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New York Public Library

**Centralized Shipping
and
Maintenance Facility
Block 3576, Zerega Avenue, Bronx**

Phase 1A Archaeological Assessment

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I. INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

The New York Public Library (NYPL) has proposed the construction of a new Centralized Shipping and Maintenance Facility, including a loading dock and 140 parking spaces. Currently, the Library provides aid to 85 branch libraries throughout New York City from three separate locations. It is vital that the operations of these services be united in one location to maximize the productivity and efficiency of the Library as a whole. The proposed NYPL site is on Lot 1 of Block 3576, located along Randall Avenue between Havemeyer and Zerega Avenue. The site has an area of approximately 156,000 square feet. (See Figures 1 and 2)

The new NYPL site will contain numerous structures, such as the centralized maintenance operation, centralized shipping operation, duplicating, lockers, showers, lounges, toilets, recycling center, general storage, and loading dock. All will be contained within a footprint of 40,000 square feet. The remaining open area of the NYPL site will be used for parking.

The purpose of this "Phase 1A Archaeological Potential Assessment Report," is to determine the potential presence, type, extent and significance of any archaeological resources which may be present on the NYPL site. The assessment is based on archival research which documents the probability that the proposed parcel hosted any prehistoric or historical archaeological resources, and the likelihood that they would have survived the post-depositional disturbances which may have accompanied subsequent development.

In order to address these concerns, various sources of data were researched. Primary source material on the project site was collected to determine the study lot's original topography, and to compile a building history, filling and disturbance record. Historical maps and descriptions of the study area were sought at the Local History and Map Divisions of the New York Public Library, and the Municipal Reference Library. Additional information concerning subsurface disturbance, and pre-fill topography was gathered from boring logs and phase 1 hazardous materials evaluations.

To place the NYPL site within an historical context, local and regional histories were examined for pertinent material. These include 19th-century works such as Jenkins' *The Story of the Bronx*, Robert Bolton's *The History of the Several Towns, Manors, and Patents of the County of Westchester* and Shonnard and Spooner's *History of Westchester County*, as well as more recent works by local and amateur historians, such as those published in the *Bronx Historical Society Journal*. William Ritchie's *The Archaeology of New York State* provided a valuable overview of Native American culture and life ways during the prehistoric period. Other archaeological literature, available site reports and journal publications, were researched for data specific to the project area. Of particular pertinence were two earlier Historical Perspectives's studies: the 1991 "NYC Long Range Sludge Management Plan: Generic Environmental Impact Statement: Zerega" and the "Phase IA Archaeological Study of Block 3540: Castle Hill." Information was also obtained from a site visit made on 8/28/00 which photographed the current conditions of the NYPL lot. (See Photos 1 and 2)

II. ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The Bronx lies in the Hudson Valley region, in geological terms a section of the New England Upland Physiographic Province, a northern extension of the Great Appalachian Valley (Schubert 1968:74). The underlying geology is the same as that which underlies Manhattan Island, "chiefly gneiss and mica schist with heavy, intercalated beds of coarse-grained, dolomitic marble and thinner layers of serpentine" (Scharf 1886:6-7).

The original landscape was altered over the last million years by three known glacial periods. As the ice advanced and receded it eroded, carved, scoured and planed the landscape, and left behind tons of glacial debris, which formed low hills or moraines. In the Bronx these run north-south, directing the local creeks and streams (like Westchester Creek, which runs to the east of the project lot), toward outlets along the Long Island Sound and other bodies of water. These watercourses have further eroded limestone belts still exposed between the glacial deposits, creating a varied landscape of hills and valleys. With the final retreat of the ice, the study area was colonized by plants suited to arctic and tundra conditions, which eventually gave way to a forest composed of conifers and deciduous trees. During the last 12,000 years, the fluctuating floral and faunal communities eventually stabilized, resulting in a landscape of oak, hemlock, beech and chestnut trees, generally characterized as a climax forest. The shrinking of the ice caps, and the accompanying rise in sea levels flooded the outlets of the water courses, and created salt marshes in adjacent low-lying areas, such as those found on the project site until filling episodes during the first half of the 20th century.

The NYPL site is near by Westchester Creek to the east, Pugsley Creek further to the west and Long Island Sound to the south. A small watercourse crosses the project site, draining the marshy area into Westchester Creek, approximately 300 feet to the southwest. (See Figure 2)

A series of Phase I and Phase II studies, including soil borings, has been conducted within the project block. This information was compiled and analyzed by AKRF, Inc. for a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment on the lot adjoining the NYPL site (2000). They used specific nineteenth- and early 20th-century topographic maps from the Sanborn Fire Insurance Company, which display not only their area of assessment but also the NYPL area under observation now. It appears that both the NYPL and adjoining lots in 1891 consisted of undeveloped marsh land traversed by a stream near the Westchester Creek (AKRF Inc. 2000). (See Figure 3)

AKRF Inc. noted that the surface topography of their project site and the surrounding area (including the current NYPL site) was relatively uneven, with fill material and debris sporadically covering the area. The topography on the west-adjacent blocks (Havemeyer Avenue) slopes down to the east along Seward and Randall Avenues becoming almost level with the rest of the site. Based on reports assembled by the U.S. Geological Survey, the NYPL site has an average elevation of 20 feet above the national Geodetic Vertical Datum of 1929.

In July of 1987, Atlantic Environmental Service conducted soil borings of the southern half of the project block. The soil boring logs indicate that the soil from 0-2 feet beneath the surface consisted of topsoil and fill materials, from 5-7 feet consisted of fill materials and/or cinders, and from 10-12 feet consisted of loose fill. In October of 1999 soil borings were taken on the NYPL site confirming the fill overmantle on the proposed facility parcel. Boring Z-1, taken in the approximate center of Block 3578/Lot 1, "indicates that from the surface down to an approximate 14 foot depth, the mater is the results of a man made cinder fill" (Munoz Engineering 1999:3). Boring Z-2, south and east of the first boring was recorded as 19 feet of fill below current grade.

The general contours of the NYPL site are from filling activities, such as the southern and western perimeters of the site which consist of large berms of earth and debris, piled approximately three to seven feet high. These areas and also the rest of the site are concealed beneath a thick layer of vegetation, both wild and domestic.

III. PRE-CONTACT ERA¹

As early as 1919, archaeologist Alanson Skinner wrote that "aboriginal sites within the limits of New York City have almost entirely disappeared" (Skinner 1919:49). This statement emphasizes the difficulty in researching prehistoric, i.e., pre-Contact, sites in the urban environment created by the growth of the city during the 20th century. However, the continuous changes made to the urban landscape also provide opportunities to investigate possible historical and prehistoric materials long buried under fill, land-fill or standing structures. Among the site types seldom preserved in the urban setting, the most rare are those from the prehistoric era.

Researchers have divided the prehistoric era in the coastal New York region into three cultural periods, based on human prehistoric adaptation to changing environmental conditions. In order to be able to assess the NYPL site's potential for prehistoric exploitation, it is first necessary to review these time periods and their associated settlement patterns. A brief discussion of their characteristics follows.

Paleo-Indian Period (10,000-7,000 B.C.)

The Paleo-Indian period commenced in the New World when small parties of hunters crossed the open land bridge between Siberia and Alaska during the Late Pleistocene epoch. Although limited information regarding Paleo-Indians has been discovered, archaeological evidence, in the form of lithic material remains, has enabled researchers to form some conclusions. It is generally accepted that Paleo-Indian subsistence was based upon the hunting of migratory big-game animals (e.g., mammoth, caribou and bison) that were found across the North American continent. Little is known, however, about the appearance and daily life of these people. The predominant materials recovered archaeologically are stone tools. The dominant tool type found is the fluted point. In the western and southwestern United States, this tool has been discovered at numerous "kill sites" associated with animal remains. Although no kill sites have been discovered in the Northeast, several campsites have been investigated archaeologically. Information from this research indicates that Paleo-Indians traveled seasonally in small bands and often returned repeatedly to established campsites. From the site characteristics, the Paleo-Indians showed a definite preference for well-elevated locations, and a large number of sites were found near or on the margins of swampy ground. Also desirable was the proximity of major waterways, large fertile valleys and the coastal plain, where the densest population of food animals was supported. To date, the Paleo-Indian site nearest to the present project location is a small campsite at Port Mobil, Staten Island (Ritchie 1980:1,3,7).

¹ Much of the following prehistoric and historical text relies on earlier evaluations filed by Historical Perspectives: 1991 NYC Long Range Sludge Management Plan: Zerega and 1994 Police Service Facility, Castle Hill.

Archaic Period (7,000-1,000 B.C.)

The changing environment of the Northeast during the post-glacial period, and the larger variety of plants and animals available for exploitation mark the end of the Paleo-Indian and the beginning of the Archaic period. Although still based on hunting and gathering, subsistence activities changed focus from the dwindling populations of big-game animals to the smaller game found in the now dominant deciduous woodland environment (e.g., white-tailed deer, moose, black bear and turkey). Among the objects added to the lithic tool kit of the Archaic were the narrow-bladed projectile point, beveled adz and grooved ax. The inclusion of grinders and the mortar and pestle indicate a greater emphasis on plant gathering. Scholars have agreed that there is a "distinct regional flavor" to the Archaic sites recovered archaeologically. Excavated sites are often labeled as distinct complexes relating to the different drainage areas within which they were discovered. This has led to the theory that there were perhaps specific territorial distributions of Archaic people (Ritchie 1980:32).

