.

Maps dating to the 18th century (Figures 6-7) as well as the mid-19th and late-19th century (Figures 8-13), indicate that the study area consisted of vacant land throughout this period. As shown on maps drawn prior to establishment of the street grid and the East New York and Canarsie Railroad (which follows the same alignment as the present MTA right of way), the project site was located in the unoccupied land shown bounded by Fresh Creek on the east, New Lots Road on the north and a lane to the west which extended from the latter road to Vanderveer's mill on Fresh Creek (see Figures 6-9 and further discussion below).

The study area was within one of a number of large tracts of land in Kings County owned by various members of the Vanderveer family, descendants of Cornelius Vanderveer, who settled in Flatbush in 1659 (Landesman 1977:74). In the 19th century, the project site was part of a farm owned by Charles B. Vanderveer, who was born in 1796 and was the sixth generation of the Vanderveer family to have owned and occupied the property. He built a "substantial mansion" on the farm in 1839. After Charles Vanderveer's death in 1878 one of his sons continued to occupy the property (Landesman 1977:74). The

1899 Hyde atlas indicates that the property was owned at that time by John Vanderveer, apparently the son referenced by Landesman. This map and others dating to the late 19th and early 20th century show the Vanderveer house at the northeast corner of 106th Street and Flatlands Avenue, approximately 1500 feet south of the project site.

The Vanderveer property also contained a mill, known as the Vanderveer's Mill or the "Red Mill," which was apparently built in the 18th century. Armbruster (1942:340), writing in 1928, noted that the mill stood "at Flatlands Avenue and about East 109th Street... [and that]... the remains of the Red Mill were still visible a few years ago. The adjacent land has since been filled in." The mill is shown along the west side of Fresh Creek on 18th and 19th century maps (see e.g. Figures 6-9). The 1899 atlas shows it east of 108th Street between Flatlands Avenue and Avenue J, approximately 2200 feet southeast of the project site.

Access to Vanderveer's mill was provided by a lane which extended to the northwest and connected the mill with the New Lots road. It is indicated on several maps as the "Road to Vanderveers Mill." The late-19th century maps (Figures 11-13) show this road in relationship to the street grid. It crossed Farragut Road just west of East 103rd Street, one block west of the project site. On these late-19th century maps what is now Farragut Road is shown as "Avenue F." Its name was officially changed to Farragut Road in 1901 (Minsky 1963:62).

As shown on the 1899 map (Figure 13) the project site remained undeveloped at the end of the nineteenth century.

C. The Twentieth Century

The 1907 Sanborn map (Figure 14) shows that the project site still remained undeveloped at this time. However, in a series of real estate transactions in 1905 and 1906 John Vanderveer had sold the property to a group which intended to develop the land which formerly constituted the Vanderveer farm (see e.g. Kings County Deed Liber 3043:257). This real estate project was to be known as Vanderveer Crossings. The sale followed a series of transactions in the 1890's by which other large tracts of lands in Flatbush formerly belonging to the Vanderveer family were sold to another development company and incorporated with other tracts into a large real estate project known as Vanderveer Park (Meyer 1901).

Some of the tracts of land acquired by the Vanderveer Crossings group were transferred to an organization known as the Vanderveer Canarsie Improvement Syndicate. It is likely that the two groups were affiliated, with the latter formed as a separate venture possibly for the purpose of constructing houses on some of the lots.

The 1912 Hyde atlas (Figure 15) indicates that structures had been constructed on two of the lots within block 8154. The two developed properties fronted on East 105th Street.

The southernmost of the two was designated as lot 27 and its street address was 556 East 105th Street. The adjacent developed lot was designated as lot 26, at 552 East 105th Street. Each of these lots measured 30 feet along East 105th Street and was 100 feet in depth. The southern boundary of lot 27 was located 120 feet north of Farragut Road. The atlases indicate that both were two story brick dwellings. As shown (see Figures 15-18), these two structures appear to be attached; this is confirmed by the text of the land conveyances discussed below. Maps dating after 1912 (Figures 16-20) indicate that these are the only structures which were built on the project site.

The two two-story attached brick structures on lots 26 and 27 which were first shown on the 1912 atlas continue to be depicted on maps dating to 1927, 1929 and 1951 (Figures 16-18). The 1927 and 1929 maps show each of the buildings with a one story frame front porch and a one story frame outbuilding toward the rear of each lot. These outbuildings are indicated as garages on the 1927 Sanborn map. In addition, the building at 552 East 105th Street is shown with a one story frame extension attached to the center of the rear wall of the building.

The garage at the rear of 552 East 105th Street is no longer shown on the 1951 Sanborn map. The other attachments and outbuildings indicated on the 1920's maps continue to be shown on this map.

During the early 1960's the project site was acquired by the city of New York for use as an industrial park and the buildings were demolished. The 1967 and 1983 Sanborn maps (Figures 19-20) show both lots, as well as the remainder of the project site, as being vacant.

1..Block 8154, Lots 26 and 27 - Ownership and Occupation

On June 22, 1908 the Vanderveer Canarsie Development Syndicate (hereafter referenced as "the Syndicate") sold Lot 26 to Oscar A. Margolin (Kings County Deed Liber 4084:199), and on December 30, 1909, the Syndicate sold lot 27 to Joseph Mandinach and Moses Ribner (Deed Liber 3195:355). All three of the purchasers were noted in the deeds as being resident in Manhattan at the time of the transactions. The latter deed and subsequent transfers of lot 27 reference a map of Vanderveer Crossings, confirming that the project site was part of this proposed development. The 1908 conveyance of lot 26 describes the southern boundary of the property as partially extending "through a party wall." This suggests that the two attached structures had been built prior to this sale. They may have been previously constructed on a speculative basis by the Syndicate. The data indicate that the structures were built between the acquisition of the land by the Syndicate in 1907 and the sale to Margolin in 1908.

The purchasers of each of the two lots occupied the properties shortly after these transactions as both are listed as resident at the corresponding addresses in the Federal census of 1910. These records indicate that 556 East 105th Street (Lot 27) was occupied

by families of both purchasers. Joseph Mandinach and his wife Yetta, as well as Moses (Morris) Ribner and his wife Anna, were Jewish immigrants from Austria. In 1910 the Mandinach household included five children and the Ribner family three children. Both Mandinach and Ribner were 48 years old in 1910, and both are listed in the census as self employed house carpenters. Although the census records describe both Mandinach and Ribner as renters, the land conveyances indicate that both owned the property on which they resided. The discrepancy may be due to the fact that, as indicated in the conveyances, the Syndicate held a mortgage on the property, together with the respondents' possible lack of understanding as to the distinction between the ownership categories as presented by the census taker.

Lot 26 (552 East 105th Street) was occupied by only the Margolin family in 1910. Oscar Margolin and his wife Anna were Jewish immigrants from Russia. They occupied this house with their six children. Margolin was a clothing manufacturer and was 44 years old in 1910.

The subsequent ownership and occupation history of the two developed properties has been reconstructed from data contained in the deeds, census records and directories which are referenced in the summary included in this report as Appendix A .

a. 556 East 105th Street (Block 8154, Lot 27)

The Joseph Mandinach family remained resident on Lot 27 for 10 years, until 1919. Four of Mandinach's five children continued to live in this house in 1915. However, in 1912, Moses Ribner and his wife sold their one half interest in the property to Bernard Mandinach and Louis Jurman. The deed indicates that Jurman was already living at 556 East 105th Street at the time of the sale. The 1910 census data indicate that Bernard Mandinach was Joseph Mandinach's eldest son and the 1915 census records indicate that he still continued to reside in his father's household after this sale. The 1915 census indicates that the Jurman family occupied one-half of the two family house at that time. Like Joseph Mandinach, Louis Jurman was an Austrian Jewish immigrant. He was 28 years old in 1915 and employed as an iron worker. His household included his wife Minnie and one son. After moving to 556 East 105th Street ca. 1912, Jurman continued to reside there for seven years.

In 1919 Bernard Mandinach, Joseph Mandinach and his wife, and Louis Jurman and his wife sold Lot 27 to Stanislaw and Anna Bai and Vincent and Josephine Dziadowicz. Although the households at 556 East 105th Street (as well as 552 East 105th Street) could not be located in the records of the 1920 Federal census, the surname of at least one of these occupants suggests Polish origin. It is uncertain whether, like the previous owners, these occupants were also Jewish.

In 1921, Bai and Dziadowicz sold the property to Giacomo and Giovannina Fiorellino and Giovanni and Margherita Diblasi. The deed indicates that the Bai and Dziadowicz

families were at the time of the sale resident on the property, while the Fiorellino and Diblasi families had been living in Manhattan.

In 1924 Giacomo and Giovannina Fiorellino sold their one half share of the house and lot 27 to Giovanni and Margherita Diblasi, who then became sole owners of the property. The deed indicates that both the Fiorellino and Diblasi families resided on the property at the time of the sale. Occupants of this house were not enumerated in the New York State Census of 1925, although the residents of the adjacent lot 26 were counted (see below). In addition, Giovanni Diblasi was not listed in the 1933/4 Brooklyn directory. However, Giovanni and Margherita Diblasi continued to own lot 27 until 1936, at which time they lost the property due to foreclosure by the East Brooklyn Savings and Loan Association. In addition to Diblasi, the foreclosure named two tenants, Michael D'Amato and Joseph Brosseau. It is uncertain if the Diblasis continued to reside on the property at this time in addition to the two tenants.

Shortly after the foreclosure, the bank sold the property to Frank Fileccia, who continued to own the property until 1943, when it was acquired by Louis and Lucy Russano. The 1943 deeds indicate that at the time of the sale, Frank Fileccia was resident at 556 East 105th Street. The Russanos apparently continued own the property for ten years, until in 1953, they sold it to John and Clara Rivera. The latter conveyance notes that the Russanos were residing on the property at the time of the sale.

The Riveras apparently resided on the property until 1957, when they sold it to the Norjay Realty Corporation, who continued to own it until 1961, when it was sold to Ralph and Carmella Cristella. The latter conveyance indicates that the Cristellas were resident on the property at the time of the sale and it is likely that they had been renting the house prior to purchasing it.

b. 552 East 105th Street (Block 8154, Lot 26)

Oscar and Anna Margolin, who had purchased lot 26 in 1908, continued to own and occupy this property until 1919. The 1915 New York State census indicates that all six of the Margolins' children continued to live with their parents. The census also indicates that by 1915 a second family lived at 552 East 105 Street. Like the Margolins, Norman and Bella Chatoff were Russian Jewish immigrants. Their household included three children; Chatoff's brother, Samuel; and a boarder, Alexander Ohann, also a Russian immigrant. Norman Chatoff, then 31 years old, apparently owned a clothing store. His brother and the boarder were both employed as shipping clerks.

After residing on the property for 11 years, in 1919 Oscar and Anna Margolin sold lot 26 to Elizabetta Alfano, who was resident in Manhattan prior to purchasing this property. The 1925 New York State census lists Joseph S. and Elizabeth Alfano, both Italian immigrants, as resident at 552 East 105th Street, together with their six children. Joseph Alfano, then 53 years of age, is listed in the census records as a tinsmith. A second

family, that of Leo H and Josephine Vitale, is also indicated as resident in this house in 1925. The Vitales were also Italian Immigrants. Leo Vitale, 31 years old in 1915, apparently owned a barber shop.

Joseph and Elizabeth Alfano continue to be listed at this address in the 1933/34 Brooklyn directory and his occupation continues to be given as tinsmith. Leo Vitale was not listed in this directory. We were unable to locate any further land conveyances for lot 26. It is possible that it continued to be owned by the Alfano family until the buildings were demolished in the 1960's.

