

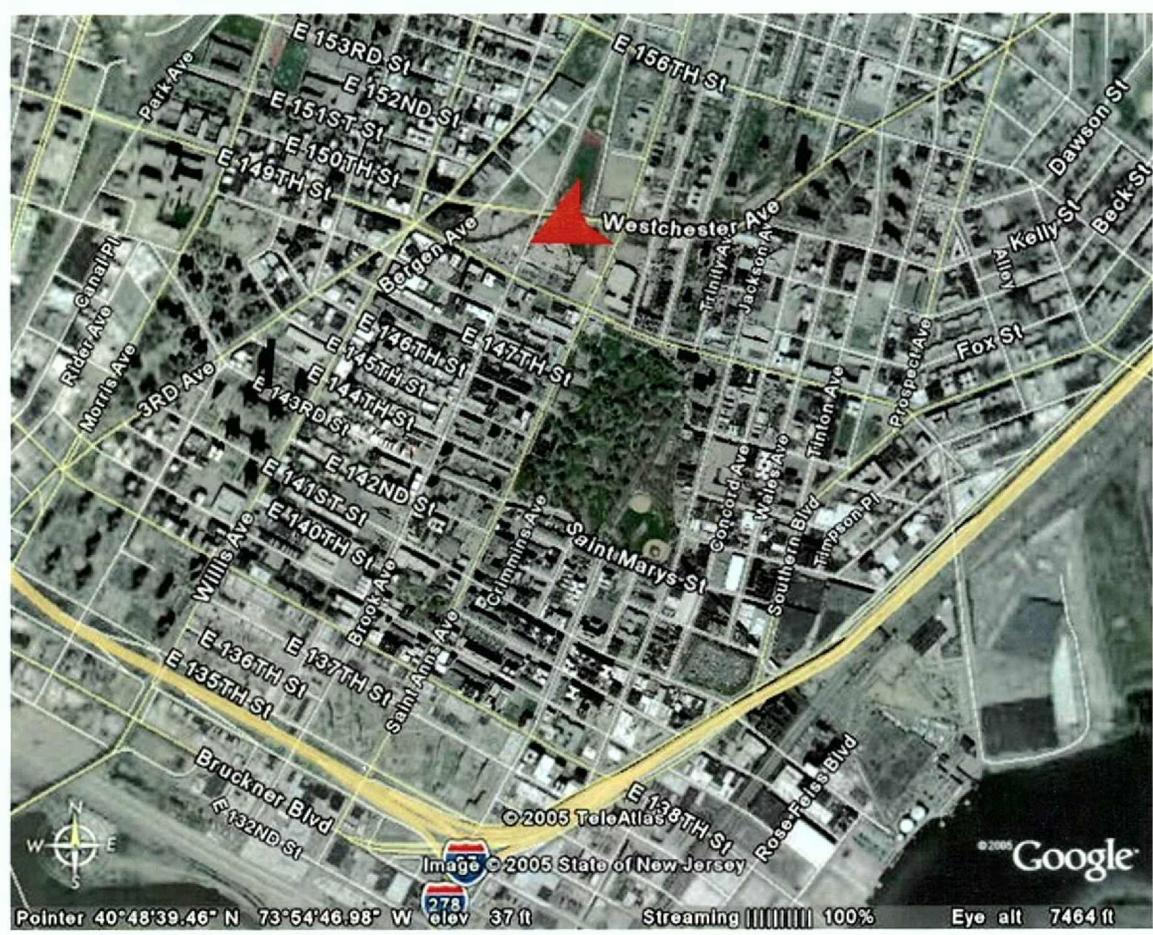
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PLAZA AT THE HUB

Borough of The Bronx, New York

DRAFT

Phase IA Archaeological Assessment Report



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I. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT SITE AND PLANNED DEVELOPMENT

The areas being assessed for archaeological sensitivity in the present report (henceforth the "project site") are lots 43 and 60 on the eastern portion of block 2294 ("block 2294 east") located in the South Bronx between Westchester Avenue on the north, Brook Avenue on the east, 149th Street on the south, and Bergen Avenue on the west (Figs. 1 and 12). Both lots are bounded on the south and west-northwest, respectively, by the IRT tracks, which emerge from a tunnel that begins at the southwest corner of block 2294 east and then traverses most of the block, past the western side of lot 60, in an open, below grade trench (Fig. 7). The tracks gradually rise towards the northeast corner of the block where they continue on an elevated trestle beyond the northwestern corner of lot 60, over Westchester Avenue (Fig. 2). A two-story building with basement that served as the New York Post Office Station "R" until at least 1969 (Hyde), now "John's Boxing Gym", occupies the western end of lot 43 leaving only a small, triangular area at its southern end bordering the subway tracks (Figs 8, 9, and 10). East of the post office is a vast parking area. Lot 60 is occupied by the "Brook Parking Lot" and is surrounded by a chain-link fence and sheeting (Figs. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7).

Third Avenue, a block west of the project site, is still the heart of the busy shopping district that gave this neighborhood its name of "The Hub". There is one landmarked property (designated 1995) in the immediate neighborhood of the project site on 149th Street at Saint Ann Avenue, the Public School 27 building designed by C.B.J. Snyder, superintendent of school buildings, in a combination Dutch-English colonial style with scrolled gables and an octagonal bell tower (Dolkart and Postal 2004, 301) It was erected in 1895-97. Not landmarked, but also of historic interest, is the building of the former Bronx Opera House (opened 1913), located opposite the project site at 436-42 East 149th St. and now occupied by the Templo de Renovacion Espiritual. It was a vaudeville house and a venue for Broadway acts, the most notorious being the tryout for Mae West's *Pleasure Man*, which was raided on its opening night on Broadway in 1928 (Steyn 2000). Opposite the project site on the east side of Brook Avenue between 149th Street and Westchester Avenue are the massive buildings of the "Juvenile Hall". This was formerly the site of Janes & Kirtland's Iron Works, where the dome of the Capitol in Washington

was cast.¹ North and east of the project site there are large, empty lots. North of block 2294, on the other side of Westchester Avenue, the southern part of block 2361 is vacant.

Lots 43 and 60 on block 2294 are within a proposed commercial and residential development known as the “Plaza at the Hub”. The development would be built on 266,940 square feet on blocks 2294 and 2361, between East 149th Street and East 153rd Street (Grove Street) and Bergen and Brook Avenues (Fig. 1). Four new buildings containing a total of approximately 1.15 million square feet are planned (Fig. 11). The commercial buildings will include retail outlets on approximately 520,500 sq. ft.; a 44,500 sq. ft. supermarket; an office tower of 317,000 sq. ft., and a six-screen multiplex cinema. Two residential buildings will comprise 210,500 sq. ft. Parking will be provided by both at-grade and above-grade facilities. The project is expected to be completed by 2010.