In New York coastal areas, numerous, small, "nearly always multi-component sites variously situated on tidal inlets, coves and bays, particularly at the heads of the latter, and on freshwater ponds . . ." have been found. By the Late Archaic, these areas offered a rich environment for exploitation by humans, providing shellfish, small game, fish, salt hay and tuberous grasses, making larger and more permanent settlements possible. Coastal sites show a principal reliance on shellfish, especially oysters, hard and soft shell clams and bay scallops, which were readily available in the water around the Bronx (Ritchie 1980:143,166-167). Only a few isolated Archaic finds have been recorded within New York City. These include Clason's Point, a coastal site approximately two miles southwest of the project site, which contained two Archaic projectile points. (See Figure 5)

Woodland Period (1,000 B.C. - c.1600 A.D.)

The Woodland period is marked by the introduction of pottery, horticultural activity, pipe-smoking, ceremonial burials, and the establishment of trade networks. A variety of site types have been found, including primary habitation sites, which by the Woodland period had become larger and more permanent villages. The villages are often found near a large fresh water source, e.g. a river, lake or an extensive wetland, and Late Woodland period sites in southern New York tend to be along "tidal streams and coves," on "well-drained sites" (Ritchie 1980:16), and "on the margins of bays and tidal streams" (Smith 1950:130). Secondary sites, where specific activities took place (e.g., tool-making, butchering, shellfish-gathering, processing and/or discard), were situated near resource locations. Shellfish refuse heaps, called "middens," reached immense proportions, covering from one to over three acres.

A wider variety of tool types has been recovered from Woodland sites, including the bow and arrow, as well as tools developed specifically for fishing and horticultural activity. By the end of the Woodland period, the importance of the production of corn, beans and squash in encouraging permanent settlement is visible (Ritchie 1980:180,266-267). The production of

clay pots as storage vessels, which commenced during the transition from the Archaic to the Woodland, is also evidence of the increased dependence on plants as a food source, and a more sedentary lifestyle.

The establishment of trade networks among the Native American groups present in the New York City area is discussed by archaeologist Reginald Bolton in *Indian paths in the Great Metropolis*. According to Bolton, two trails running north-south on either side of Westchester Creek provided links to the trade network for the native population in the vicinity of the project area. Historical research by Robert Grumet supports Bolton, and both identify one of these trails as the precursor of present Castle Hill Avenue (within 1500 feet to the southwest of the study site). (See Figure 5)

An important component of background research on the Late Woodland period is the examination of the early documentary record. Written accounts from 17th-century explorers and early settlers provide our only first-hand details of Native Americans in the New York City area. Although many of these accounts discuss hostilities between these two very different peoples, information regarding the location and appearance of some of the Late Woodland villages and people is included. In the general vicinity of the NYPL site, the Native Americans encountered were the Wiechquaesgeck, a group of Munsee-speaking Upper Delaware Indians who inhabited portions of the areas now known as the Bronx, Manhattan and Westchester County (Kearns, Kirkorian and Schaefer 1994:8).

Robert Juet, who traveled with Henry Hudson on his voyages of discovery, described several meetings with native peoples along the shores of what is now the Hudson River (1609). His journal details the objects traded between his shipmates and the native population. In most cases, small groups approached the ship to trade "Indian wheate" (maize) and tobacco for knives and beads (Van Zandt 1981:10-11). Adriaen Block, a Dutch explorer who sailed near the present project location in 1614, noted seeing "large wigwams of the tribe on Castle Hill" (approximately 2,000 feet southwest of the project site) (Skinner 1919:76), and describes it as the location of one of the "principal Indian settlements" in Westchester County (Grumet 1981:8). Although Grumet and Seifert both note this village or "stockade," on their maps of Native American sites the Bronx, this claim has never been substantiated, and Grumet suggests that the site was destroyed by modern construction and development. (See Figures 5 and 6) The site was excavated by Alanson Skinner in 1918, and Bolton reported that Skinner had uncovered a shell midden, a number of unidentified artifacts, and debris associated with a wampum production site (Kearns, Kirkorian and Schneiderman-Fox 1991:3; Grumet 1981:8). Excavation of this "wampum factory," at the tip of the Castle Hill peninsula (about 3,500 feet southwest of the project lots), produced shell, pottery, drills, tool fragments and points representing the Early Archaic through the Early Woodland periods (Kearns and Kirkorian 1986:14). Adriaen van der Donck, one of the first European landowners in the present Bronx, witnessed the production of wampum and published this description in his book, *A Description of the New Netherlands* (1655):

They strike off the thin parts of those shells and preserve the pillars or standards, which they grind smooth and even and reduce the same according to their thickness, and drill a hole through every piece and string the same on strings . . . (O'Donnell 1968:93).

By the 17th century, Native Americans had developed more complex territorial group dynamics as noted by Johannes de Laet, who in 1625 wrote that the people were "divided into many nations and languages." He describes their clothing as made from "the skins of animals," and their food as 'maize, crushed fine and baked in cakes, with fish, birds and wild game" (Bolton 1972:16). Because their group was decimated by European-introduced diseases against which the Indians had no resistance, and often savage hostilities with Europeans and other Native American groups, during the 17th century many of the surviving Wiechquaesgeck moved to northern Westchester County and New Jersey (Grumet 1981:60-62; Kearns, Kirkorian and Schaefer 1994:8).

In addition to the Castle Hill "village", the inventoried archaeological site closest to the project lots is #5327, a site on the east bank of Westchester creek, described by archaeologist Arthur C. Parker as showing "traces of occupation." This site is imprecisely located, approximately 2,000 feet northeast of the project lot (Parker 1920:pl.147). Another important site in the vicinity of the project area is the Snakapins village site on Clason Point, investigated by Skinner in 1918. This site, about two miles southwest of the project lot, provides much of what is known about the inhabitants of coastal New York during the Late Woodland and Contact periods. Skinner excavated the remains of a large village site on a high sandy knoll, approximately one-half mile from the tip of Clason Point. Skinner stated that the village had been inhabited between 1575 and 1625-1643, and may have contained over 300 people (Skinner 1919:49; Grumet 1981:54). The site contained over sixty earth ovens, human burials, a large number of stone tools and fishing implements and pottery fragments (Kearns and Kirkorian 1986:11). Secondary sites, including several shell middens, were discovered along the shores of Westchester and Pugsley Creeks. This village site has been referred to as a "type site" for the late prehistoric period. Sites of the so-called Clasons Point phase in southern New York, tend to be located "on the second rise of ground above high- water level on tidal inlets and they approximate an acre in extent" (Ritchie 1980:271).

Prehistoric Potential

The evidence from 17th-century observers' accounts, archaeological reports and site inventories clearly indicate a strong prehistoric and early contact period Native American presence near the NYPL site on Castle Hill Neck, along the shores of Westchester and Pugsley Creeks, as well as on neighboring Clasons Point. A Native American path adjacent to the site linked Castle Hill Neck with other mainland Indian settlements and resource extraction loci.

As described in Section II of this report, pre-fill maps of the project lot show that the NYPL site area once possessed many of the attributes that attracted prehistoric peoples, and

suggest a high potential for exploitation by humans in prehistory. As detailed in the discussion of the Native American culture periods, these include a large-scale saltwater marsh, which covers most of the site, and extends along the shores of Westchester Creek; access to a major body of water, Westchester Creek, within 500 feet of the project site, giving access to the Long Island Sound, 4,000 feet to the south; a source of fresh water, the creek and a tiny rivulet which crosses into the project lot; and most importantly, an area of elevated, well drained land in the southwest corner of the site. (See Figure 4) (For conclusions and recommendations, see Section V.)

IV. HISTORICAL PERIOD

Until its annexation by New York City, the Bronx was the southernmost section of Westchester County. Although a part of the Dutch colony of New Netherland, because of Westchester County's proximity to Connecticut and its aggressive, land-hungry population, the earliest European settlements in the eastern portions of the county, including the eastern Bronx and the project area, were dominated by the English and New Englanders.

As was the Dutch practice, the New Amsterdam-based administration of the Dutch West India Company purchased most of the present Bronx east of the Bronx River from the resident Indians in 1640. This area, which included the project site, was called Vredelandt² (FRAY-deh-lahnt), which means "land of peace" in Dutch (Jenkins 1912:26,30). (See Fig. 7) With company ownership established, Governor-General Willem Kieft could then grant colonists a *grond brief*, or patent to purchase property and establish a settlement. In 1643, the first of these patents was assigned to John Throckmorton (or Throgmorton) and 35 families of "Quakers and other malcontents from the New England colonies." Their settlement, was established on what is now Throgs Neck (about 3.3 miles southeast of the project lots - see Figure 7), possibly as early as the autumn of 1642 (Brodhead 1854:333-334; Jenkins 1912:30).

Tragically, Throckmorton's settlement was destroyed (1643) when simmering hostilities with the Wiechquaesgeck and other local Native American groups erupted into full-blown warfare. Wiechquaesgeck warriors burnt the buildings, and killed the people and livestock. By chance, a group of settlers escaped when a boat arrived at the time of the attack (Brodhead 1854:366-367). Vredelandt was swept clean of European settlement. Wiechquaesgeck resistance was only broken after a series of savage massacres by the Dutch, culminating in the attack on a large village near Bedford, New York in 1644, under the leadership of Captain John Underhill. It is estimated that over 500 Native Americans were shot or burned to death (Grumet 1981:61).