2. Overview of Occupation - 552 and 556 East 105th Street

Several sources (Rieder 1985, Landesman 1977) note that the population of Canarsie and New Lots in the early portion of the twentieth century consisted largely of European Jewish and Italian immigrants. The occupants of the structures built at 552 and 556 East 105th Street during the first decade of the twentieth century reflect the waves of immigration to this country during this period. Occupants of these structures for the first 10-13 years of their existence were European Jewish immigrants who had first settled in Manhattan, and subsequently, presumably seeking relief from crowded conditions there, moved to the sparsely settled Canarsie/East New York section of Brooklyn. These occupants were followed by Italian immigrants whose journey to America followed a parallel trajectory; initial settlement in Manhattan with a subsequent move to what was undoubtedly viewed at that time as a suburban environment. These structures were apparently occupied by Italian-Americans at least through the 1950's

3. Landfilling and Provision of Utilities

Although the portion of Brooklyn surrounding the project site began to be converted from agricultural purposes to residential development at the beginning of the twentieth century, the area remained relatively undeveloped well into the second quarter of the century. At the end of the second World War, the Canarsie area "still contained a number of truck farms and broad meadows through which no streets have been cut [while other streets contained] one and two family houses, detached and semi-detached" (Brooklyn Eagle 1946). Numerous items in the local newspaper attest to the fact that many streets in the area remained unpaved and without city water and sewer services at least into the 1930's.

The City of New York did not officially acquire and open Farragut Road from East 56th to East 108th Street until Sept 18, 1928 (Block Index, Office of the City Register). A 1928 City map examined in the Kings County office of the New York City Register (Teirney 1928) indicates the existing street grades in the vicinity of the study area and those which had been newly established, indicating that the streets were to be graded and paved. The 1929 Hyde map (see Figure 17) also shows the new grades. However,

according to a 1931 article in the Canarsie Civic (1931b) "Canarsie has many streets on the east, west and south that are so far below grade that the city refuses to even install water mains." The article specifically names East 105th and East 104th Streets between Avenue D and Avenue K, and Farragut Road from Rockaway Parkway to East 108th Street as being among these streets which had still not been raised to the established legal grade. The absence of sewers in the "Vanderveer section" of Canarsie, and the need to fill in "the upper part of Fresh Creek" and the surrounding low-lying areas, were noted in another 1931 article (Canarsie Civic 1931a).

Comparison of the old and new established grades indicate that more than five feet of fill would have been deposited at Farragut Road and East 105th Street and more than seven feet at Farragut Road and East 104th Street. However, only one to two feet of fill would have been deposited along Foster Avenue, where the grade was originally higher. The result of landfilling would have been to level out the previous upward slope from Farragut to Foster Avenue.

Since the project site is at the approximate grade of the adjacent streets, the data discussed above suggests that there are some 5-7 feet of fill overlying the previous ground surface on the southern portion of the project site with lesser depths of fill on the northern portion adjacent to the MTA right of way. This could not be confirmed by examination of boring records since no borings have yet been taken on the project site.

Examination of the 1928 and 1929 maps (Figures 16-17) also indicate that the city water supply had not been extended to the vicinity of the occupied structures on East 105th Street. The nearest water pipes which had been installed at that time were on Foster Avenue west of East 103rd Street. It should be noted that the 1951 edition of the Sanborn atlas still does not show water pipes in East 105th Street or in the nearby portions of Farragut Road. However, this may have been due to a failure of the map makers to update the street grade and utilities information in this edition, since the old street grades are also shown along Farragut Road on this map (see Figure 18). Water facilities are shown here on the 1967 Sanborn map (Figure 19).

IV. EVALUATION OF PROJECT SITE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SENSITIVITY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Definition of Archaeological Significance

Significant archaeological resources are defined as those which meet the eligibility criteria for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. According to these criteria (Federal Register 1981):

The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association and:

- (a) That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- (b) That are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- (c) That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- (d) That have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory, or history.

Except in certain circumstances "properties that have achieved significance within the past 50 years shall not be considered eligible for the National Register." National Register eligible archaeological resources usually qualify under the fourth of the above criteria.

B. Prehistoric Period Archaeological Sensitivity

Because of the rarity of intact prehistoric sites in the intensively developed New York City urban environment, any such archaeological remains which might be present on the project site would be likely to yield important information and would be considered significant.

The only documented disturbance to the project site would have been associated with the construction of the two early twentieth century domestic structures fronting on East 105th Street. The documentary evidence suggests that fill was deposited on the site during the second quarter of the twentieth century. This would have provided further protection to any archaeological deposits present on previously undisturbed portions of the site.

As discussed in Chapter II of this report, the southeastern portion of Kings County in the vicinity of Jamaica Bay and the associated tidal creeks is, in general, sensitive for the presence of prehistoric sites. Several sites have been documented south of the project site, closer to the shore of Jamaica Bay and to the western shore of Fresh Creek and the adjacent marshes. However, the reported locations of these sites place them at least 1800 feet from the project site. There have been no prehistoric archaeological sites reported closer to the study area.

Consideration of the physiographic and topographic characteristics of the area prior to 20th century land filling indicate that the reported Native American sites were located on low-lying and level ground which extended south of the project site, closer to the shore of Jamaica Bay and to the tidal portion of Fresh Creek. These areas would have provided access to subsistence resources such as fish, shellfish, and waterfowl, and possibly would have been also been suitable for cultivation in the late prehistoric and Contact periods. The project site would appear to have been on the northern edge of this lower-lying area and more than 1250-1500 feet west of Fresh Creek and the adjacent marshes.

The fresh water stream which apparently flowed into Fresh Kill would also have represented a resource attracting prehistoric settlement and/or utilization, both as a source of drinking water and as watering spot for game, which would have made it a suitable location for hunting camps. The land adjacent to this stream would have been at a higher elevation than the project site, which was located more than 1500 feet south of the stream.

Although located in a portion of Brooklyn which in general should be considered archaeologically sensitive, the distance of the site from tidal and fresh water streams and from the reported prehistoric site locations suggests that the project site should be considered to have only a low to moderate sensitivity for the presence of significant prehistoric period archaeological remains.

C. Historic Period Archaeological Sensitivity

The project site and the surrounding land remained unoccupied until the first decade of the 20th century. Any historic period archaeological resources present on the project site would most likely be associated with the occupation of the two structures built at 552 and 556 East 105th Street ca. 1908. The two two-family brick structures were occupied by Austrian and Russian Jewish immigrant families from this period until ca. 1920 and subsequently by Italian immigrants.

The archaeological significance of early 20th century sites has, in general, been questioned due to the availability of extensive documentary resources pertaining to this period. However, there are archaeological research questions which could be addressed by the analysis of deposits dating to this period. In particular the material culture correlates of ethnicity can be addressed by archaeological materials in ways which may

not be possible using only documentary sources. For example, we have seen how the Jewish and Italian immigrant families which occupied the East 105th Street structures followed a similar pattern of immigration; from Europe, to Manhattan, and then to suburban Brooklyn. Archaeological analysis of domestic artifact and food remains associated with both the European Jewish and Italian immigrant families which occupied the East 105th Street structures, if present on the site, could provide data as to the similarities or differences in how immigrants from these ethnic groups lived their daily lives in this section of Brooklyn. Such data could also be compared with information from sites in lower Manhattan containing deposits associated with families of similar ethnic background to assess similarities and differences in material culture expressions of ethnicity and/or status before and after the move from urban Manhattan to suburban Brooklyn.

Archaeological deposits found on urban domestic sites are usually present in sub-surface "features" such as cisterns, wells and privies, which may have been used for disposal of refuse after their period of primary use, which ended either when new features of similar type were constructed or, more usually, when the houses were connected to City-provided water and sewer facilities. Evidence suggests that such facilities were not available on East 105th Street at least until the 1930's.

On these early 20th century sites, water would most likely have been obtained from cisterns, usually located at the rear of the structures. Waste disposal would most likely have utilized cesspools or septic tanks, rather than open privies. Such facilities, which were enclosed, would most likely not have served as subsequent repositories of refuse. Cisterns or wells which served as a source of water in the early 20th century would most likely have continued in use until the public water supply was available. Thus any refuse deposits which they may contain would most likely date to the 1930's or later. It is possible, however, that the vacant land constituting the remainder of the project site may have been utilized for refuse disposal by the occupants of the two East 105th Street structures earlier in the 20th century.

Because any feature deposits would probably date to the period when the public water supply became available any deposits within them would probably date subsequent to 1930 and would most likely be associated with the Italian-American occupants of the site. Any earlier deposits which might exist, possibly associated with European Jewish occupants, would most likely only be in the form of surface deposits of refuse beneath overlying fill. Such deposits would only have accumulated if the surrounding vacant land was used for refuse disposal. The location of any such deposits on the site is uncertain.

In view of the above considerations the archaeological sensitivity of the project site for the presence of significant historic period archaeological deposits is considered to be low.

D. Recommendations

Archaeological sensitivity of the project site derives primarily from the likelihood that undisturbed stratigraphy is present beneath overlying fill and the presence of known Native American archaeological deposits in the southeastern portion of Kings County, although not in the immediate vicinity of the project site. Since the site is not testable by manual techniques, a separate archaeological testing program would not appear to be warranted by the degree of sensitivity of the site as discussed above.

At its discretion, however, the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission could have an archaeologist present on the site at the time any necessary borings are taken. Continuous samples could be taken in the upper portion of the stratigraphic column, until any ground surface underlying the fill is penetrated. These samples could be examined and screened in the field by the archaeologist to determine if, in fact, undisturbed strata are present beneath the fill, and whether the samples contain any indications of prehistoric activity. The author's experience (e.g. see Pickman 1980a) has shown that midden deposits are readily detectable by such means, although less intensively distributed indications of prehistoric occupation could escape detection.