The proposed project involves several actions including the disposition of City-owned property for private development; a zoning map amendment; the declaration of a general large-scale district; special permits for bulk modifications for height, setback, and distance between buildings, and an accessory group parking facility in excess of 150 spaces. The project would also require a special permit for development within or over a railroad or transit right-of-way as well as a modification to the January 1995 Bronxchester Urban Renewal Plan. To facilitate construction of buildings on the northern block, an existing sewer and sewer easement would need to be relocated within the project site to a location north of its present location.²

¹ The building appears in an 1868 photograph reproduced in Utan and Hermalyn 2000, 34.

² The description of the actions required by the proposed project is courtesy of Lisa Ohman, of Philip Habib and Associates.

II. ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING AND PREHISTORIC POTENTIAL

The principal feature of the project site block in former times was Mill Creek, also called Saw-mill Creek (Dripps 1853; Fig. 13). Bolton (cited in Jenkins 1912, 267) described the brook as “rapid”. It traversed the project site block from its northeast corner, exiting on 149th Street roughly at the western edge of lot 60. Indeed, the western edge of lot 60 follows the line of the former stream bed. The creek later formed the border between the old towns of East Melrose and East Morrisania (see part III, below, and Fig. 14). The Viele map indicates that the Mill Brook valley was a marsh, and this stream bed covered most of the project site (Fig. 13). Rising near east 170th Street, the Mill Brook emptied into the East River. In the 1890s, it was channeled in a “great sewer” under Brook Avenue (Jenkins 1912, 16). There were other sources of fresh water in the vicinity of the project site. A small lake fed by natural springs lay east and south in present-day St. Mary’s Park (Jenkins 1912, 319; Viele 1874). On the 1868 Sidney and Neff map it is named “Jayne Baley’s Pond”.

The land around the project site block was hilly (Fig. 13). St. Ann’s church, located on St. Ann and 140th Street, was built on a small eminence and there was also steep-sided hill northeast of the project site, north of 156th Street (Dripps 1853). The highest hill in the neighborhood was at Courtlandt and Westchester Avenues. McNamara (1989, 11) claims that it would “no doubt have been a look out in Indian times”.

The main concentration of Indian settlement and activity in the Bronx appears to have been around the Bronx River and on the East River shorelines on Hunts and Clason’s Points (below). The latter was called *Snakapins* (Jenkins 1912, 22). The Bronx River was the most important water course in the Bronx and was known to the Indians as *Aquahung*, meaning “a high bluff or bank” (Jenkins 1912, 16) Small vessels could navigate the river up to approximately three miles from its mouth (Ibid.) There were several other important streams that traversed the Bronx. Bungay Creek, formed from two branches that rose in Crotona Park and joined at East 170th Street, ran roughly along the line of later Intervale Avenue and in historic times marked the boundary between Morrisania Manor and West

Farms (Ibid.) This stream emptied into the East River north of Port Morris. On the west side of the Bronx peninsula the Riverdale Ridge runs north-south ending in the Spuyten Duyvil neck. An Indian settlement known as *Nipnichsen* – meaning a small pond or water place-- was located there (Jenkins 1912, 21; Boesch 1996, 17).³

According to Boesch, prehistoric settlement in the Bronx is poorly documented and consequently not well known or understood (Boesch 1996, 85). Aside from the march of progress and consequent disturbance or destruction of prehistoric sites, Boesch points out that models of predicting the potential for the recovery of prehistoric remains result in the elimination of sites in areas considered “marginally sensitive or non-sensitive” and the concentration of testing in areas considered highly sensitive leads to a self-fulfilling validation of the model (Boesch 1996, 21). He points out in particular that in areas where filling has occurred – and this is the case with the project site evaluated in the present report – traditional testing methods, i.e. shovel testing, might not be effective in establishing the presence or absence of remains (Boesch 1996, 20). It would therefore be advisable to consult boring information, if available, or historic maps providing topographic data in order to gauge the depth of modern fill on a site.

Clearly, when the Mill Brook was filled, the ground level must have been raised and there is documentary evidence that all the streets were raised by the City ca. 1904 / 1905, viz. Erich Marks’ account of Old Melrose in which he states that the railroad used to run at grade but now runs underneath Westchester, Brook, and St. Anne’s Avenues and East 149th, 150th and 151st Streets as a result of the street raising (Marks 1968, 28; Jenkins 1912, 405). Unfortunately, there is no information regarding levels prior to those recorded on the 1908 Sanborn map. That map shows a drop in level – still appreciable today -- from 20 feet at Bergen and Westchester Avenues to 13 feet along Brook Avenue. In the parking lot that today occupies lot 60 there is a noticeable slope of perhaps three feet down towards Brook Avenue. It should be observed that the stream may not always have run in exactly in the same bed, across the project site, as it did in historic times.

³ During historic times the point was called Tippet's Hill or Tippet's Neck after George Tibbett, the fourth owner of the point; later it was called Berrien's neck, after being acquired by the Berrien family (Jenkins 1912, 22).

Over the centuries and millennia it may have altered its course perhaps flowing further to the east along the low-lying Brook Avenue.

According to Boesch's model, highly sensitive locations would possess at least three of his list of characteristics, including the presence of known sites or surface finds in the "immediate vicinity" of a project site; the existence of a nearby freshwater source, and high subsistence potential, as found for instance in a marsh. The project site meets these three criteria. It does not meet the criteria of being well drained or located on high ground (Boesch 1996, 22).

As for recorded sites, there is no evidence of PaleoIndian occupation in the Bronx (ca. 10,000-8,000 B.C.E), and for Early and Middle Archaic (ca. 8,000-2,500 B.C.E.) the evidence is "scarce" although some remains may be identified in Riverdale Park (Boesch 1996, 12). Boesch (1996, 13) points out that the sea level was lower during PaleoIndian and Early Archaic times and that sites of that date located along the East River and Long Island Sound shorelines would have been inundated when the water level rose.

A Native American presence in the Bronx is attested during Late Archaic times, ca. 2,500-1,000 B.C. It consists of temporary hunting camps, kill or butchering sites, and semi-permanent settlements found in Hunts Point, along the Bronx River estuary, and on Westchester Creek, and by finds of artifacts made in the New York Botanical Gardens along one of the peninsula's major inland streams (Ibid.) These last in particular, occurring in an area that has not been subjected to the intensive development of the rest of the Bronx, suggest that the density of occupation in this borough during Late Archaic times may have been greater than indicated by the surviving remains.

The Woodland period, beginning around 3,000 years ago, is the best represented era in the Bronx. The first 1,000 years of this era, the Early Woodland period, is characterized by the introduction of pottery and the disappearance of the carved steatite vessels used during the preceding Transitional era. The increase in shellfish collection during this period, thought to indicate growing sedenterization, is attested by the huge piles of

discarded shells called middens found in the harvesting localities. Domestication of plants is thought to have followed during the succeeding 1,000 years known as the Middle Woodland period. During the Late Woodland period, ca. 900 to 1,600 C.E., horticulture became the primary source of subsistence and permanent villages are attested. During this period, groups of Munsee-speaking Indians of the Algonquian culture migrated into the Bronx and Westchester County. The descendants of these people, the Wappinger, called the area *Laaphawachking* meaning “place of stringing”, a reference to the wampum manufacturing that took place here (Boesch 1996, 14).