In 1646, Thomas Cornell, a survivor of the Throgs Neck massacre, obtained a ground brief to land between the Bronx River and Pugsley's Creek, about 5,500 feet southwest of the study lot. (See Figure 7) This land became known as Cornell's Neck, but is now called Clason Point. Further hostilities with the Indians caused Cornell to leave for Rhode island by 1653 (Jenkins 1912:31).³

The earliest permanent settlement in Vredelandt was illegal. A group from New Haven under the leadership of Thomas Pell established a village on the shore of Westchester Creek (about .6 miles north of the study parcel). The Native Americans resold the land west of the Bronx River to Pell in 1654. (See Figure 7) Despite Director-General Peter Stuyvesant's warnings to leave Dutch territory, the settlers remained, refusing to recognize Dutch

²Jenkins is the only source that spells it Vriedelandt, which is probably a more archaic orthography.

suzerainty. Finally, in March 1656, Stuyvesant sent an armed expedition to "West Chester," and captured 23 men, taking them to New Amsterdam. There, moved by the pleadings of the prisoners' wives, Stuyvesant and the Council released the men, and on their submission of a petition to remain at West Chester and to recognize Dutch authority, they were given permission to return to West Chester, which the Dutch named Oostdorp (AWS-door-rup), or east village (Jenkins 1912:35-36; Brodhead 1854:595,618-619).

Despite his magnanimity, Stuyvesant's difficulties with the Oostdorpers did not end there. The colonists constantly intrigued with the Connecticut colony, and were suspected of instigating various Indian groups to attack the Dutch, sometimes promising assistance in exchange for additional lands. Rather than recognize Dutch authority, and as a way of extending the boundaries of Connecticut, the Westchester villagers recognized only Pell's purchase, even though they had to pay him an annual quit-rent. These problems continued even after the English captured all of New Netherland in 1664 (Jenkins 1912:38,48).

Under English hegemony, as the only village in the area, Westchester was made the seat of Westchester County (1683), and from 1700 to 1759 was the location of the Court of Oyer and General Jail Delivery (Jenkins 1912:396-398). The Township of Westchester included the project lot as well as all of the former Vredelandt. (See Figure 7) The earliest recorded property transaction on Castle Hill Neck was in 1685, when John and Elizabeth Cromwell exchanged 6 acres of meadow for Thomas Hunt's "8 acres of upland, situated on Castle Neck." John Cromwell was believed to be a nephew of Oliver Cromwell, and for a time Castle Hill Neck was known as Cromwell's Neck. The property later passed from the Cromwells to the Underhill family, descendants of Captain John Underhill. (Jenkins 1912:409).

The salt marshes which dominated the project lot were hardly considered wasteland. Salt hay was a much-desired livestock fodder, and the town charter of 1721 included provisions for the equitable division of such a valuable resource. Each freeholder was entitled to free pasturage for 25 sheep, or "a cow in lieu of five sheep, a horse, mare, or an ox; in lieu of a sheep, a calf; in lieu of two sheep a yearling". The area set aside was known as "the Commons," and included 400 acres of meadowland along the west shore of Westchester Creek (about 1,000 feet north of the project site), as well as a fenced acre on the east shore where owners "folded and washed" their sheep.

The Reverend Isaac Wilkins, purchased the Castle Hill property, including the study parcel, from the Underhill family sometime after 1763. Issac Wilkins was born in 1741, the son of a wealthy Jamaica planter. When the father died, young Wilkins was sent to New York to attend King's College (now Columbia University) in 1756. He completed his A.B. degree in 1760, A.M. in 1763, and prepared himself for a career in the Church of England. After completing his education he settled in Westchester County (Bolton 1881:391), occupying a house on Castle Hill Neck, about 2,400 feet southwest of the project site, near the intersection of present Norton and Screvin Avenues. (See Figure 9 "Farm yard") This building, believed to have been constructed c.1765, may have been built by Issac Wilkins, or by one of the

previous owners. It was not torn down until after 1927 (Jenkins 1912:264,407; Wells 1927:311).

Issac Wilkins married Isabella Morris, the half-sister of Lewis Morris, the wealthy and influential Lord of the Manor of Morrisania and later signer of the Declaration of Independence. Because of his education, wealth and social connections, Wilkins served as a Westchester representative in the Provincial Assembly, where he became the leader of the loyalists, allying himself with the powerful De Lancey and Philipse families against his in-laws. Partially due to the strong influence of the De Lanceys and the Church of England in the region, the parts of Westchester County along Long Island Sound were the most Tory in the vicinity of New York City (Jenkins 1912:114,115,409). When the freeholders and inhabitants the county gathered at White Plains in 1775 to choose provincial delegates to the Continental Congress, the majority refused to take part, and drew up a protest and declaration of allegiance to King and Constitution. The author of the protest was Isaac Wilkins, who was also probably the author of a series of loyalist articles signed A. W. F. (A Westchester Farmer), and published in New York City in royalist printer James Rivington's *Gazette*. They were considered important and influential enough to merit a response by Alexander Hamilton. After news of the Battles of Lexington and Concord reached New York, Wilkins, feeling endangered by his "blatant display of Toryism," and claiming an unwillingness to fight against either his country or king, fled to England in 1775 (Bolton 1881:392; Jenkins 1912:117,264).

During the Revolution, remote Castle Hill Neck, with only one dwelling, was not a scene of major troop movements. During August of 1776, when Generals Washington and Heath were attempting to defend positions in and around Manhattan Island from the British forces under General Howe, Heath stationed a chain of sentinels along the coast from Hell Gate to Throgs Neck, to provide warning of impending British landings. Howe eventually landed at Throgs Neck, on October 12th, and when that location was deemed unsuitable for maintaining supply lines and communications, Howe moved his forces to the vicinity of Eastchester and New Rochelle on the 18th (Morris 1896:12). (See Figure 8)

Until the signing of peace and the British evacuation of New York in 1783, the present Bronx and Westchester Counties became the "Neutral Ground" between the British and American lines. Raids and counterraids, gangs of vicious bandits nominally Loyalist ("Cowboys") or American ("Skinners"), as well as the occupying army's enormous demand for wood for heating and cooking, denuded the forests, demolished wooden buildings and drove off or killed many of the remaining inhabitants. The isolated project area fared better than the western sections of the county (Morris 1896:15), since the main bodies of British troops were concentrated near Kingsbridge, at the northern tip of Manhattan Island.

After the war, the county returned to its peaceful existence as an agricultural region. The only commercial activity was the sloops which transported produce to New York City and also visited Eastchester regularly (Shonnard and Spooner 1900:534). Westchester village was only 15 miles from New York by water, as opposed to 19 miles by land routes, and Westchester Creek had always been navigable to the village. The sloop trade began in the 17th

century, and continued to the 19th century when the sloops were replaced by small steamboats (Wells et al. 1927:283).

Following his sojourn in England, and later on British-controlled Long Island, Isaac Wilkins returned to his property on Castle Hill Neck, but sold it to Gilbert Pell for £2,500 in 1784. Oddly, his estate had not been confiscated, as were those of many other loyalists. It is possible that his brothers-in-law, Lewis and Gouverneur Morris, both members of the Continental Congress, were influential enough to protect him. Wilkins finally took holy orders in 1798, and in 1799 became rector of St. Peter's parish in Westchester village (Bolton 1881:392-393, 422; Jenkins 1912:409). The present landmarked 1855 St. Peter's building still stands on the same site as the church Wilkins knew, at 2500 Westchester Avenue, 4,000 feet north of the project site (Willensky and White 1988:541). According to local historian Fordham Morris, Wilkins "was foremost in helping his former neighbors to reorganize their affairs," and taught them "higher agriculture, learned by him in England" (Morris 1896:7). He died in 1830, and was buried in the church beside his wife (Bolton 1881:393).

During the first half of the 19th century, the necks of southeastern Westchester were occupied by wealthy merchants, "who placed on the breezy shores of the East River their summer homes, but [were] compelled, as now, by the exacting cares of commercial life to be near the growing metropolis" (Morris 1896:16). After passing through a series of owners, the estate, including the project site, was purchased by the distinguished lawyer Martin Wilkins, Isaac's eldest son (Bolton 1881; 423), presumably after he acquired the former town commons from the town trustees in 1825 for \$300,000 (Jenkins 1912:406). (See Fig. 10 - the Commons was the area gridded and labeled "Unionport.")

One of the Wilkinsees built a new residence on the elevated section of Castle Hill (about 2,000 feet southwest of the project area, near the present intersection of Castle Hill and Norton Avenues), and the c.1765 building became a farmhouse. (See Figures 9 "Gov Wilkins," 10) The property passed to Martin's son, Gouverneur Morris Wilkins, who enlarged and beautified the mansion (Morris 1896:17):

In 1851, Gouverneur Morris Wilkins sold the former Westchester commons acreage at \$200 an acre to Henry Palmer, a trustee for the New York Industrial Home Association No. 2. Association No. 1 was a building association composed of "tradesmen" and "employees" - "people of small means" who had banded together to escape New York City's exorbitant rents and build a village at a convenient distance from their workplaces. This resulted in the founding of Mount Vernon in 1851. In 1854, presumably with the same intentions, Association No. 2 filed plans for the village of Unionport, beginning approximately 1,000 feet north of the project lot (Jenkins 1912:406; Shonnard and Spooner 1900:579). (See Figures 9 and 10)

The Wilkins estate, along with the NYPL study lot, remained undeveloped for the remainder of the 19th century, passing at Gouverneur Wilkins' death in 1871 to his son-in-law,

John Screvin. In 1887 Screvin sold 150 acres of the estate to the American Jockey Club, which was looking for a new site after Jerome Park Racetrack was converted into a municipal park. This area was immediately south of the project site, and included all of Castle Hill Neck south of present Lacombe Avenue. However, the Jockey Club never used the site because "it was considered out of the way and had poor transportation facilities" (DiBrino 1972:1-2).