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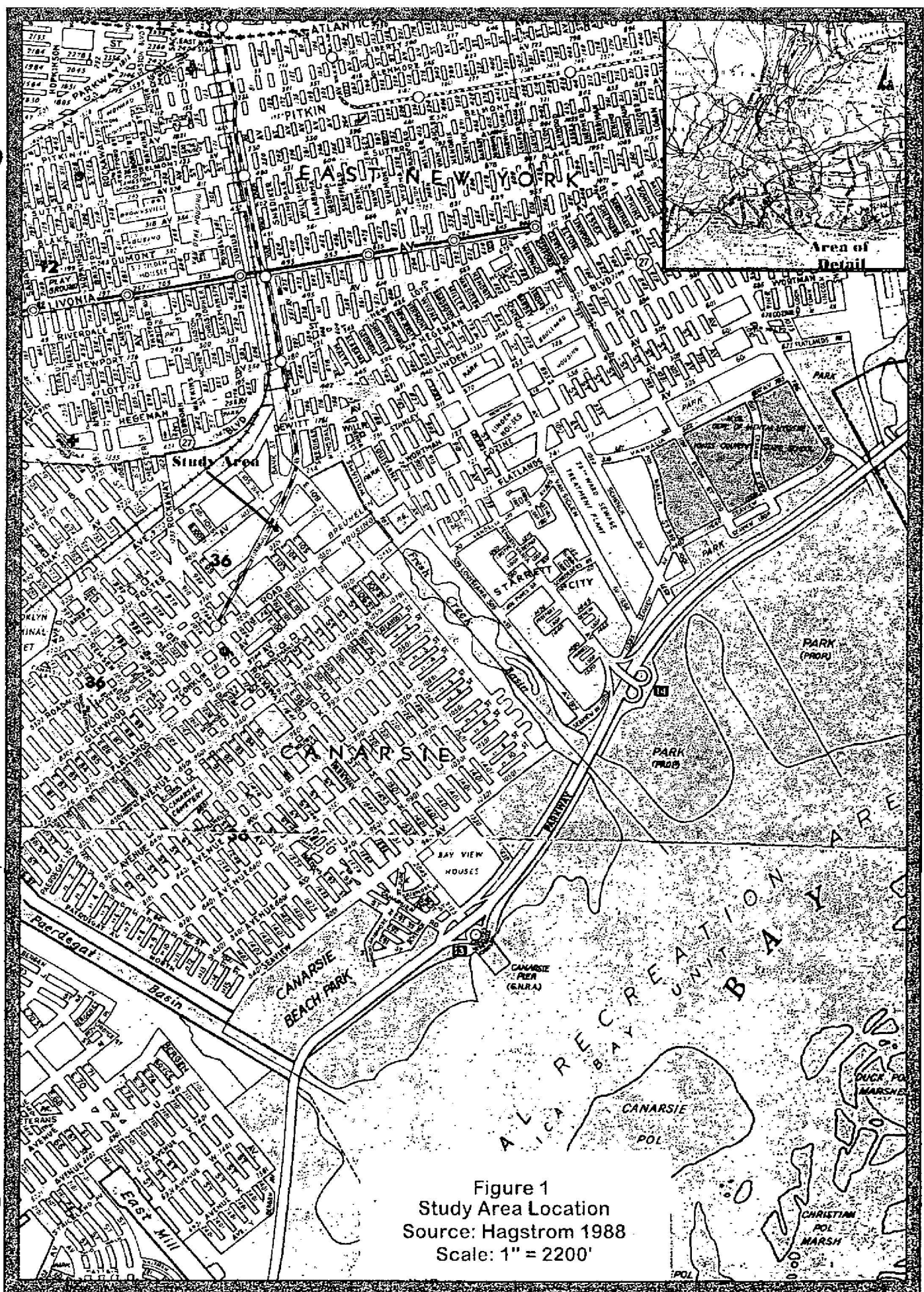
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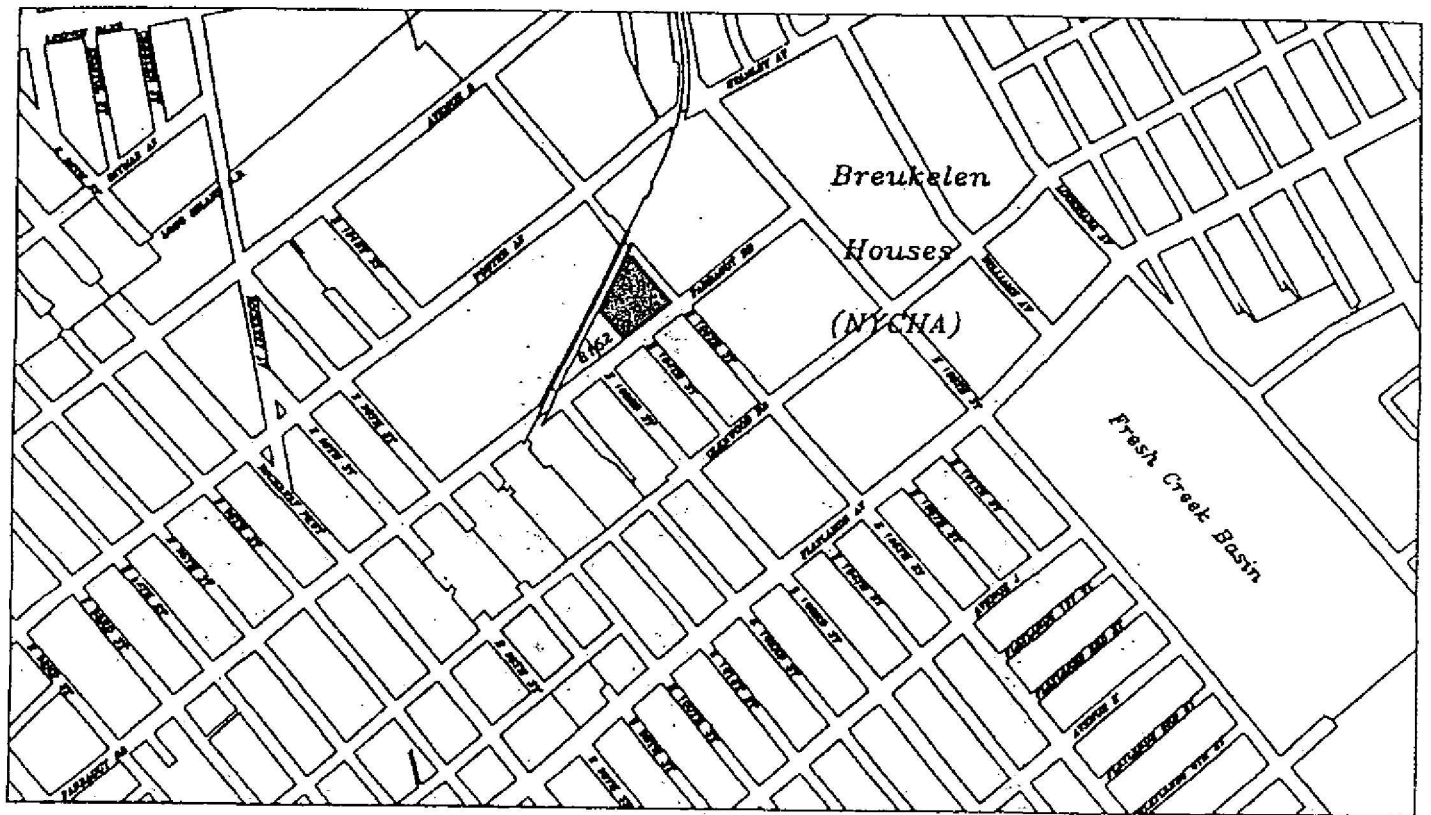
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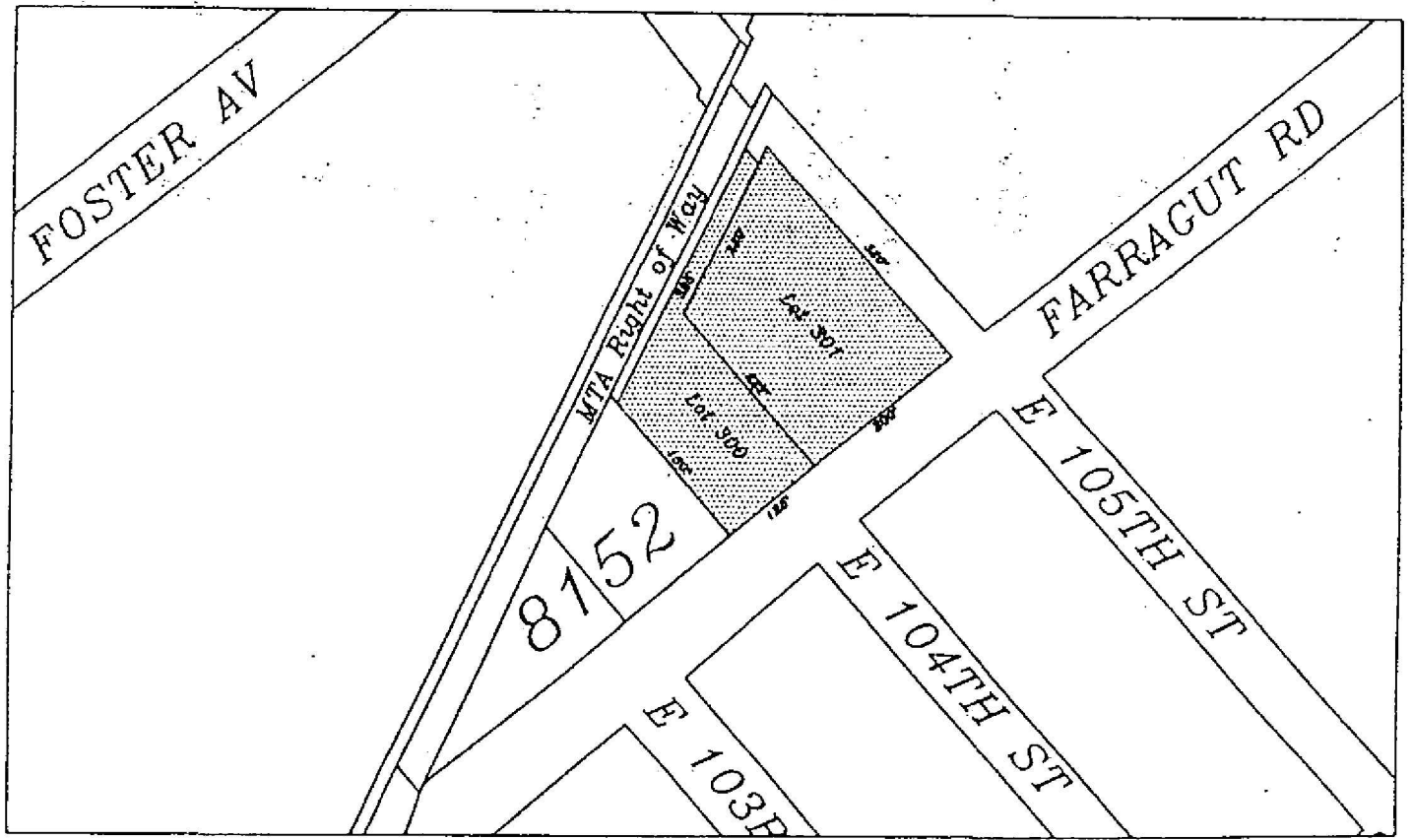
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FIGURES