During the Contact Period, ca. 1600-1750 C.E., the south Bronx, west of the Bronx River, was inhabited by the Reckgawawancs, a group “closely related to the Weckquaesgeek, the Wappinger group located to the north, and probably under their political control” (Boesch 1996, 16). The Siwanoy were associated with the territory east of the Bronx river.

Boesch’s compilation and map of previously identified sites based on the site files of the New York State Museum and the New York State Office of Historic Preservation document a high concentration of settlement, mostly dating to the Late Woodland period, in three localities: on Clasons point, near the mouth of the Bronx River, and on Hunts point, this last known to the Indians of the Contact Period as *Quinnahung*, “the great planting neck” (Boesch 1996, 100). These areas have a high potential for the recovery of further prehistoric remains, as also the shoreline of the Bronx in general. Within a mile of the project site, a prehistoric burial site was found north of Westchester Avenue near Saint Ann’s Avenue (Boesch 1996, 99, site number 32). A 19th century cemetery covered the site, which is presently occupied by P.S. 38. Just over a mile to the south there was an important settlement between 130th and 133rd Street and Cypress Avenue, now covered by the Triborough Bridge Approach Road that was excavated by Calver and Bolton (Boesch 1996, 99, site number 31). The site was identified by hearths, shell-filled pits, burials and nearby shell middens. It was reportedly occupied by the Reckgawawancs during the early Contact Period (Boesch 1996, 99). The area of the village was called *Ranachqua*, derived from the Algonquian *wanachquiwi-auke* meaning “the extreme end”

i.e. of the mainland peninsula. *Ranachqua* was reached by an Indian trail that ran along the later line of Bruckner Boulevard and Willow Avenue (McNamara 1984, 544). Jonas Bronck purchased this track of land in 1639 and renamed it “Emmaus”.

III. HISTORIC PERIODS

Jonas Bronck was the first European settler in the Bronx, receiving a patent in 1641. He built a mill some three miles from the river named after him, the borough being later named after the river (Jenkins 1912, 22, 104). His farm extended as far as 148th Street -- not quite as far north as the project site (McNamara 1989, 11). North of his land was the territory of the Weckguasgeek Indian tribe.

In 1670, a large tract of land north of the project site bounded on the south by 161st Street, on the west by Claremont Park and Prospect Avenue, on the north by the Cross Bronx Expressway, and on the east by Crotona Park and Prospect Avenue, became the property of the Morris family. The first lord of the manor was the Honorable Lewis Morris (d. 1746). But "Morrissania", the later township incorporating all the land west of the Bronx River (including the project site), was named after his grandson, Lewis Morris, a Brigadier-General during the Revolutionary War and one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. The Morris family retained their estate until 1846 when the township of West Farms was formed, west of the Bronx River, and the property was divided up and sold.

The county of Westchester, including all the lands now part of the borough of the Bronx, was formed in 1683. In 1788, by an act of the state legislature, this territory was divided up into twenty-one townships whose borders followed those of the original patents and manors. The project site was then located in Morrissania, which came to include all the land west of the Bronx River. The area east of the River was called Westchester. In 1791, Morrissania was absorbed by Westchester and did not become a separate township again until 1855. The area west of the Bronx River, including the townships of Morrissania, Kingsbridge and West Farms, was transferred to New York City in 1874 and became the 23rd and 24th wards. The section east of the Bronx River was annexed in 1895.

From an early date there were mills on the Mill Brook as its name implies. One of these is mentioned in the 1690 will of Col. Lewis Morris (Jenkins 1912, 105). Later legacies of land west of the Mill Brook made by the Honorable Lewis Morris and his son, Lewis Morris Jr. (d. 1762) carried with them “the right to the use of the stream for milling and other purposes” (Jenkins 1912, 359). The former document refers to the land west of the Mill Brook as “Old Morrisania”. The son of Lewis Morris Jr., the Lewis Morris who joined the Continental Congress and signed the Declaration of Independence, retained the manor until after the Revolutionary War.

During the Revolutionary War, the project site area and much of Westchester was an “ever-shifting battleground” or “Neutral Ground” as it was called, between the two armies (McNamara 1989, 9). A route between the American and British lines ran through the Mill Brook valley (Jenkins 1912, 155). Near the project site, in St. Mary’s park, temporary quarters were built that were first occupied by displaced persons and later by soldiers of the “Associated Loyalists” (McNamara 1989, 9). The loyalists raided the Americans and the patriots responded by attacking the barracks. Later the corps was disbanded by Sir Henry Clinton who “disapproved of their excesses which were in the nature of personal vendettas against former neighbors” (Ibid.)

The principal roads of the South Bronx in the area of the project site were laid out at the turn of the 18th century. In 1790, the State Legislature gave Morris a franchise to construct a stone dam bridge from Harlem to Morrisania, and authorized him to appoint a commission to build a road from the bridge through Morrisania to connect to the Boston Road (Third Avenue). the bridge crossed the Harlem at 3rd Avenue, and the road followed the line of that Avenue as far as East 163rd Street then turned east to cross Mill Brook and join up with Boston Avenue (Jenkins 1912, 193). The line of Westchester Road originally followed an old Indian trail (Jenkins 1912, 219). A “Westchester Path” is first mentioned in the late 17th, but the Avenue was only laid after 1800 by the Westchester turnpike Company (Ibid.) A bridge ran over the brook on Westchester Avenue (Findlay 1850). According to Jenkins (1912, 405), it was “little different from a country road, lined by magnificent trees” until the street was widened and graded in 1904. Similarly, McNamara

(1989, 11) states that East 149th Street was also originally a “tree-lined lane”. It was known as Benson Street after Benjamin Benson, founder in 1853 of Bensonia, a village located immediately north of the project site. This street name, however, does not appear on any of the 19th century maps consulted for this report. Bergen Street was formerly known as “Retreat Avenue”. We may also note here that the earliest maps of the project site block, from 1850, show a Gerard Street on the southwest side of the block partly bordering the southwest side of lot 60 of the project site. This street was still in existence in 1989 (Sanborn), but is now fenced and incorporated into the area of block 2294.