Although other areas of the Bronx experienced population booms after annexation by New York City in 1895, the Neck remained undeveloped and the NYPL lot was never historically inhabited. On the 1891 and 1910 Sanborn Insurance maps, the streets were mapped adjacent to the project site itself but the site and the surrounding area (owned by the Catherine V.R. Turnbull and the McDonald Estates) were still indicated as undeveloped marsh land and salt meadows traversed by a stream. (See Figures 3 and 11) Furthermore, on the Sanborn Insurance maps from 1927, and 1951 (water courses are no longer shown), the project site is never occupied. (See Figures 11 and 12) During the first half of the 20th century, neighboring Clason Point and to some extent, Castle Hill Neck, became popular summer fishing and bathing spots, and the number of docks along the Westchester Creek shore increases visibly from the 1922 to the 1939 topographic maps (Ultan and Hermaylin 1992: 151). (Figure 4)

After World War II, the housing shortage in New York City became acute, and government-sponsored, low-rent apartments were built to alleviate this problem. Preferred sites for these complexes were areas of undeveloped, vacant land, such as that on Castle Hill Neck, where the Castle Hill Houses were constructed southwest of the project site, on the blocks between Havemeyer, Lacombe, Olmstead and Seward Avenues (Ultan and Hermaylin 1992:5-6). (See Figure 1)

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Historical Period

Cartographic and other historical data provide no evidence that the New York Public Library site was occupied for any purpose during the historical period between 1891 and 2000. During that time, the marshlands once on the site were filled. The filling process itself would have been destructive to the natural subsurface condition of the entire site. The process, at a minimum, would have entailed compaction by heavy machinery and grading. Therefore, it is the conclusion of this report that the study site is not sensitive for buried cultural resources from the historical period.

Prehistoric Period

Overwhelming evidence exists that Native Americans exploited the natural resources of the Bronx for thousands of years before the arrival of Europeans. Furthermore, as described in Section III, the Indian presence on Castle Hill Neck has been documented in both the written and archaeological records. It is also clear that the watercourses and marshland once found on the New York Public Library site offered prehistoric people a source of food and raw materials.

Settlement pattern data of the prehistoric culture periods show a strong correlation between habitation and processing sites and the confluence of two water courses, proximity to a major waterway, a marsh resource and/or well-drained, elevated land. A review of the documentary and cartographic evidence confirms that all of these criteria were met in the project lot area. However, despite these attributes which would have proven attractive to Native Americans, most of the site was part of a larger salt marsh along the shore of Westchester Creek. Although it is likely that the marshy resources of the site were tapped, most of the project site was too wet and soggy a location for an Indian campsite or processing station.

However, one small area of elevated land has been identified – the northern edge of a small isolated hillock in the southwest corner of the project lot. (See Figure 11) It is possible that a limited portion of the proposed NYPL facility site was used as a temporary shellfish processing station during times of a lowered sea level but the extent of the possibly elevated land available for habitation and processing sites is very limited. Therefore, this northern edge of a small hillock would not have been a substantive habitation or processing site preferred by Native Americans.

It is always possible that a stray artifact may be recovered during an excavation, but the evidence for prehistoric potential in these formerly marshy areas is not sufficient to warrant further archaeological research, field investigation or monitoring.

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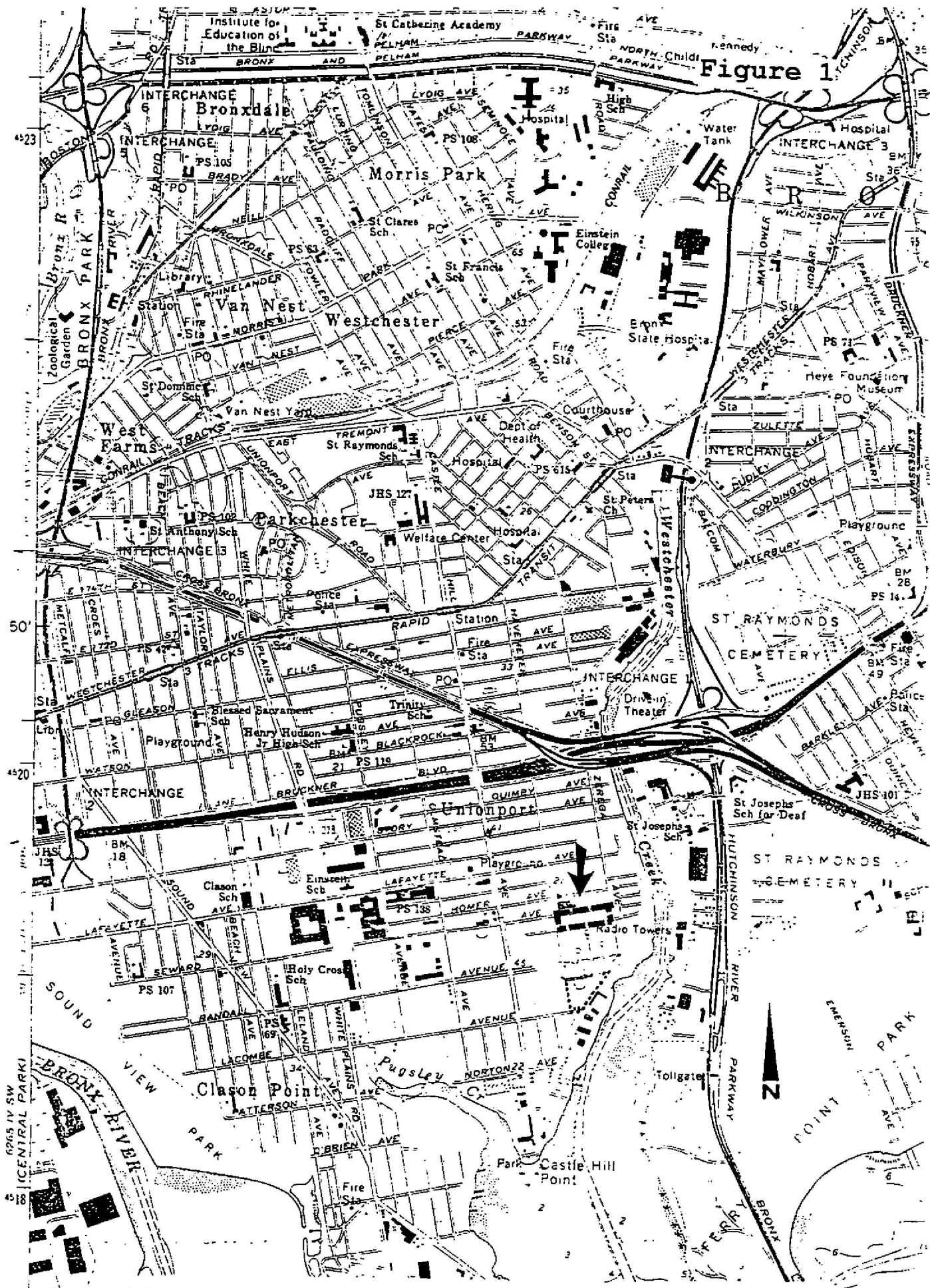
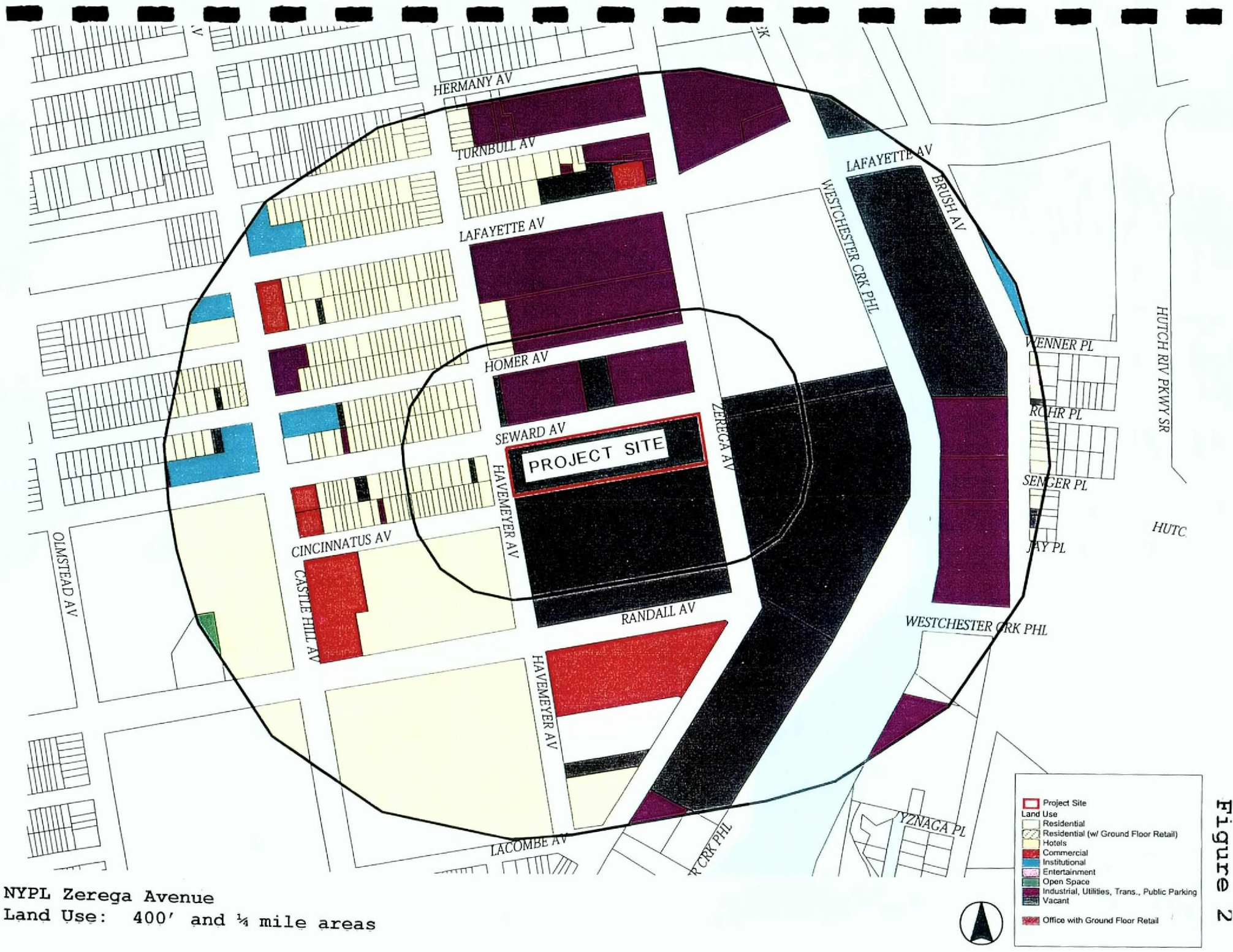