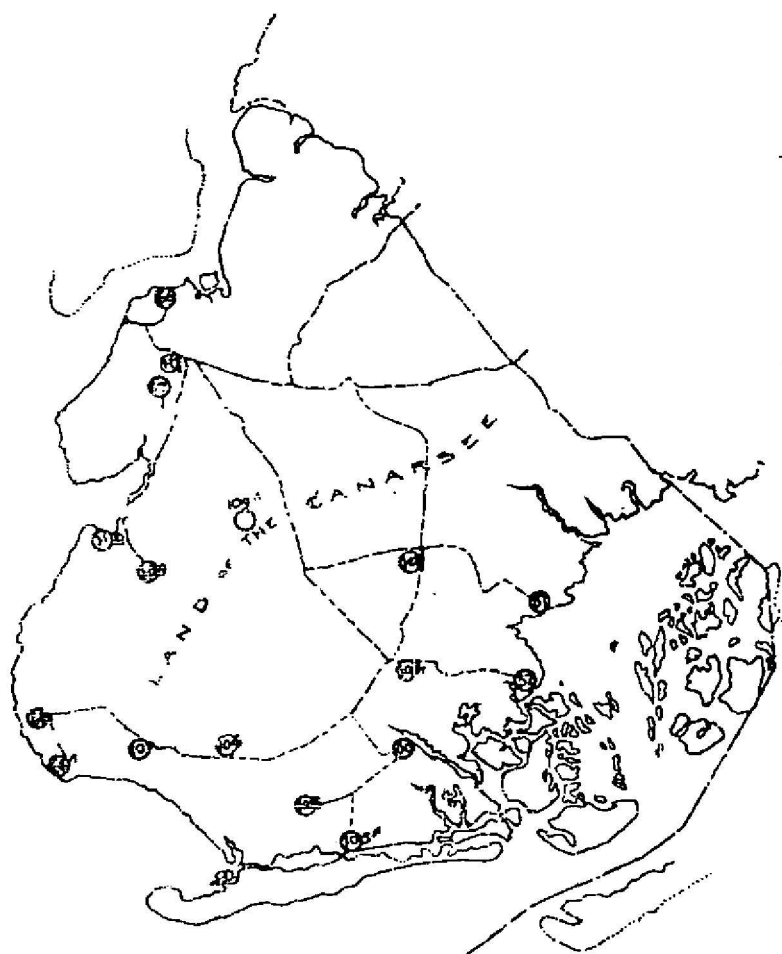


Context Map

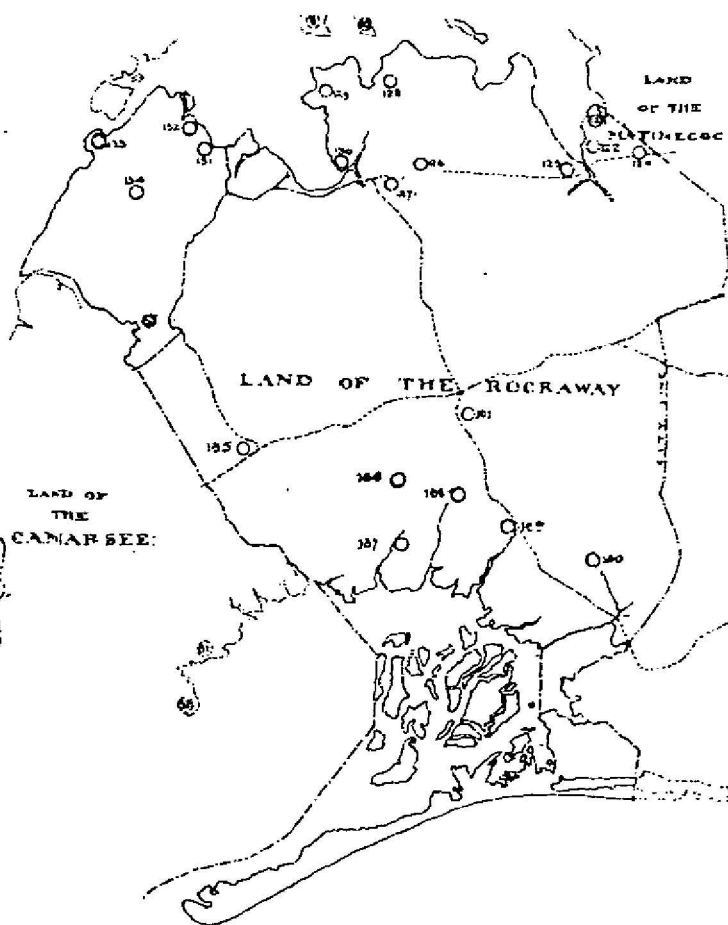


Site Map

Figure 2



INDIAN SITES IN THE BOROUGH OF BROOKLYN



INDIAN SITES IN THE BOROUGH OF QUEENS

Figure 3
Source: Bolton (1934:144;148)

Figure 4
Location of Canarsie Site
Source: Bolton (1922, Map VIID)

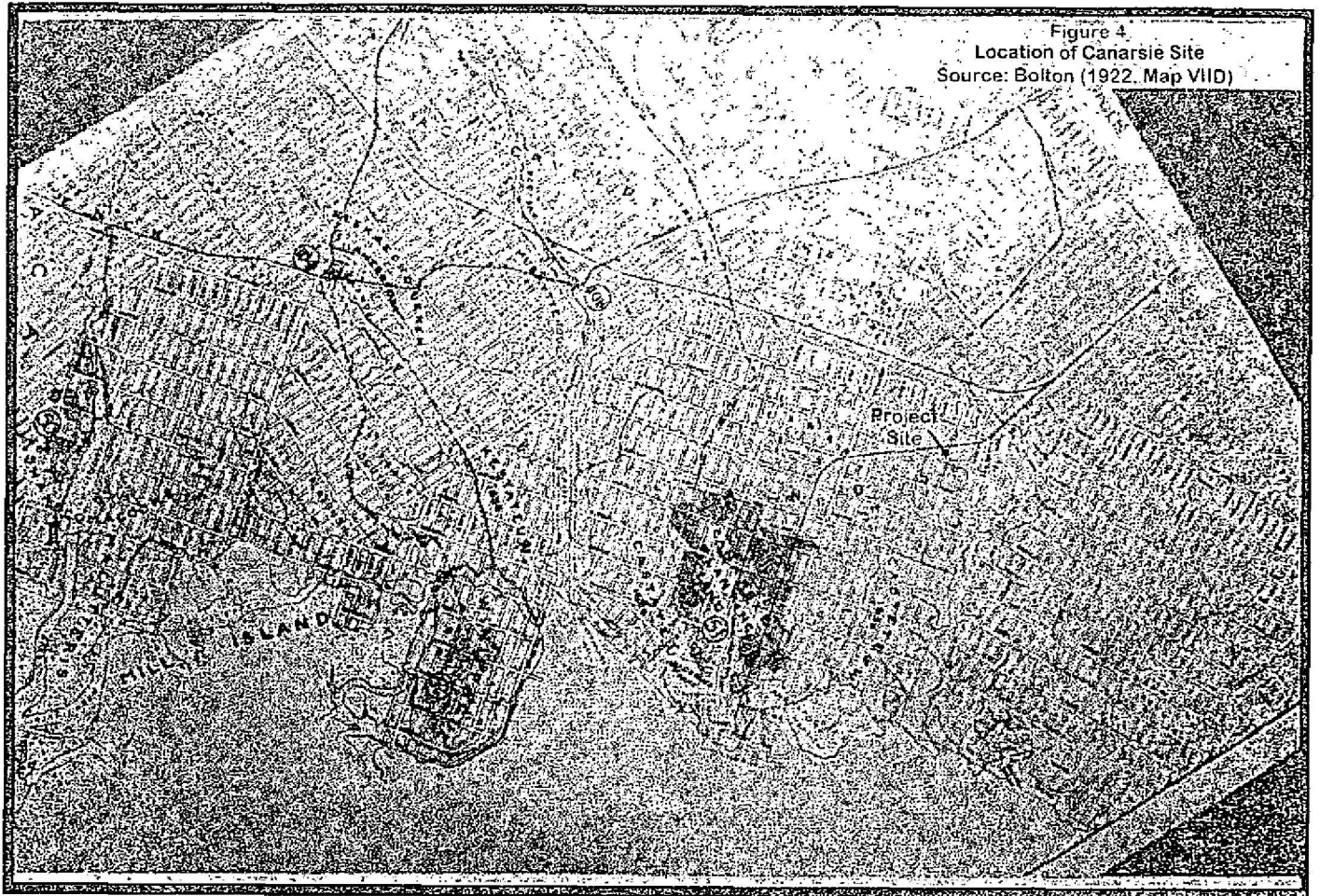
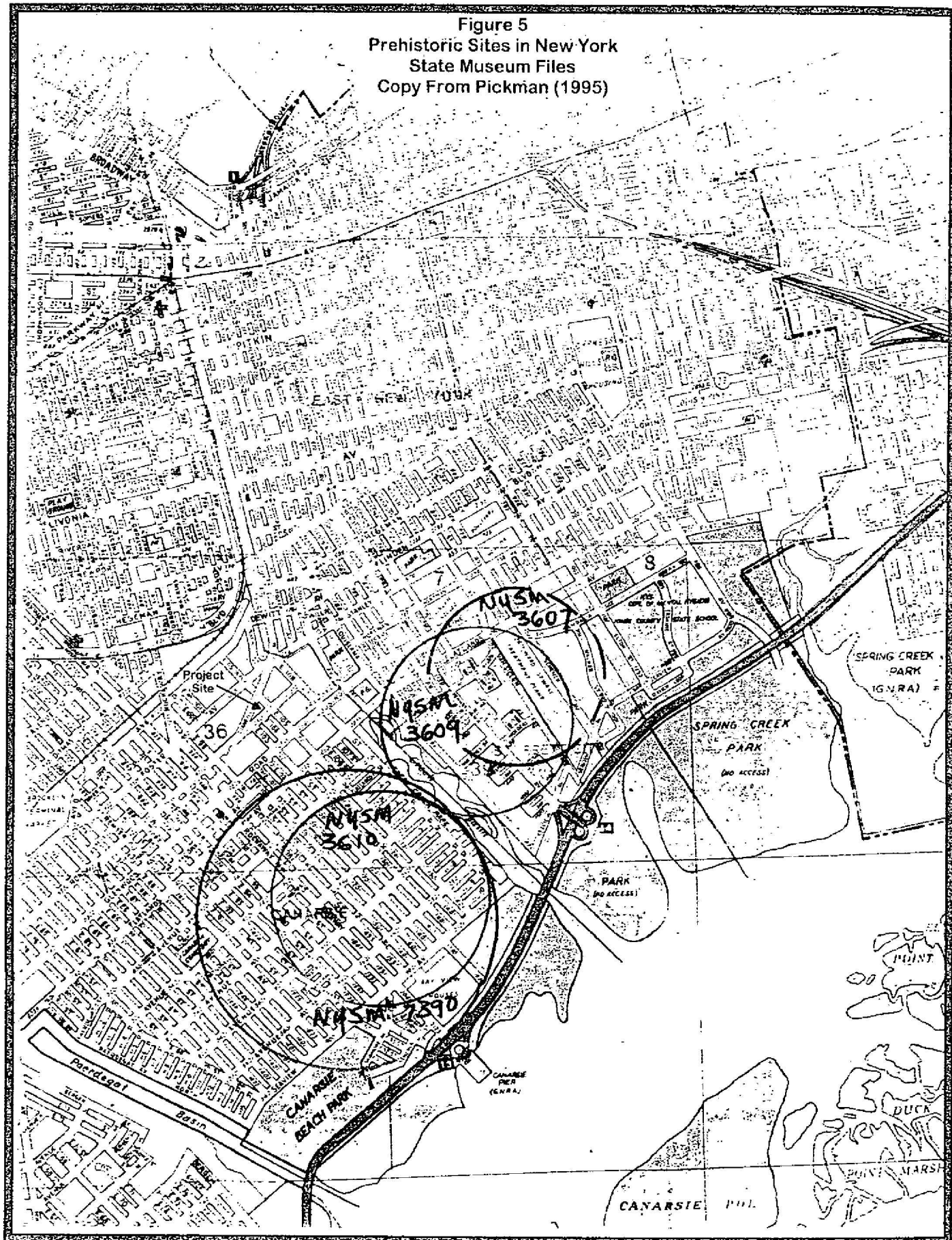
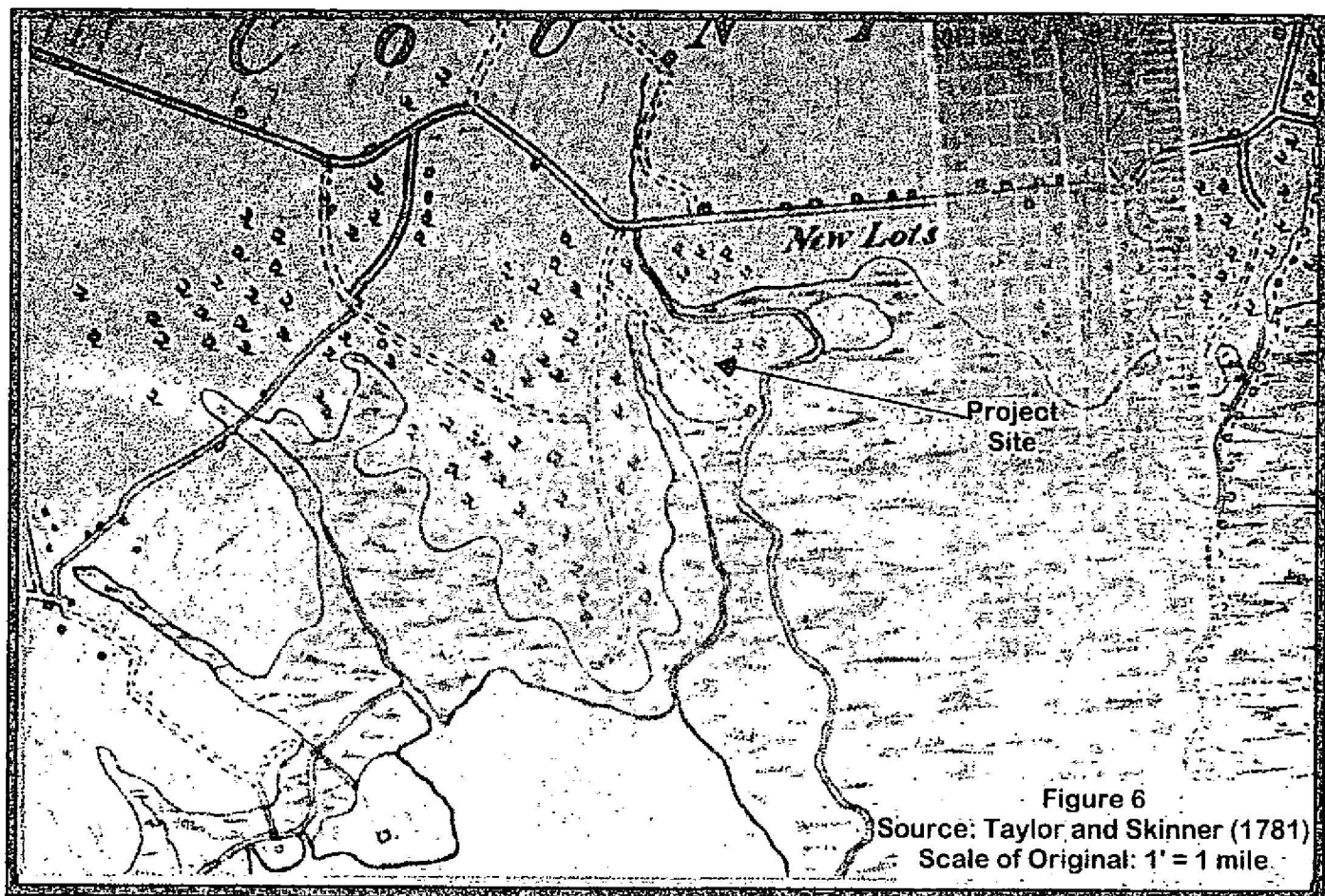