Until the middle of the 19th century, Morrisania had the smallest population of all the Westchester townships. But its development was spurred by the building of the Harlem Railroad in 1842 (today Metro North’s Harlem Line), followed in 1848 by the arrival of the first waves of immigrants fleeing the political upheavals in Central Europe and the potato famine in Ireland (Jenkins 1912, 4). Gouverneur Morris Second and other local landowners sold land to the new immigrants, who formed a number of small villages in the area of the former manors (McNamara 1989, 11). The project site area was settled by “artisans, craftsmen and small shopkeepers” mostly from Germany, but there was also an Irish presence east of the Mill Brook, now called East Morrisania, and native born Americans throughout (Gonzalez 2004, 28, 36-37; Fig. 14). On maps of this date it is now possible to trace the various village boundaries. The village of Melrose, purportedly founded by one Mr. Sullivan who built a farm there in 1812 (Marks 1968, 22), bordered on the Mill Brook and therefore included lot 43 of the project site. The western boundary of Melrose was the New York and Harlem Railroad. The narrow tract between Third Avenue and the stream was called “East Melrose” (Bromley 1911; Gonzalez 2004, 34, map 2.4). During the 1840s, the lands comprising later north, south and east Melrose were owned by four Morris cousins and were still vacant (Gonzalez 2004, 26). The land west of the stream was divided into lots by 1850, and East Morrisania was also platted by that time, but the eastern part of lot 60 of the project site, east of the former stream, fell between the two populated areas and was slower to develop (Findlay 1850, 1851; Fig. 14). By 1860 (Fig. 15), block 2294 west of the Mill Brook was built up, no doubt with the “small cottages” characteristic of Melrose (Gonzalez 2004, 27), but the eastern half,

including lot 60 of the project site, was still vacant and only the southeast corner of the block on 149th Street and at the corner of 149th Street and Brook Avenues had been divided up into lots.

The 1860 Beers map (Fig. 15) shows the foundry and Iron Works buildings of Janes and Kirtland on the block east of the project site block. It had moved there in 1857 from Manhattan. Aside from the 10,000,000 pound dome of the Capitol in Washington, its most famous creation, the company was also responsible for creating the congressional library, the ceiling of the senate chamber and House of Representatives, the patent office, the general post office and the treasury building (Frisbee & Coles 1871, xxviii-xxix). This map also shows, at the corner of Westchester and Retreat Avenues, one of typical features of the neighborhood, a German brewery. A second brewery, un-named, stood at the corner of Brook Avenue and 153rd Street. Most of the breweries, however, were located along Third Avenue between East 167th and 170th Street. Besides breweries, beer gardens and saloons, the Germans brought other Teutonic institutions with them to Melrose: *turnvereins* – gymnastic clubs; singing societies and the Lutheran church (Historical Perspectives 1994, 7-8). The high concentration of German inhabitants earned Third Avenue its nickname of “Dutch Broadway” (McNamara 1989, 11).

In 1869, the Parks Department was granted permission to plan bridges, streets and “proper sewerage and drainage and water supply” (Gonzalez 2004, 42), but sewer pipes were not laid in the streets around the project site block until more than a decade later. There are no tap records at the Bronx Sewer Department, but the maps of the sewer system maintained there indicate that pipes were installed in Brook Avenue in 1880 and in 149th Street and Westchester Avenue in 1884. A few of the old house lots on lot 60 of the project site are potentially sensitive for historic remains consisting of cisterns and privies at the rear of the dwellings that existed on these properties (see section IV, below). The old addresses were 713, 715 and 723 149th Street (Fig. 17); changed in the early 20th century to 451, 457 and 459 149th Street (Fig. 19).

Following the earlier tradesman and builders, "unskilled laborers, peddlers and junk dealers" moved into Melrose and East Morrisania during the 1870s. The number of dwellings in Melrose had more than doubled between 1856 and 1868 thanks to the introduction of the street railways, which allowed workers to live in the suburbs and commute to their jobs in the city (Gonzalez 2004, 28). Service began in 1863 up Third Avenue, with a second line along the Boston Road to West Farms (Olmstead 1989, 79). The urbanization of the project site area was completed during the late 19th century with the arrival of the Third Avenue el, which reached 169th Street by 1888 (Olmstead 1989, 81). In the last decade of the 19th century, the population of the Bronx more than doubled, rising from 89,000 to 201,000. Three-quarters of the inhabitants lived in the South Bronx near the el (Ibid.)

IV. LOT HISTORIES – ASSESSMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL SENSITIVITY

LOT 43

Lot 43 corresponds to 436 to 460 Westchester Avenue, formerly 710 to 738 Westchester Avenue. The earliest record of building on this lot is the 1860 Beers map (Fig. 15), which shows two structures on the street at 436 (old 710) Westchester Avenue, marked “P. Lambert” and “Store”; two buildings on the lot of F. Lambert, 446 to 448 (old 722 to 724) Westchester Avenue; a small structure on the next lot belonging to Borretto, 450 (old 726) Westchester Avenue, and two buildings on the property of J. G. Zwing and Stone, 452 and 454 (old 730 and 732) Westchester Avenue. Numbers 440 to 442 (old 716) Westchester Avenue were developed between 1860 and 1880. The building on this lot was a wagon House (Fig. 17), later a wagon shop (Fig. 18).

The east corner of the triangle of lot 43, 456 to 460 Westchester Avenue, was not built upon until the first decade of the 20th century when it was completely covered by a brick building (Fig. 19). This portion of the lot is therefore not considered archaeologically sensitive.

436 Westchester Avenue:

The area of the buildings at 436 Westchester and its yard was completely covered by the New York Post Office Station “R”, erected between 1908 and 1921 (Figs. 19 and 20). That building is still standing on the lot, although it no longer functions as a post office. A triangular area at the rear of this building, abutting the concrete wall of the IRT right-of-way and measuring 50 feet north, 22 feet west and 55 feet south (550 sq. ft.), has never been built upon (Fig. 10). But while the first buildings on the lot predated the installation of a sewer pipe in Westchester Avenue in 1884, the potential cistern, at the rear of the building, and the privy, in its yard, would no doubt have been destroyed by the erection of the post office building.

There is a difference of approximately twelve feet between the level of the adjacent

parking lots and the triangular strip of yard behind the post office, which indicates that we probably no longer have here the original ground surface. Between the impacts attendant upon the erection of the post office on one side and the excavation of the subway tunnel and its concrete wall on the other, along with the likelihood that the yard was excavated and the original ground surface removed, we conclude that this part of lot 43 is not archaeologically sensitive for historic or prehistoric remains.

440-442 Westchester Avenue:

Between 1900 and 1907 the above-mentioned wagon shop was converted to a "Vaudeville." This building, which appears larger than the wagon house shown on the 1891 Sanborn map, covered almost the entire lot (Figs. 17-19). The remaining triangular area at the rear of the lot between the vaudeville and the IRT right-of-way was covered by a new brick building erected before 1921 (Fig. 20). But a narrow alleyway running the length of that building from the street back to the right-of-way that already existed in 1880 remained, and was not built over in subsequent decades (Figs. 16, 21 and 22). This alley extended partly over the western edge of the adjoining property to the east at 446-448 Westchester Avenue for a total width of approximately 15 feet (Fig. 19). This strip is considered archaeologically sensitive for prehistoric remains.

446 to 448 Westchester Avenue:

Except for the narrow alley running along the western edge of the lot, the rest of the lot area was completely covered by a two-story brick building erected between 1900 and 1907. This covered the backyard areas of the dwellings that had existed at These two dwellings, shown as two-story brick buildings on the 1891 Sanborn map (Fig. 1891), survived until between 1900 and 1907. The area of the former alley is considered archaeologically sensitive for prehistoric remains.