Figure 1

Current U.S.G.S Topographical Map, Flushing Quadrangle
 (1 inch = approx. 2,000 feet)

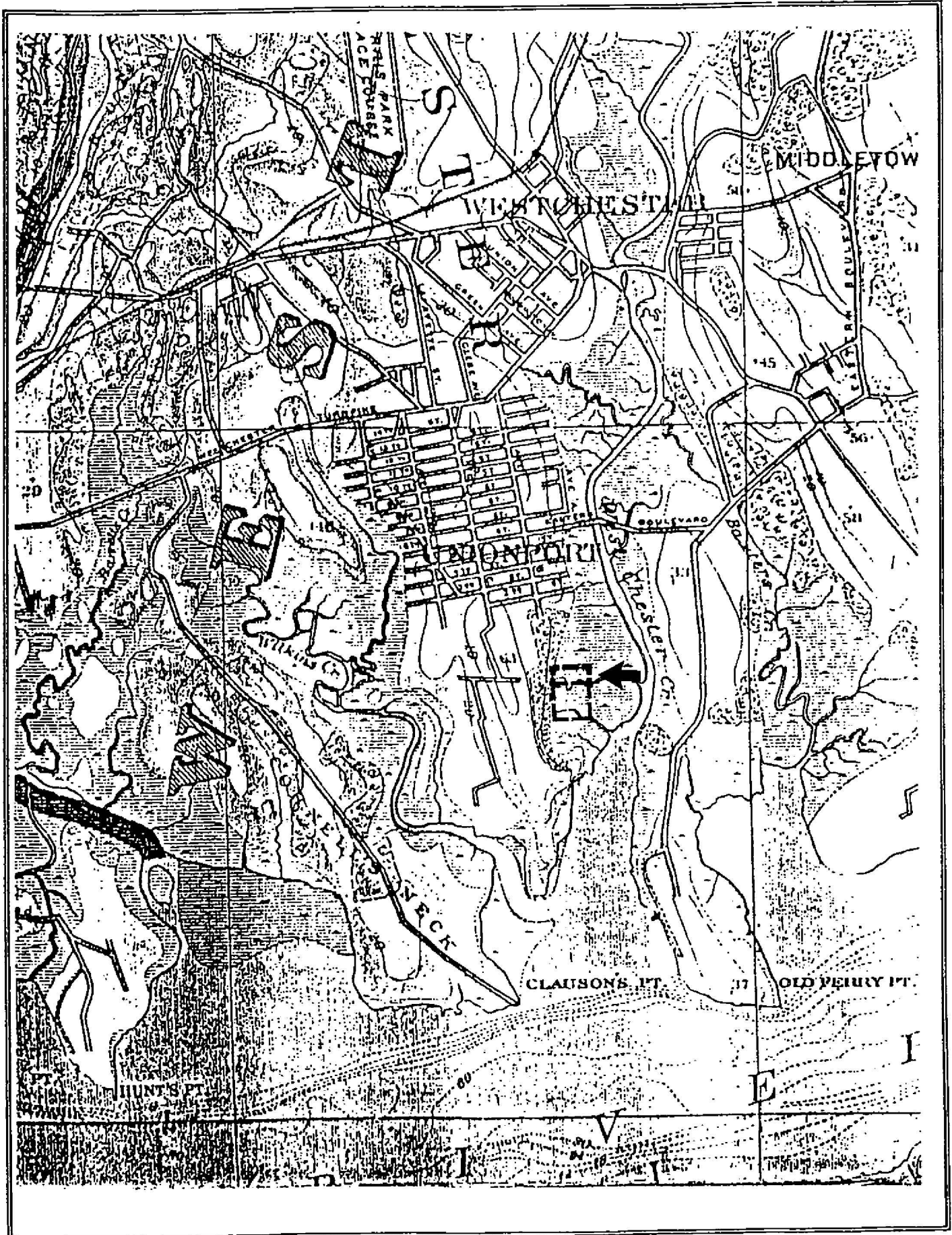


NYPL Zerega Avenue
 Land Use: 400' and 1/4 mile areas

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| | Project Site |
| Land Use | |
| | Residential |
| | Residential (w/ Ground Floor Retail) |
| | Hotels |
| | Commercial |
| | Institutional |
| | Entertainment |
| | Open Space |
| | Industrial, Utilities, Trans., Public Parking |
| | Vacant |
| | Office with Ground Floor Retail |