Figure 5
Prehistoric Sites in New York
State Museum Files
Copy From Pickman (1995)





[illegible]

Figure 8

Source: Connor (1852)

Scale of Original: 1" = ca. 1265'

Beattie



John Doe
PO Box

Vanderbilt University
Box 1100
Nashville, TN 37240

1992

CONFIDENTIAL

CANARSIE

Interfaith

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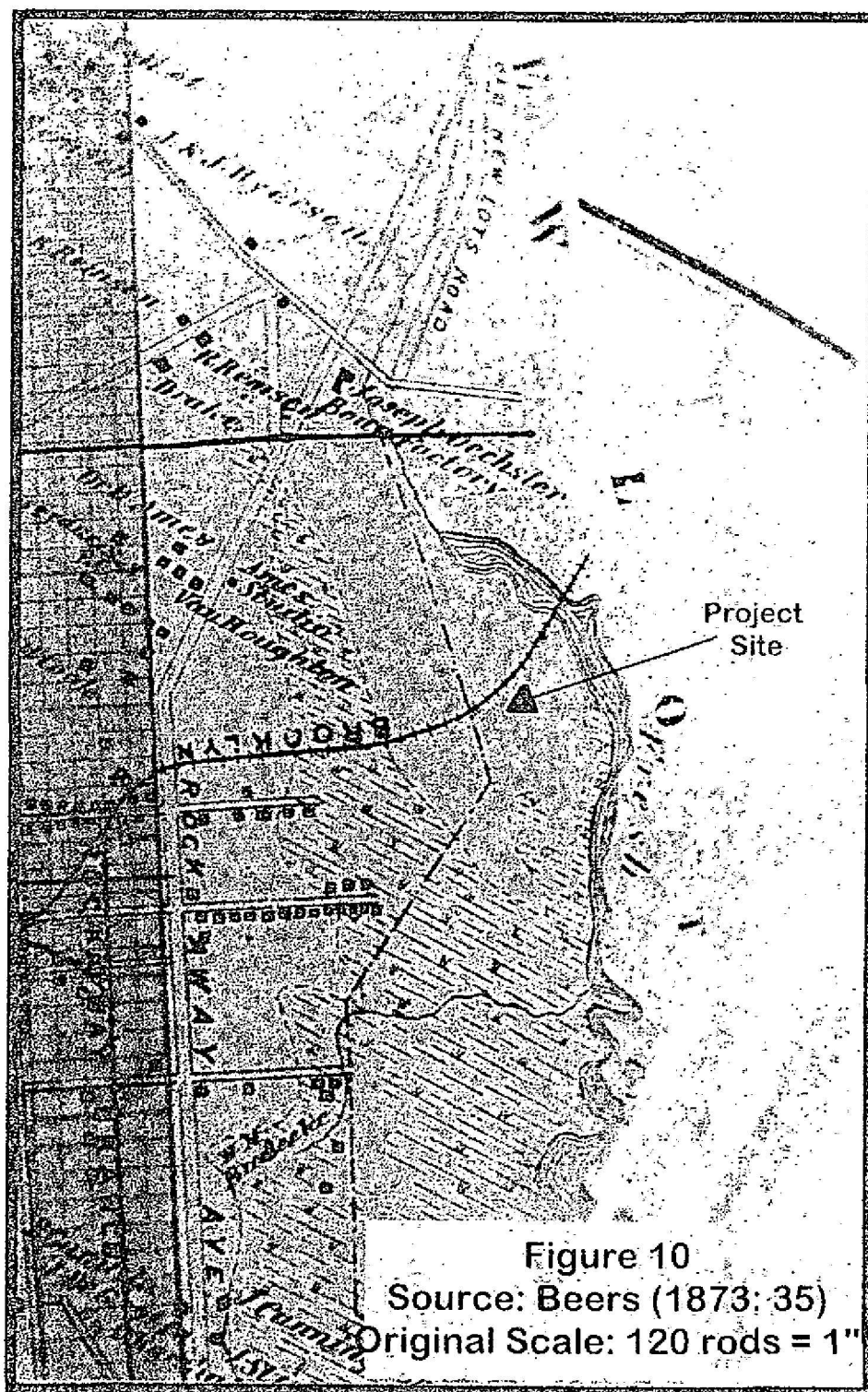
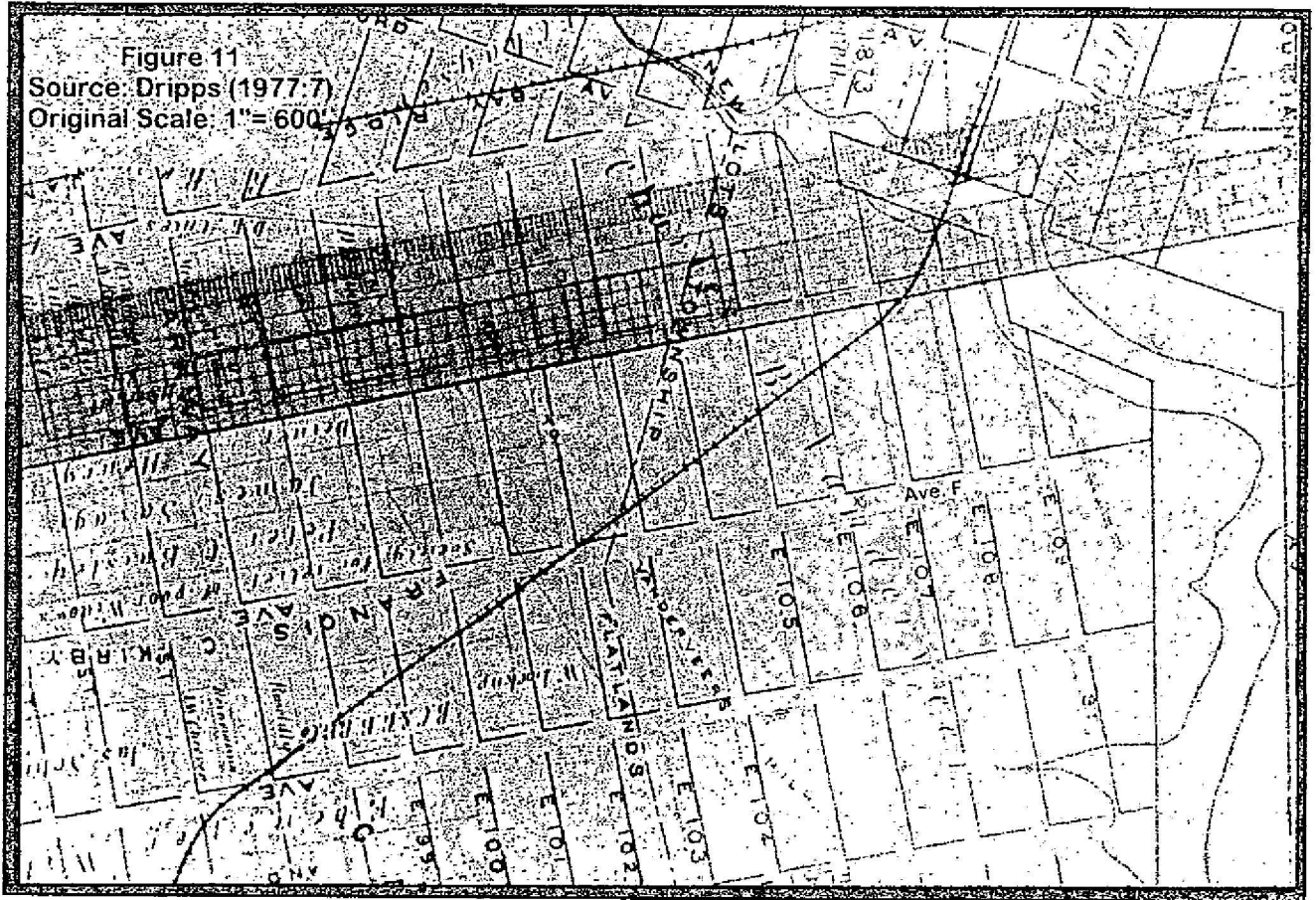
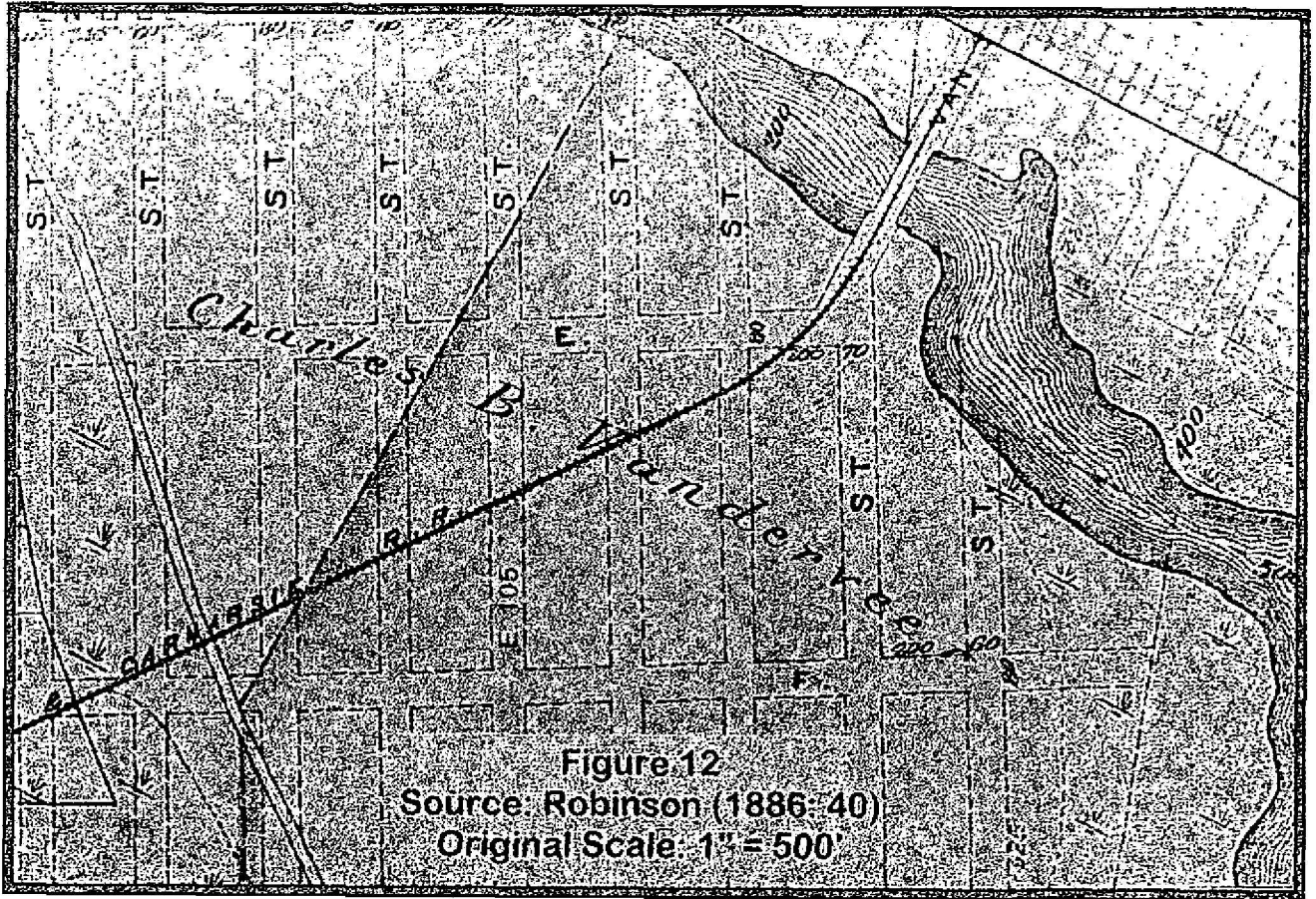
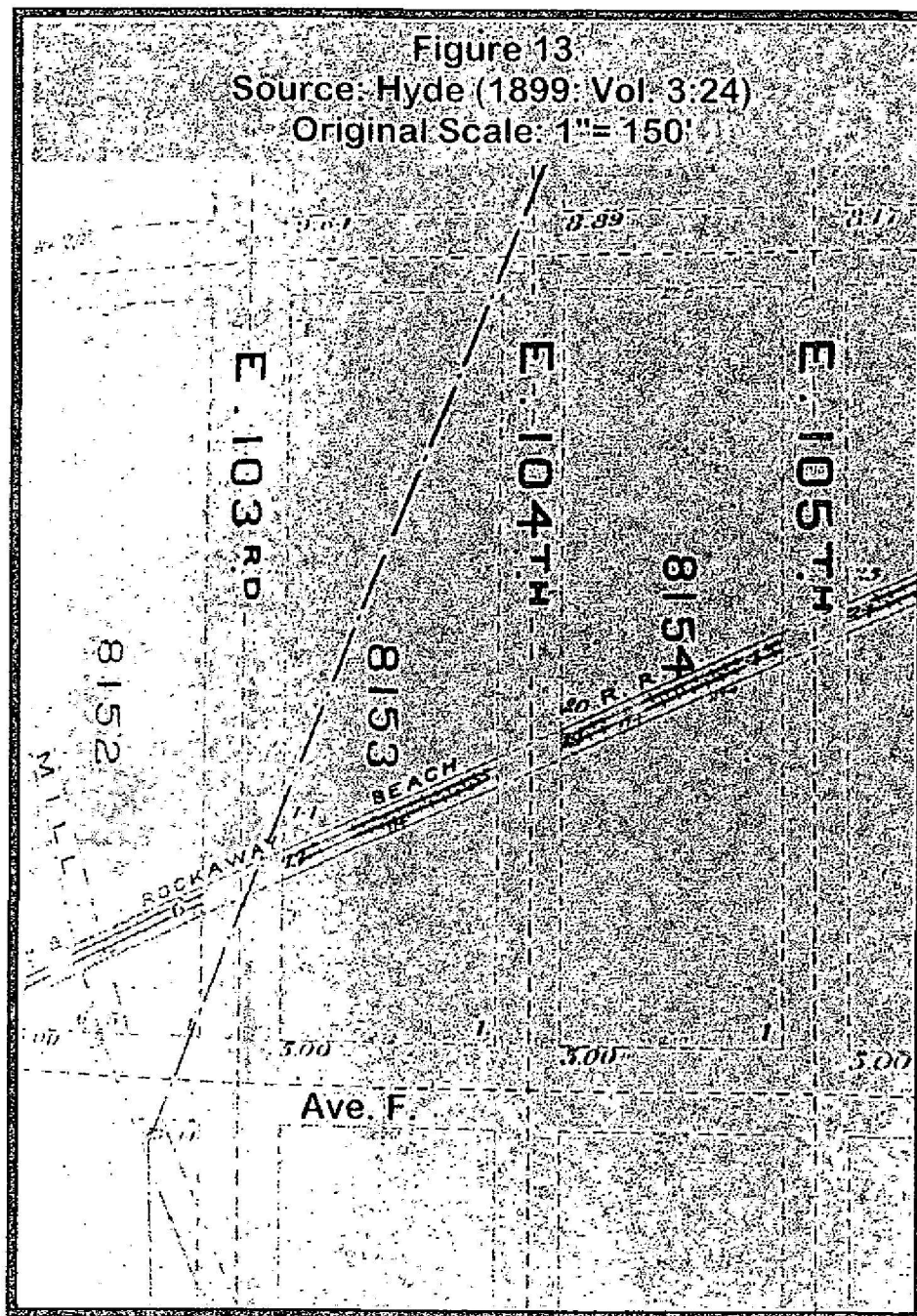