450 Westchester Avenue:

The area of Borretto's building and yard was completely covered by a three-story livery stable, erected between 1891 and 1900 (Figs. 17 and 18). This part of lot 43 is not considered archaeologically sensitive.

452 and 454 Westchester Avenue:

Any archaeological remains that may have existed in the yards of the former dwellings at 452 and 454 Westchester Avenue on lot 43 would have been destroyed by the excavation for the IRT right-of way and by the construction of additions to the rear of the buildings (Figs. 19 to 22). This part of lot 43 is therefore not considered archaeologically sensitive.

LOT 60

Lot 60 is a large, irregularly-shaped lot fronting on Brook Avenue and 149th Street. Formerly it also fronted on Gerard Street, but that street is now closed (Fig. 12). A diagonal line, partly dotted, is still shown on the 2005 Sanborn map running roughly north-south across the eastern part of block 2294 west of the center of lot 60. This marks the former line of the Mill Brook. Lot 60 therefore straddles the former stream bed. Its western part was once the rear portion of the old lots on Westchester Avenue and the old lots on Gerard Street (Fig. 18). The 1860 Beers map (Fig. 15) shows that while the area west of the Mill Brook, which was part of East Melrose, was already fairly densely developed by that date, the area east of the brook, which was part of East Morrisania, was still largely vacant land. The properties on Gerard Street within the area of present-day lot 60 had houses on them by 1860. The 1880 Dripps map (Fig. 16) depicts these dwellings as part of a row on Gerard Street; all save for the one next to the stream, which stood at the rear of the lot. Between 1860 and 1880, the first buildings were also erected east of the brook on the project site, probably corresponding to numbers 713 and 723 149th Street as shown on the 1891 Sanborn map (Figs. 15 and 16).

With respect to impacts from subsequent building episodes during the 20th century, the project site may be broken down into three sections as follows (Fig. 18):

Area 1: The part west of the former brook consisting of the rear of old lots 73, 74, 76, 77, 78 and 79 along 149th and Gerard Streets, and the rear of the old lots 43, 45 and 47 on Westchester Avenue;

Area 2: Old lots 71, 70, 69, 68, 67 and 66 on 149th Street and at the corner of Brook Avenue, east of the former brook, with the addresses 725-727 149th Street / 463 149th Street and 537-541 Brook Avenue;

Area 3: The old lots on Brook Avenue, numbers 65 to 60, corresponding to 543 to 553 Brook Avenue.

Area 1:

As noted above, all of the lots west of old lots 73 and 74 west of the brook were developed by 1860 (Fig. 15). Old lots 73 and 74 were built upon by 1880 (Fig. 16). Sewer service was available only in 1884 and the residents at these addresses would therefore have needed privies and cisterns.

The buildings on old lots 73 to 75 were impacted by the widening of 149th Street between 1900 and 1907 (Fig. 18). The building on old lot 73, 449 149th Street, was replaced or enlarged by a frame building that completely covered the rear portion of the old lot leaving a narrow alley approximately five feet wide running along its western side (Fig. 19). Note that approximately half of this alley, on the street side, was formerly covered by the buildings that stood on old lot 74 ca. 1900 (Fig. 18). The remaining part of the alley, although not built upon, would probably have been negatively impacted by the construction of the five-story brick building on the adjacent old lots 75 and 76 (Fig. 19). This part of lot 60 is therefore not considered archaeologically sensitive.

In 1910, a six-story brick storage building was erected that covered the entire area of old lots 75 and 76. The entire area of old lot 77 was covered by this structure and an addition made in 1922 (Fig. 21). This portion of lot 60 is therefore not considered archaeologically sensitive.

Moving west, old lot 78 was covered by a one-story brick store that was erected between 1935 and 1945 (Figs. 21, 22 and 23). A small triangular area approximately six by twelve feet (36 sq. ft.) bounded by the rear of the building, the west wall of the storage building to the east, and the concrete wall of the railroad bank to the north, remained vacant.

Similarly, a slightly larger triangular area at the rear of old lot 79, between the concrete wall of the railroad bank and the west wall of the building on lot 78, also remained vacant. The building on the front of this lot appears to be a new structure erected between 1907 and 1921. The two small triangular areas behind these lots appear to be too small and too close to the railway embankment and adjoining buildings to be free of impacts from construction. This portion of lot 60 is therefore not considered archaeologically sensitive.

The rear portions of the old lots on Westchester Avenue were partly destroyed by the IRT tracks. The section south of the tracks, old lots 43 ½, 45 ½, and 47 ½ was almost completely covered by the furniture storage building erected in 1914 (Fig. 20; date recorded on the 1935 Sanborn map, Fig. 21). A square area measuring approximately 21 by 18 feet, located immediately north of old lot 75 in old lot 43 ½, was not built upon. This area does not correspond to the backyard of any of the dwellings on the adjacent old lots and is therefore not considered sensitive for historic remains. In view of the proximity of the stream, however, and the size of the undisturbed area, it is considered sensitive for prehistoric archaeological remains.

Area 2:

As noted, buildings were erected at 713 (old lot 71) and 723 (old lot 69) 149th Street by 1880 (Fig. 16), and at 715 (old lot 70), 725 and 727 (old lot 68), by 1891 (Fig. 17). All of these buildings were largely destroyed when 149th Street was widened between 1891 and 1900 (Figs. 18 and 19).

New buildings were erected on the front of old lots 70 and 69 by 1907. A narrow, one-story office building was erected on old lot 71, against its west lot line, between 1935 and 1945 (Figs. 21, 22 and 23). The building on lot 70, at 457 149th Street, was demolished between 1921 and 1935 and replaced by an auto sales yard that also included the area of old lot 71 and the small office buildings (Figs. 20 and 21). The two-story store and dwelling on the front of old lot 69, at 469 149th Street, is still shown on the 1951 Sanborn map (Fig. 22), but was demolished before 1989. Since these lots were first developed

before sewer service was introduced, in 1884, they must have been equipped with privies and cisterns. Neither the rear of the buildings nor the backyards of these old lots have been impacted by later construction episodes, and this portion of lot 60 is therefore considered sensitive for historic remains as well as possibly prehistoric remains, given the proximity of the former stream.

A five-story store and dwelling on old lots 68 and 67 covered almost all of their areas leaving only narrow alleys on the west and most of the north side of the building (Figs. 19 to 23). The alley on the west side measured approximately six feet; the one on the north even less. The digging of trenches for the laying of the building's foundations would have disturbed any potential remains in these areas and this portion of lot 60 is therefore not considered archaeologically sensitive.

Old lot 66 was completely covered by a five-story building erected between 1921 and 1935 and this portion of lot 60 is therefore not considered archaeologically sensitive (Figs. 20 and 21).