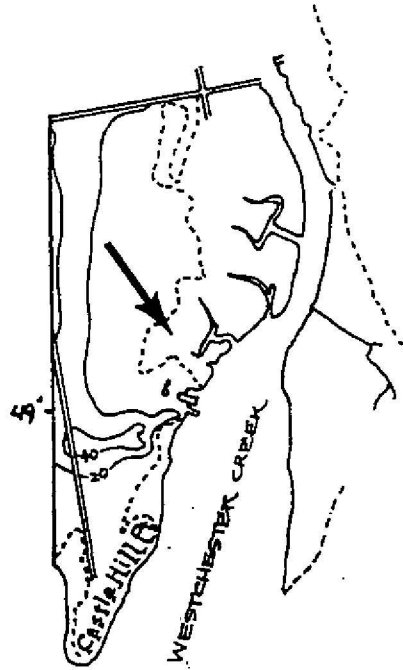


Figure 2



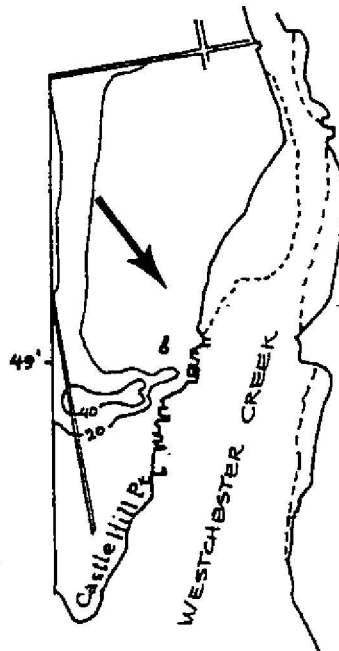
Sanborn Historical Map 1891

Figure 4



1922
BASED ON SURVEYS OF 1917, 1919

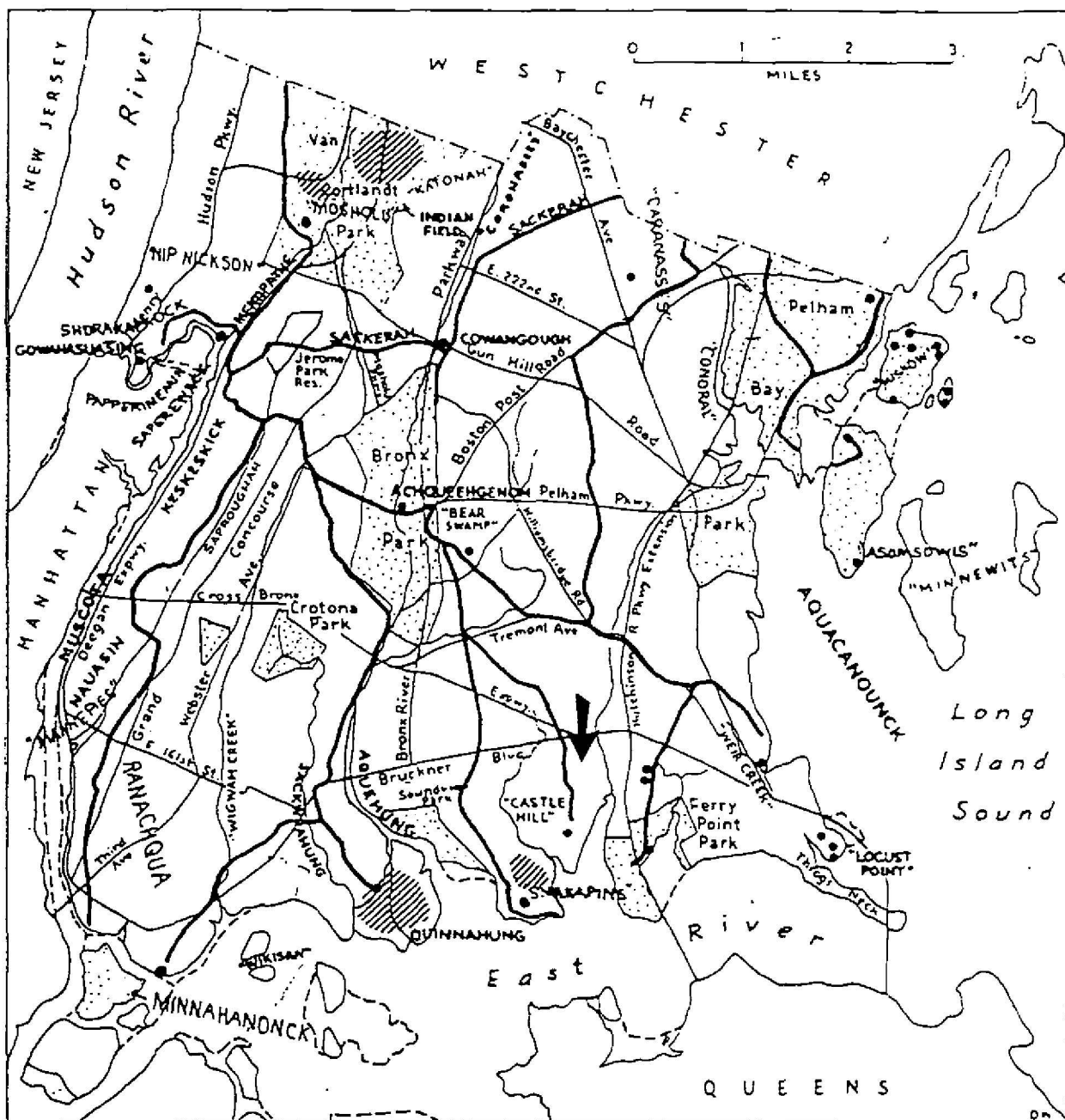
----- EDGE OF MARSH



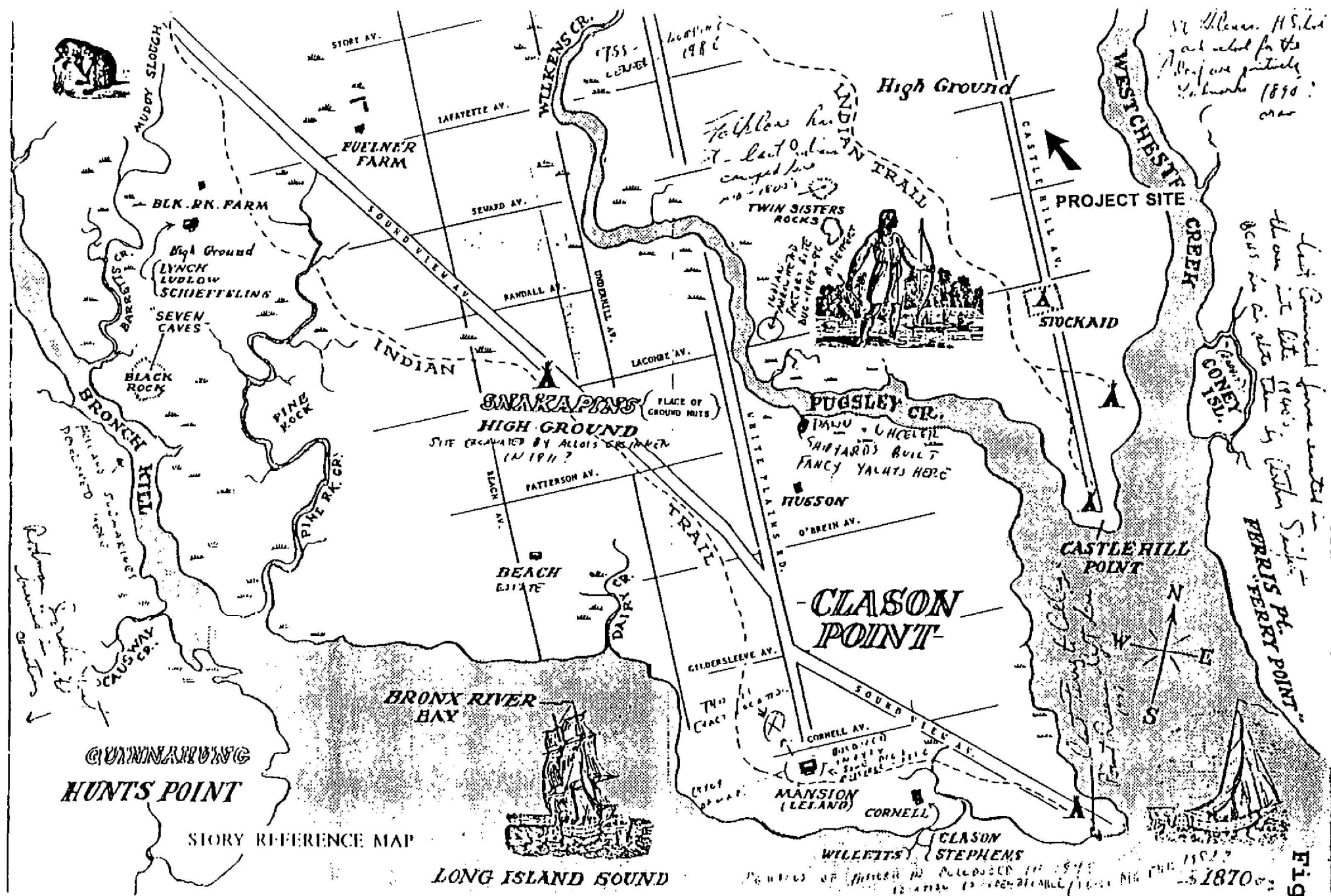
1939
BASED ON SURVEYS OF 1934, 1936

0 500 YARDS

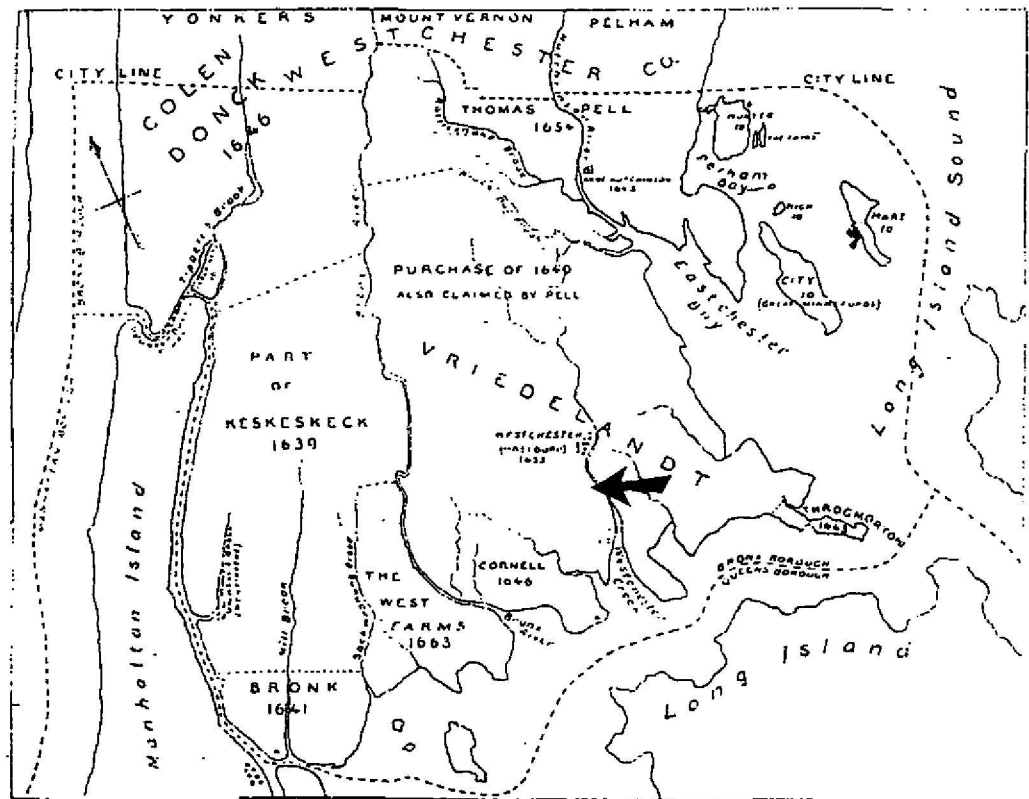
U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey
Long Island Sound and East River
Hempstead Harbor to Tallman Island
Sheet #233, Washington D.C.