Figure 11
Source: Dripps (1977:7)
Original Scale: 1"=600'







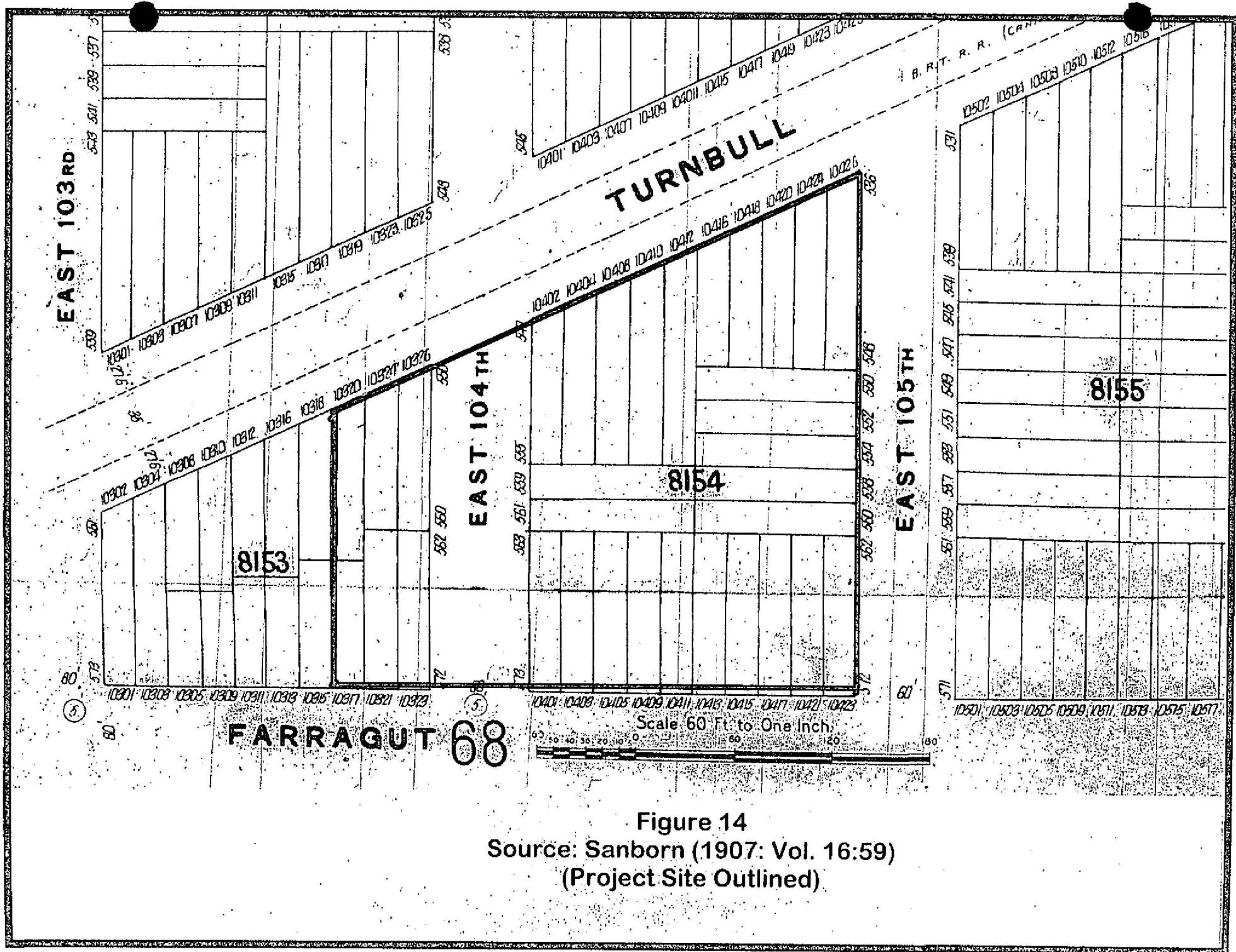
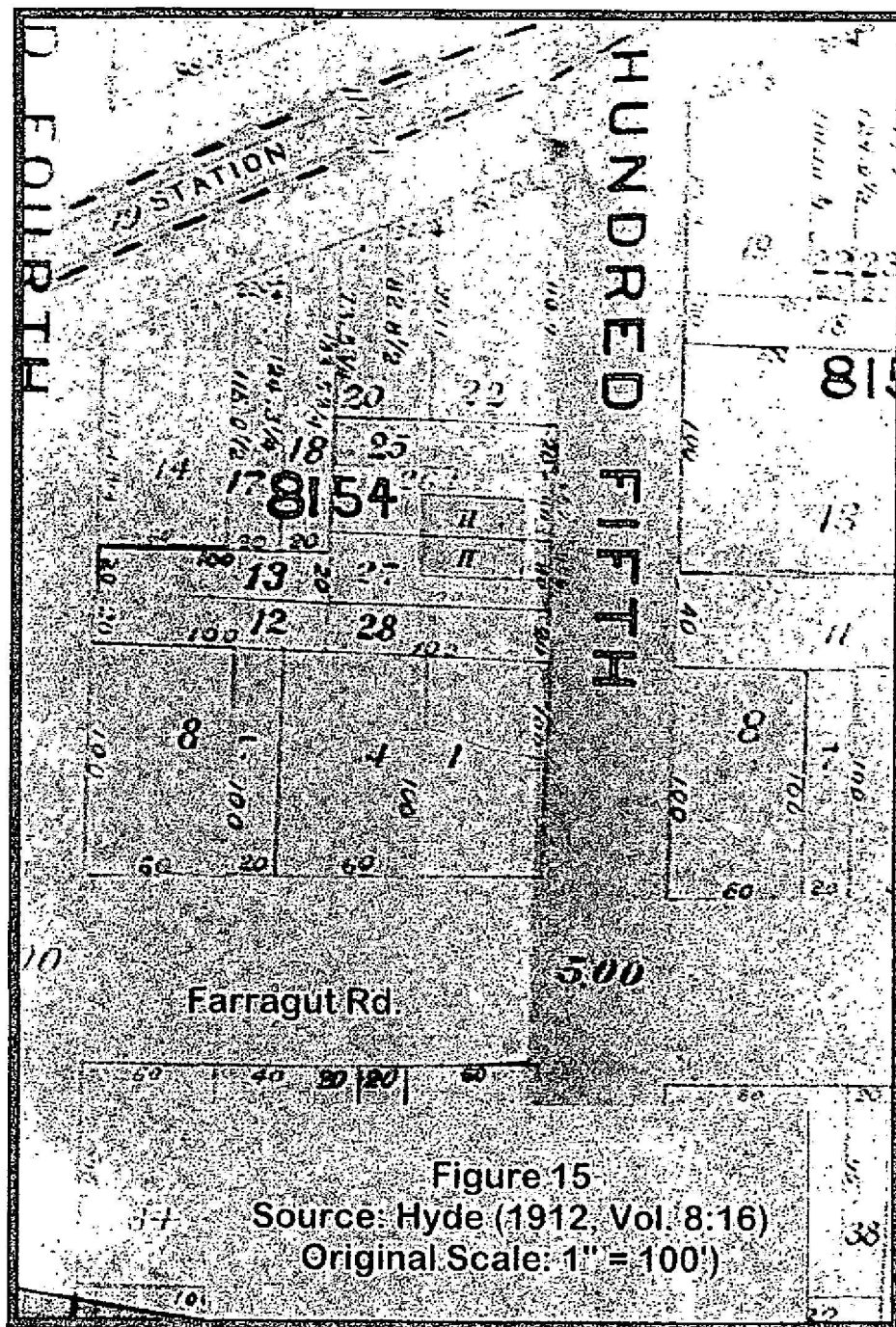