Area 3:

The rear yards of the four-story brick buildings with basements at numbers 543 and 547 to 553 Brook Avenue have not been impacted by subsequent construction episodes. The rear yard of 545 Brook Avenue (old lot 64) was completely covered by a one-story addition made between 1935 and 1944 (Figs. 21 and 23). This row of tenements was erected during the last decade of the 19th century and it is likely that the new residents would have availed themselves of the sewer service (Figs. 17 and 18). A sewer pipe had existed in Brook Street since 1880. This part of lot 60 is therefore not considered sensitive for historic archaeological remains. In view of the proximity of the former stream, however, we can not rule out the possibility that prehistoric remains might have survived in the area of the former yards, given the ample depth of the undisturbed portion at the rear of old lots 62, 63 and 65, which varies between 40 and approximately 70 feet. This part of lot 60 is therefore considered sensitive for prehistoric remains.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The areas within lots 43 and 60 considered sensitive for prehistoric or historic archaeological remains are shown outlined in red on Fig. 23. This map is a combination of the 1945 Sanborn map, which shows the greatest extent of building on the lot, with the old lot outlines as shown on the 1891 Sanborn map superimposed in blue. Section IV above concluded that lot 43 is sensitive for prehistoric archaeological remains only in the area of the approximately 15-foot wide former alley between 440 to 442 and 446 to 448 Westchester Avenue. Lot 60 is sensitive for prehistoric or historic archaeological remains in the three areas shown on Fig. 23.

Bearing in mind the relative paucity of well recorded prehistoric sites in the Bronx and the historic interest of the late 19th century occupation on lot 60, which is significant for its peculiar geographic situation on the outskirts of East Morrisania at the edge of a stream, this report recommends that archaeological field testing be conducted in those areas of the project site found to be archaeologically sensitive for prehistoric and historic remains prior to any future construction that could negatively impact these potential archaeological remains.

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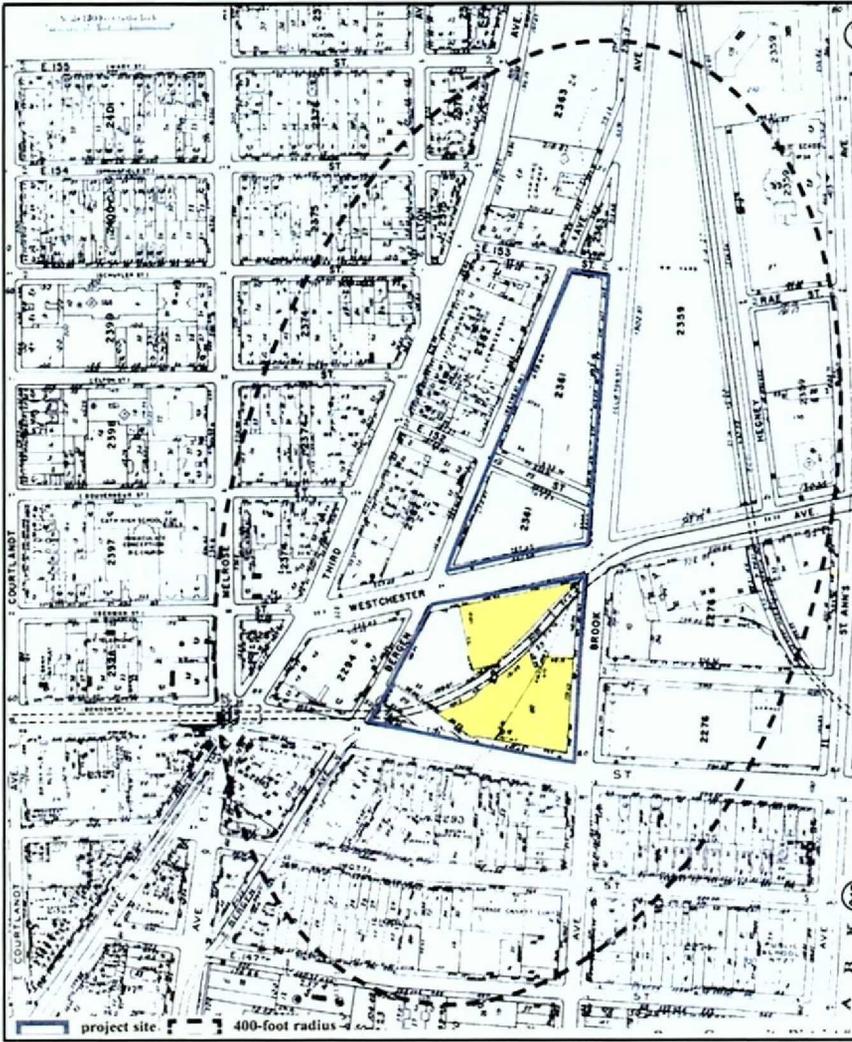


Fig. 1A. 2005 Sanborn map of the area of the Plaza at the Hub and the location of the project site on block 2294, lots 43 and 60.

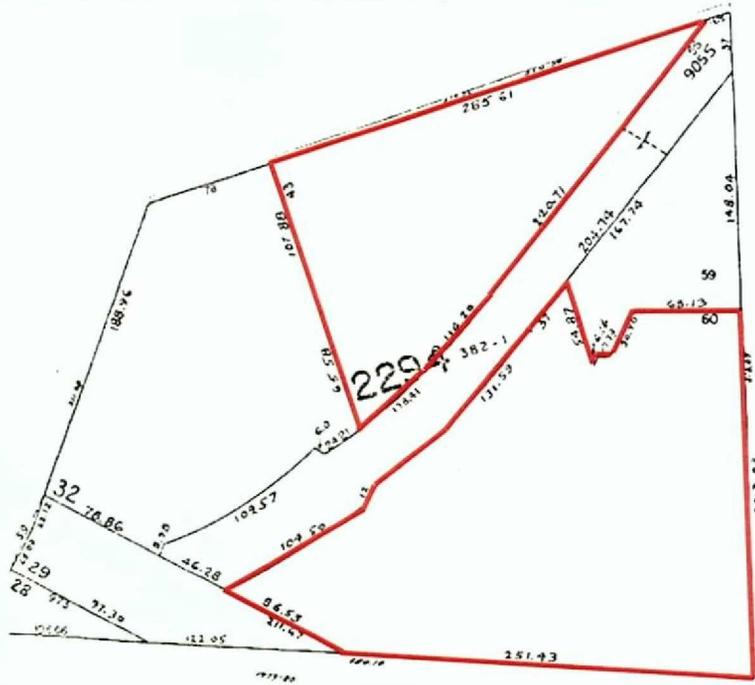


Fig. 1B. Tax map showing the location of the project site on block 2294, lots 43 and 60.



Fig. 2. View of lot 60 from the northeast corner of Westchester and Brook Avenues looking southwest with the trestle of the IRT at the right.



Fig. 3. View of lot 60 from Brook Avenue looking south-southwest.



Fig. 4. View of the north end of lot 60 looking east towards Brook Avenue.