Map of Indian Trails, Planting Fields and Habitation Sites
(Grumet 1981: 69)

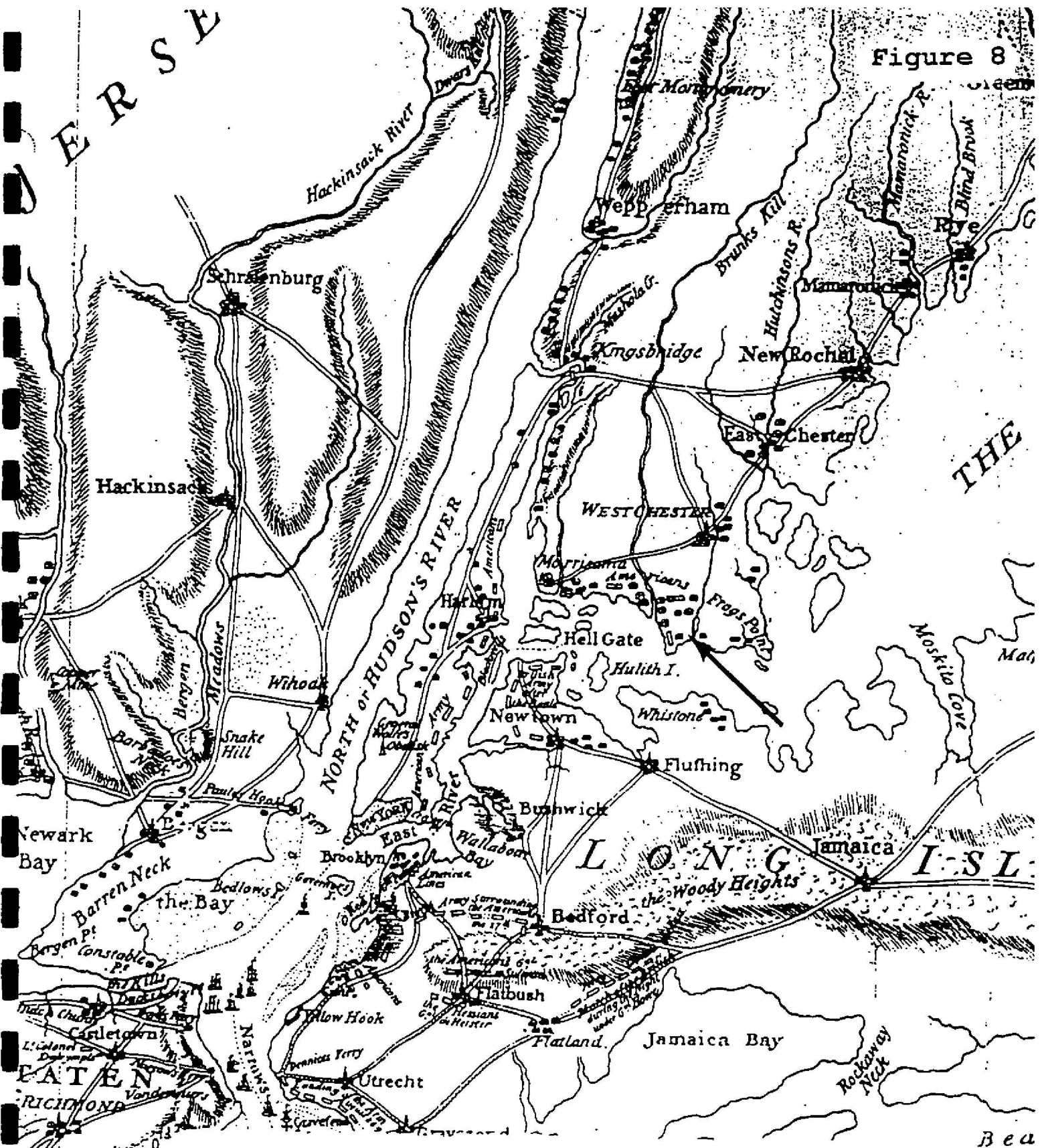


Map showing Native American Sites close to the project area. Prepared and provided by Arthur Seifert.

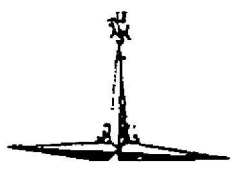


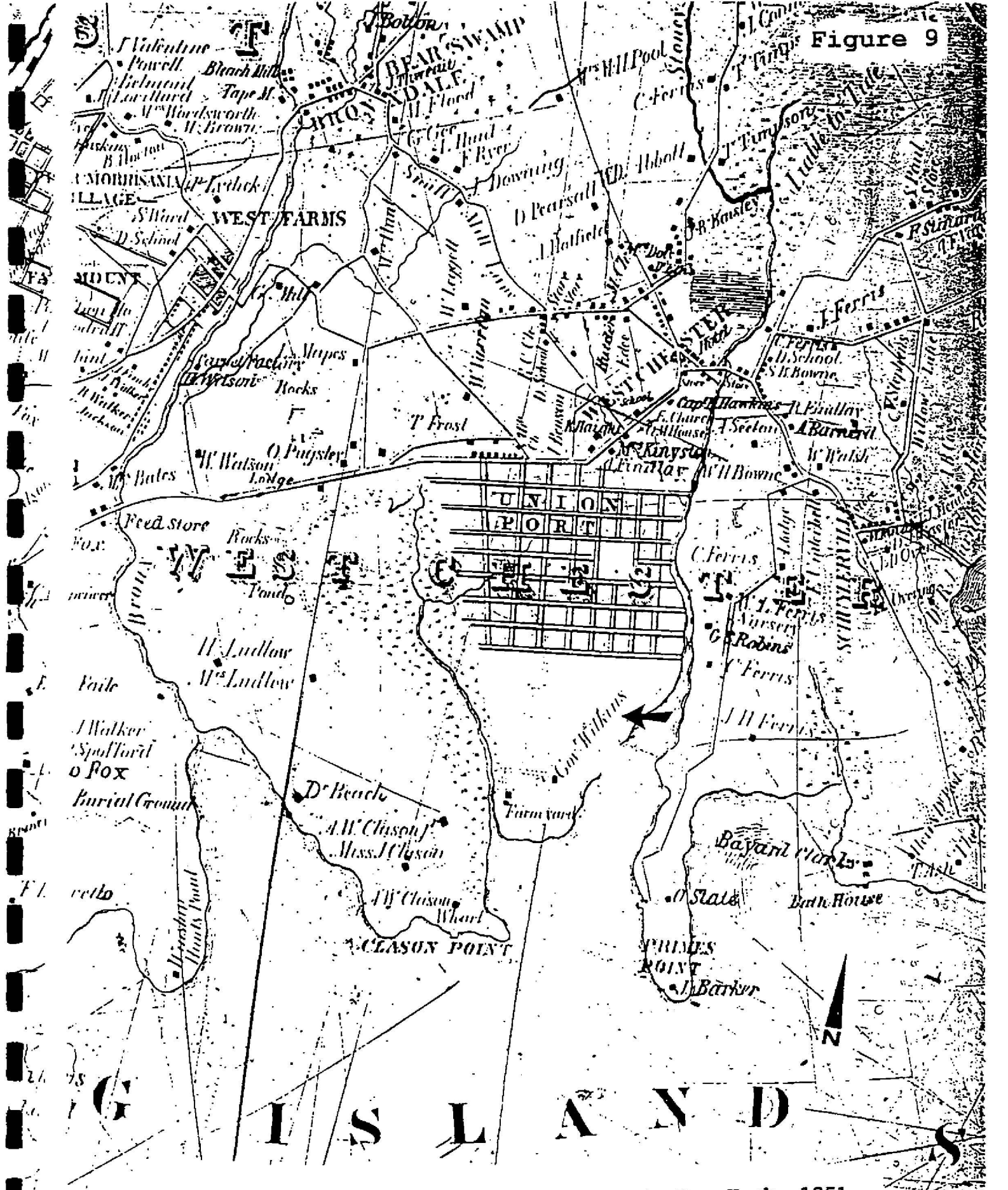
The Bronx at the End of the Dutch Period, c. 1664
(Jenkins 1912: opp. 44)