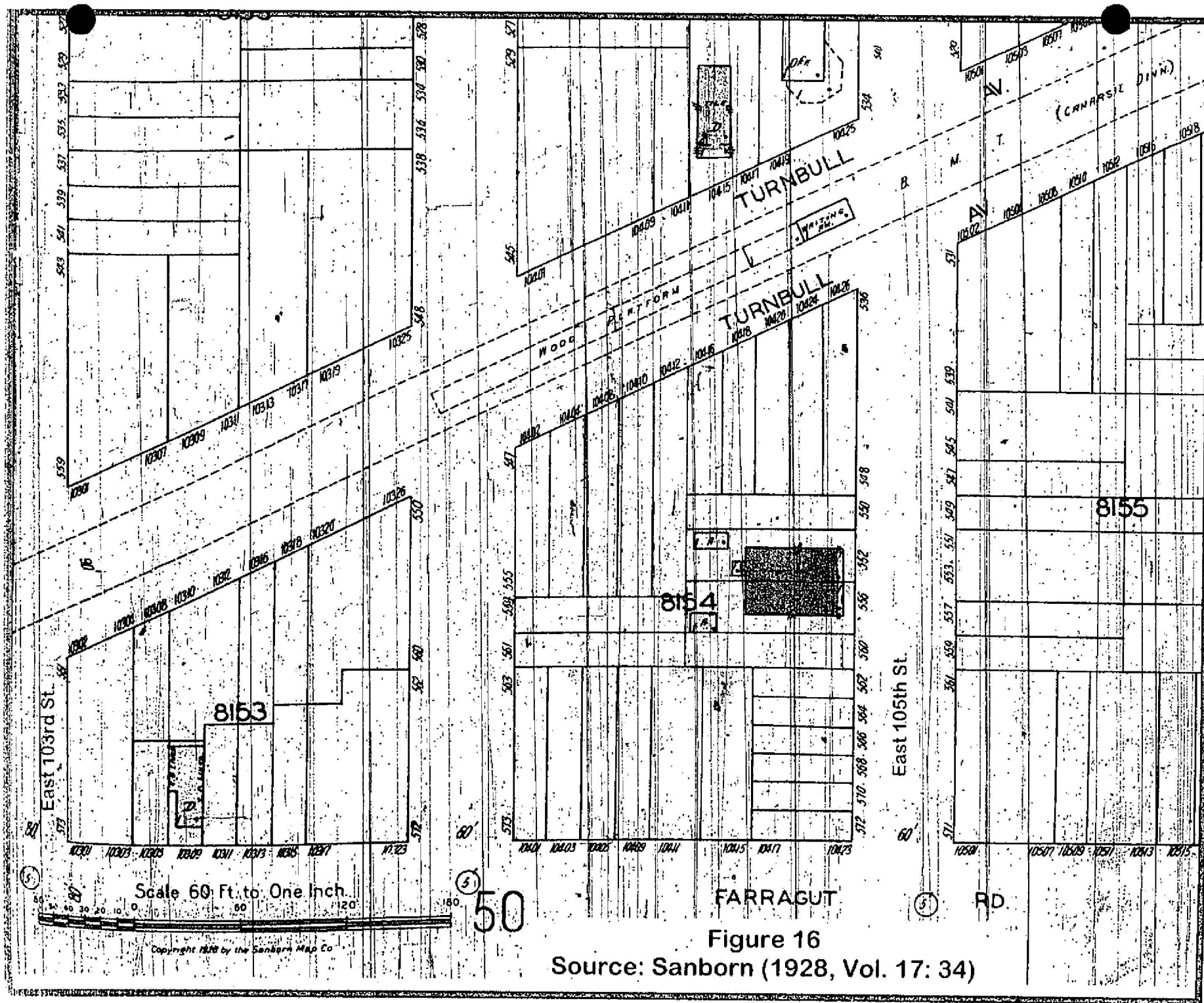
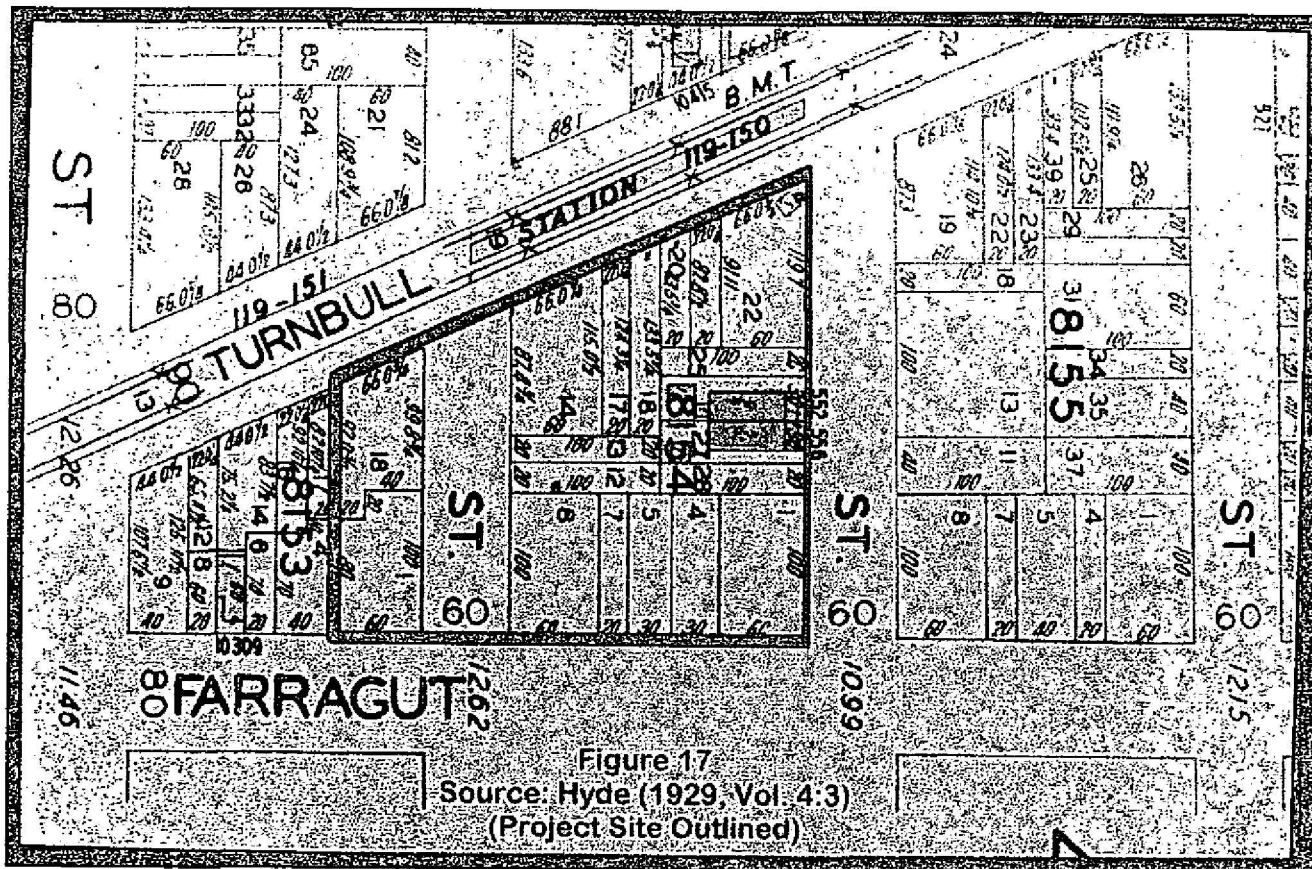
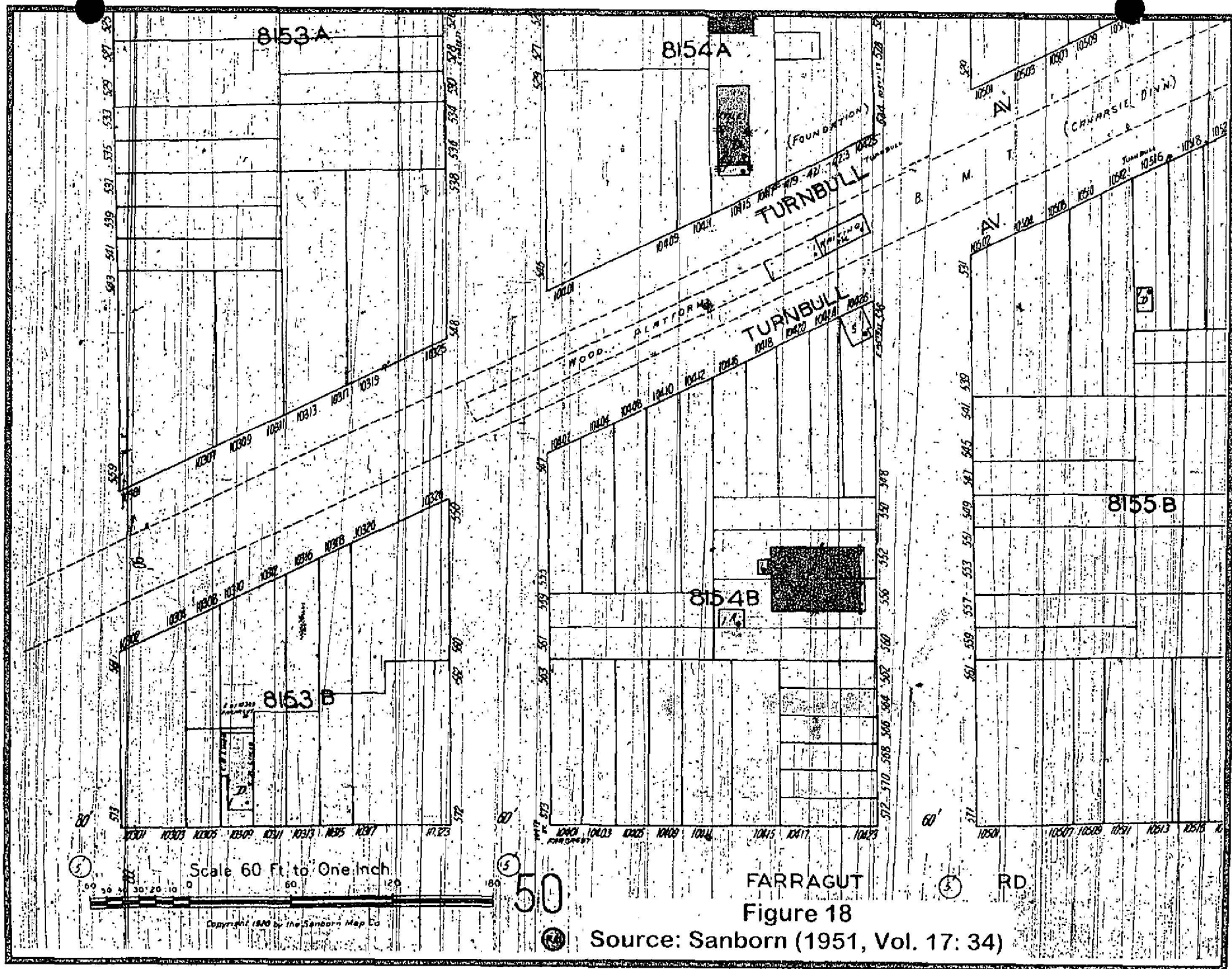