Fig. 5. View of lot 60 from 149th Street looking north.



Fig. 6. View of the west end of lot 60 looking north towards the IRT tracks.



Fig. 7. View of the north side of lot 60 near the western edge of the lot, looking east over the IRT tracks and the concrete barrier at the edge of the project site.



Fig. 8. View of 436 Westchester Avenue from the north side of the avenue looking south.



Fig. 9. View of the east side of the building at 436 Westchester Avenue looking southwest.



Fig. 10. View of the rear of the building at 436 Westchester Avenue looking east; the rear of the building is at the left, the railroad tracks at the top of the view.

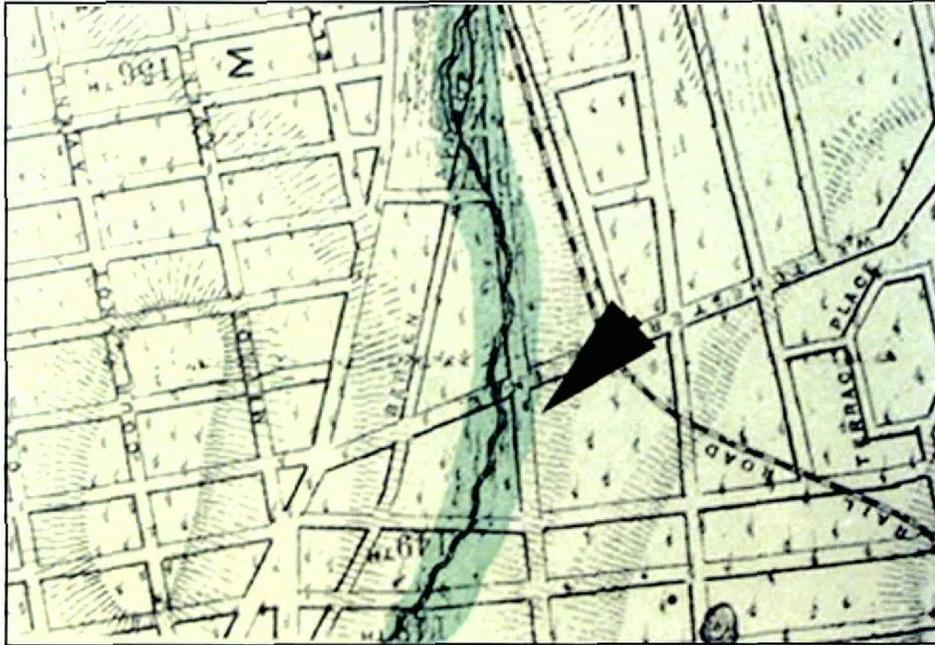


Fig. 13. 1874 Viele map showing the location of the project site block.



Fig. 14. 1868 Sidney and Neff map showing the location of the project site.

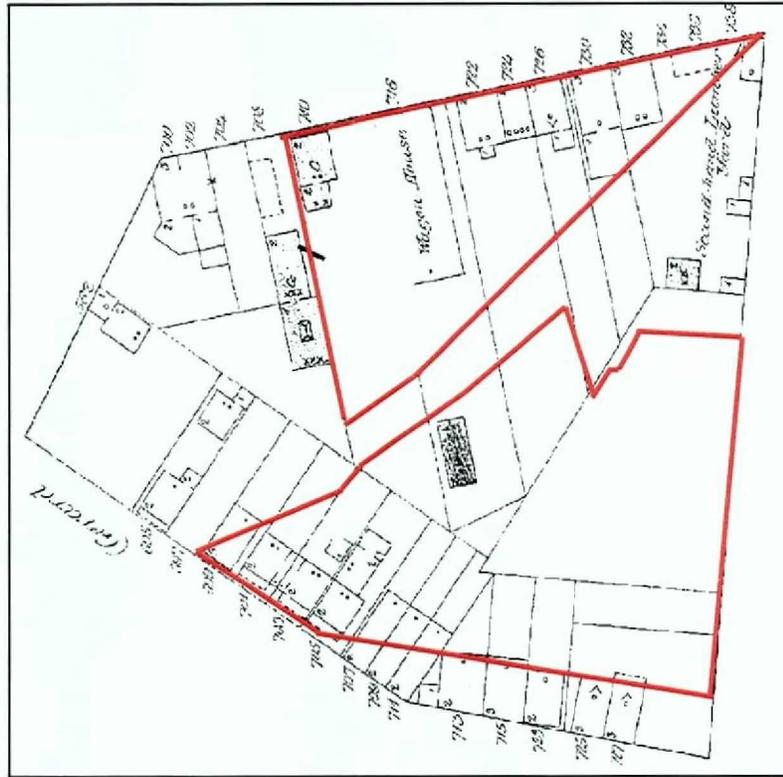


Fig. 17. 1891 Sanborn map showing the location of the project site.

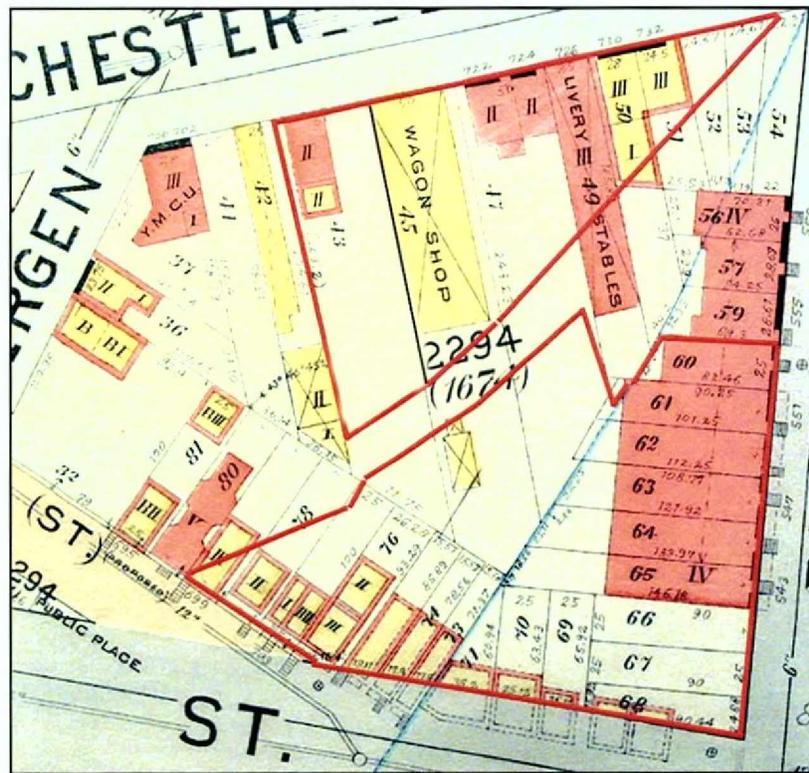


Fig. 18. 1900 Hyde map showing the location of the project site.