Figure 8

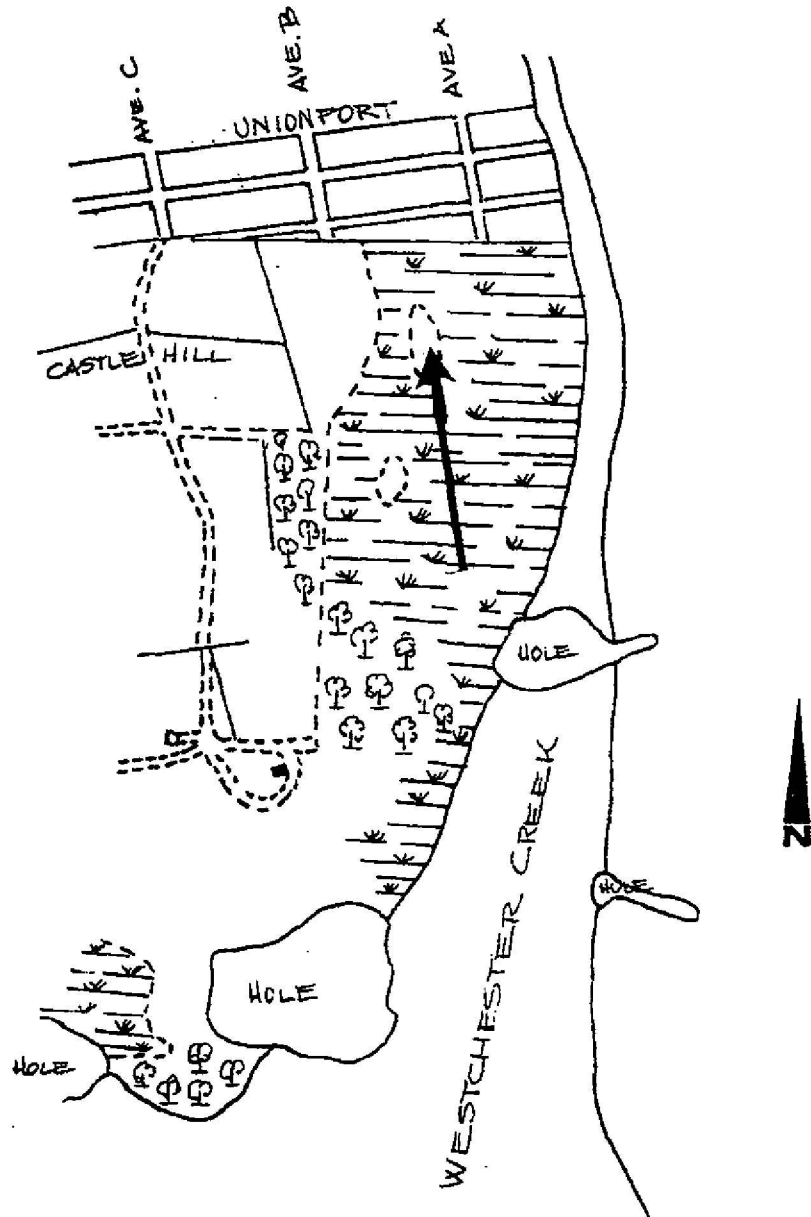


The Seat of Action between the British and American Forces or An Authentic Plan of Western Part of Long Island with the Engagement of the 27th of August 1776, between the Kings Forces and the Americans: from the surveys of Maj. Holland

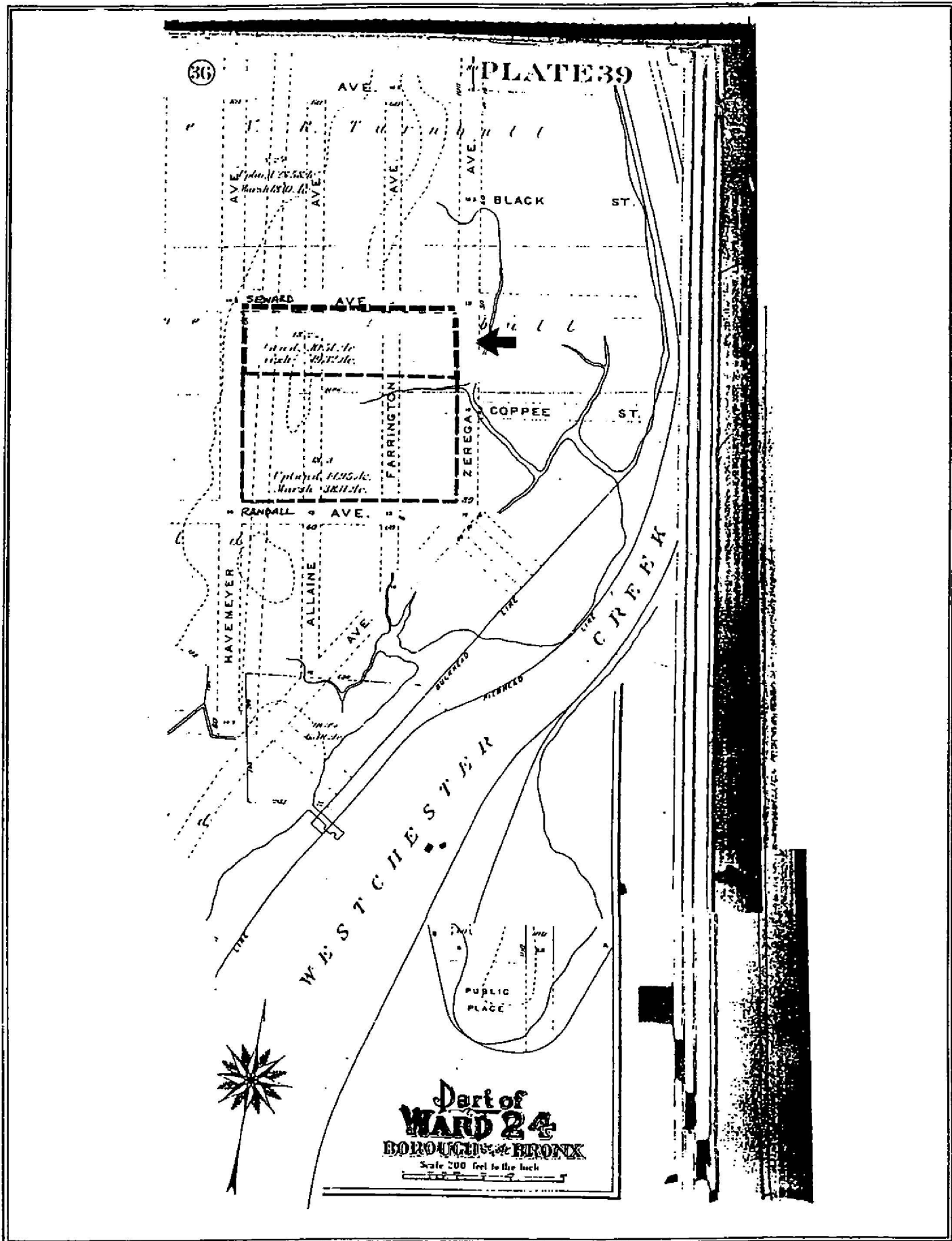




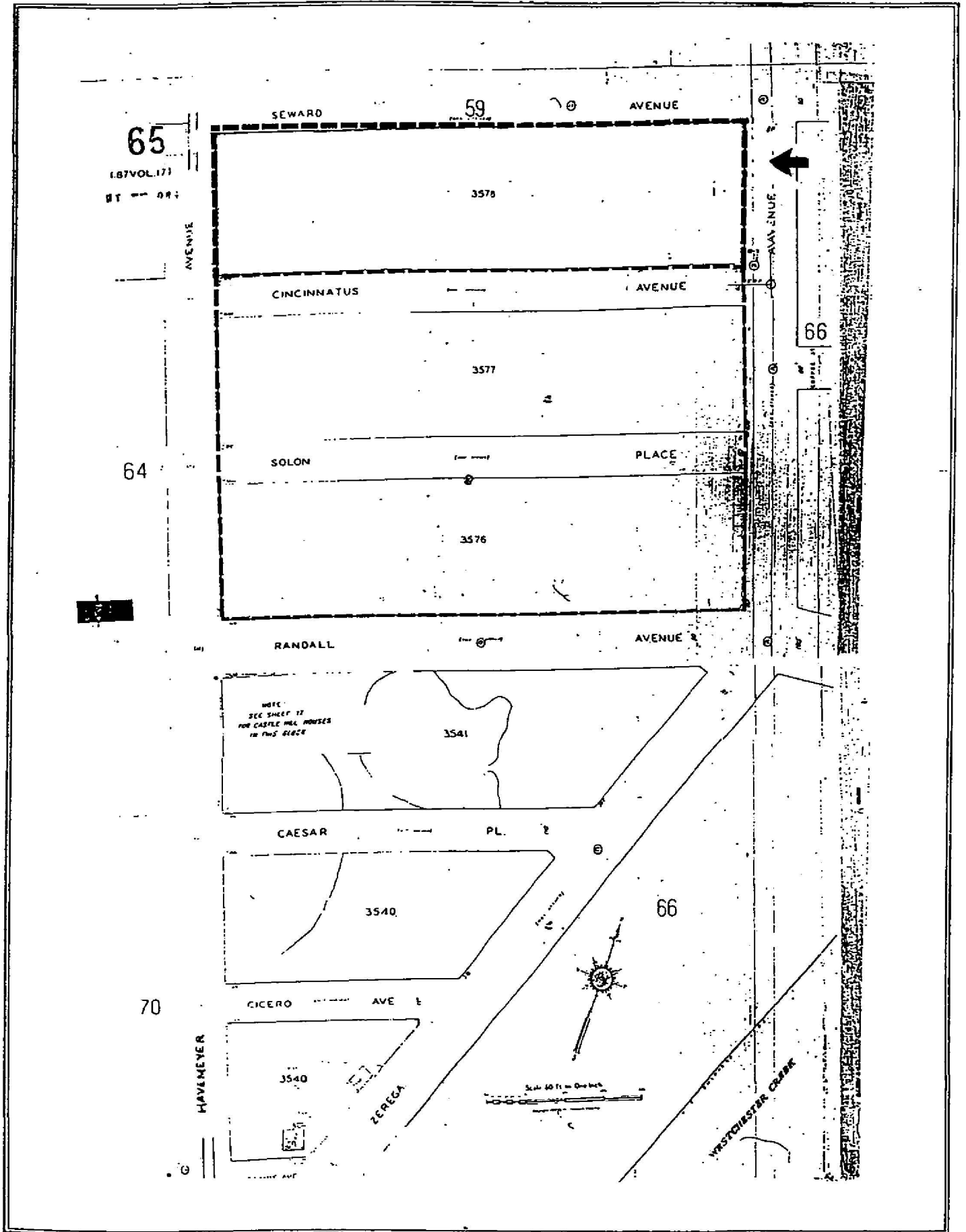
Sidney and Neff, Map of Westchester County New York, 1851



M. Dripps, Map of the Southern
Part of Westchester County
New York, 1853
5 inches = .1 mile
RGS



Sanborn Historical Map 1910



Photograph 1
Project Site: Entrance gate off of Zerega Avenue
view: east to west



Photograph 2
Project Site: Corner of Seward and Havemeyer Avenues
view: west to east