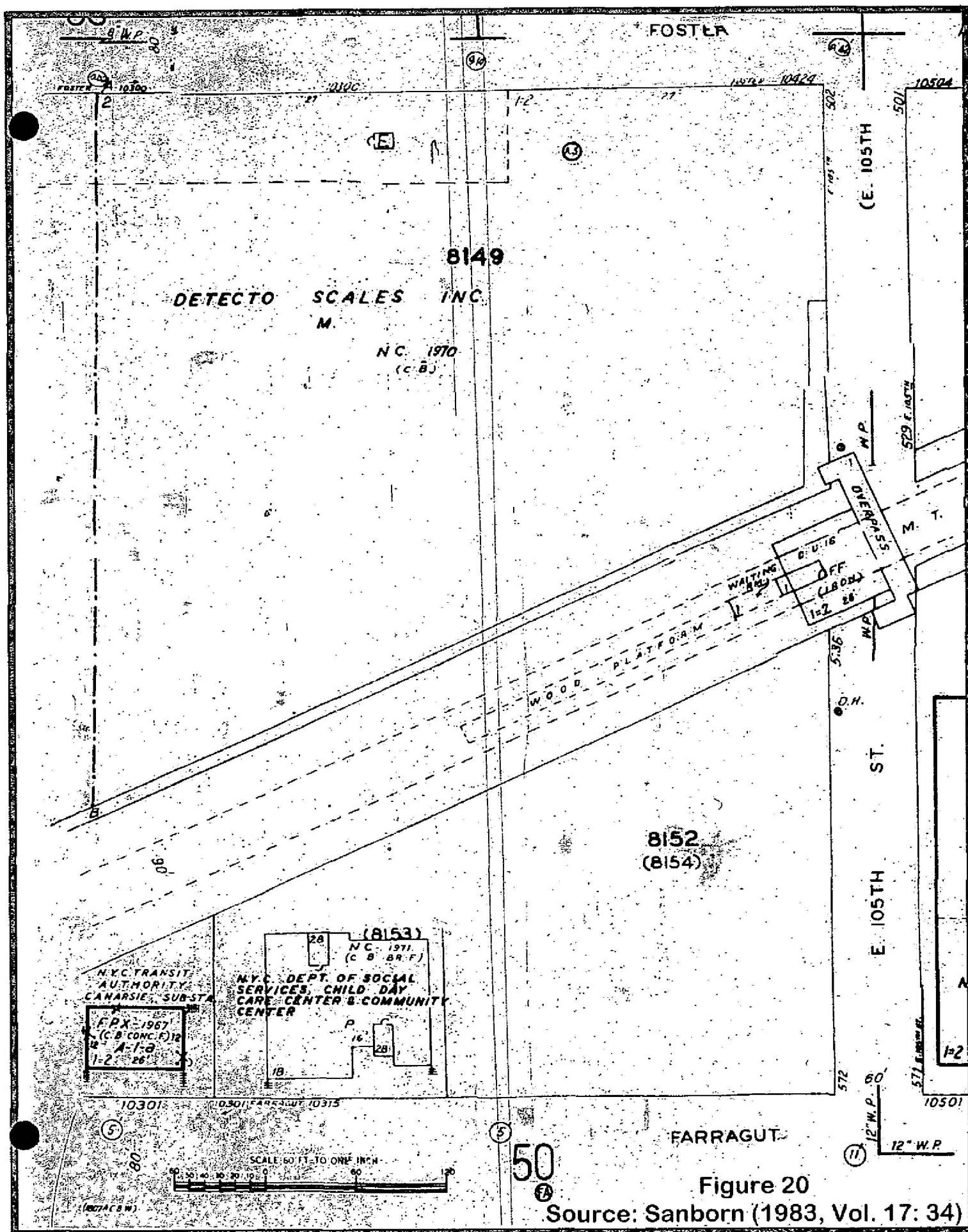
Figure 14
Source: Sanborn (1907: Vol. 16:59)
(Project Site Outlined)











PLATES



Plate 1
Project Site
View Southwest From East 105th Street at MTA Station
December 30, 1998



Plate 2
Easternmost Edge of Project Site at East 105th Street
View North from Southwest Corner of Farragut Road and East 105th Street
December 30, 1998

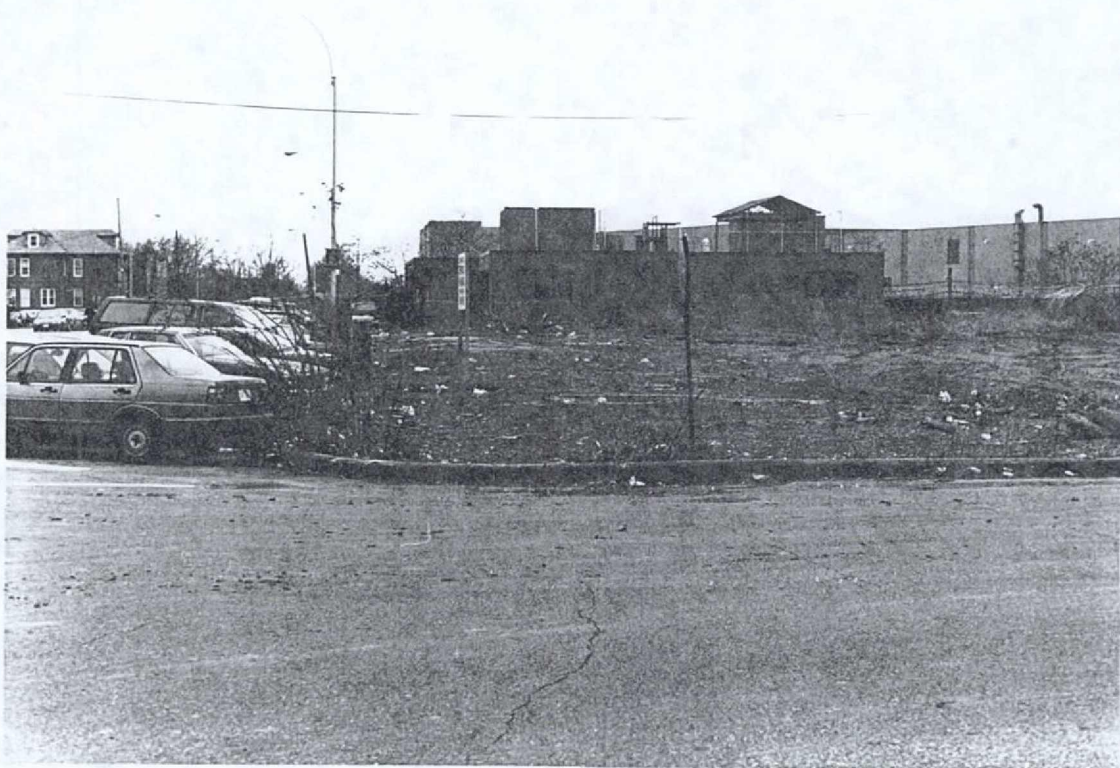


Plate 3
Southern Portion of Project Site
View West from Northeast Corner of Farragut Road and East 105th Street
December 30, 1998



Plate 4
Northeastern Portion of Project Site
View North Near Western Edge of Site
December 30, 1998



Plate 5
Project Site
View Westward From East 105th Street
Toward Former Site of #552 and #556 West 105th Street
December 30, 1998

APPENDIX A

**Ownership/Occupation Summaries
Block 8154, Lots 26 and 27
552 and 556 East 105th Streets**

		<u>556 East 105th Street</u> (Lot 27)	<u>552 East 105th Street</u> (Lot 26)
6/22/1908	Deed Liber 3084:199	----	Vanderveer Canarsie Development Syndicate To Oscar A Margolin (Resident Borough of Manhattan)
12/30/1909	Deed Liber 3195:355	Vanderveer Canarsie Development Syndicate To Joseph Mandinach & Moses Ribner (Both Resident Borough of Manhattan)	----
1910	Federal Census	Joseph & Yetter Mandinack & 5 children Morris(sic) & Anna Ribner & 3 children	Oscar & Anna Mullgollen(sic) & 7 children
12/23/1912	Deed Liber 3401:320	Moses L. & Hinda? Ribner Both Resident Borough of Brooklyn To Bernard Mandinack & Louis Jurman (Residing at 556 East 105th Street) [conveys 1/2 interest in property]	----
1915	N.Y. State Census	Joseph and Yetta Mandinach & 4 children Louis and Minnie Jurman & son.	Oscar & Anna Margolin & 6 children Norman & Bella Chatoff, & 3 children, brother & border
7/21/1919	Deed Liber 3805:244	----	Oscar & Annie Margolin (Borough of Brooklyn) To Elizabetta Alfano (Borough of Manhattan)

11/10/1919	Deed Liber 3945:133	Barnard Mandinach, Louis and Minnie Jurman & Joseph & Yetter Mandinach To Stansilaw & Anna Bai & Vincent & Josephine Dziadowicz	----
6/13/1921	Deed Liber 4044:554	Stansilaw & Anna Bai & Vincent & Josephine Dziadowicz (all residing at 556 East 105th Street) To Giacomo&Giovannina Fiorellino & Giovanni and Margherita Dibiasi (Manhattan)	----
9/6/1924	Deed Liber 4455:204	Giacomo&Giovannina Fiorellino (residing at 556 E. 105th Street) To Giovanni and Margherita Dibiasi (residing at 556 E. 105th Street) [1/2 of property]	----
1925	N. Y. State Census	----	Joseph S. & Elizabeth Alfano & 6 children Leo H. & Josephine Vitale & 2 children
1933/34	Directory	----	Joseph & Elizabeth Alfano (552 E. 105th St.)
11/21/1936	Deed Liber 5795:308	Bank foreclosure against	----
12/06/1936	Deed Liber 5713:503	Giovanni & Marherita Dibiasi & 2 tenants & sale To Frank Fileccia	
6/3/1943	Deed Liber 6334:448	Frank Fileccia (556 E. 105th	----
6/8/1943	Deed Liber 6336:595	St.) To Louis and Lucy Russano (Williams Avenue, Brooklyn)	
7/14/1953	Deed Liber 8143:254	Louis and Lucy Russano (both residing at 556 E. 105th St.) To John & Clara Rivera (Brooklyn)	----

2/20/1957	Deed Liber 8521:572	John & Clara Rivera (556 E. 105th St.) To Norjay Realty Corp	---
3/9/1961	Deed Liber 8521:433	Norjay Realty Corp. to Ralph and Carmella Cristella (both Residing at 556 E. 105th St.)	----