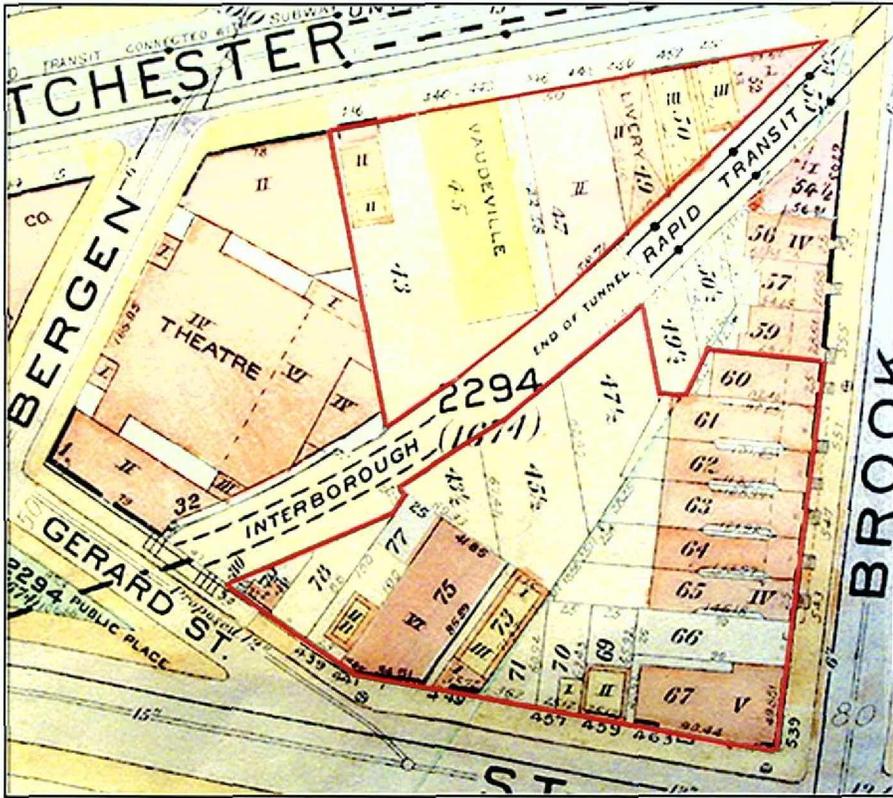


Fig. 19. 1907 Hyde map showing the location of the project site.

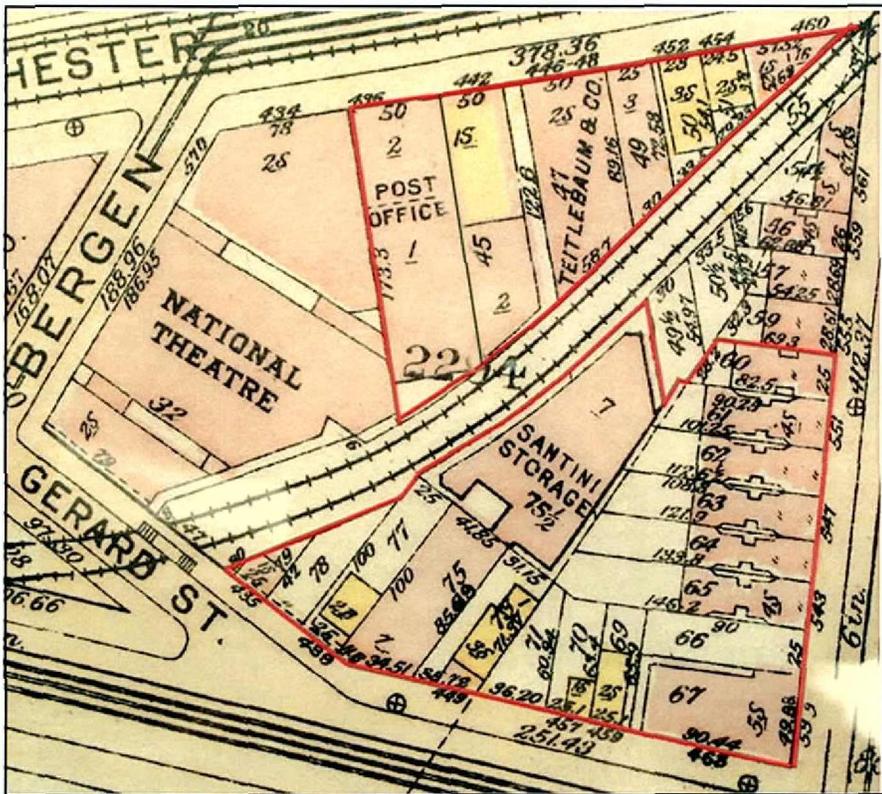


Fig. 20. 1921 Bromley map showing the location of the project site.

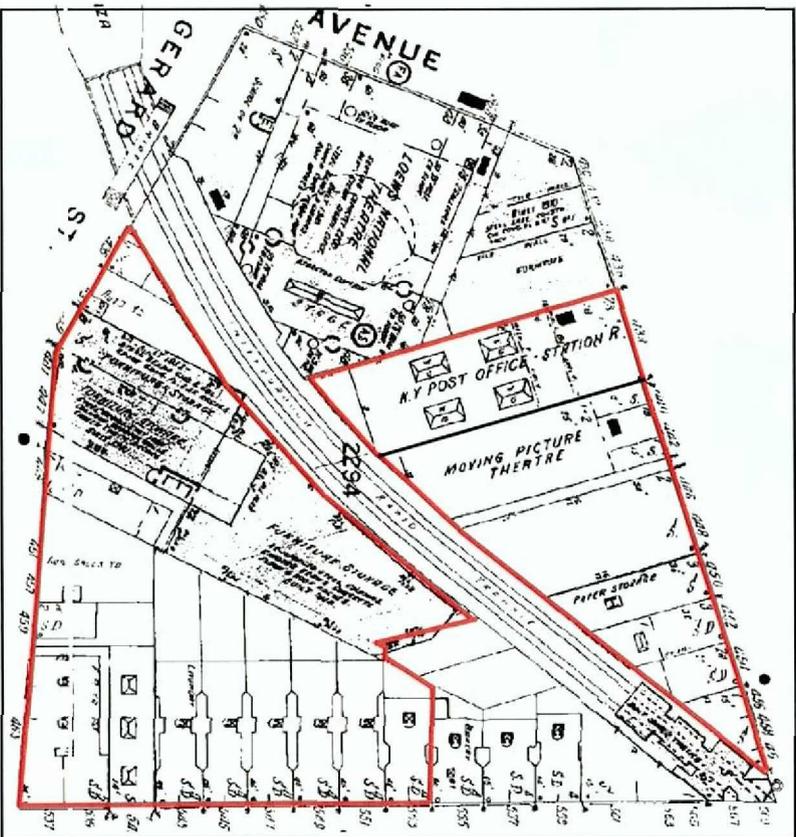


Fig. 21. 1935 Sanborn map showing the location of the project site.

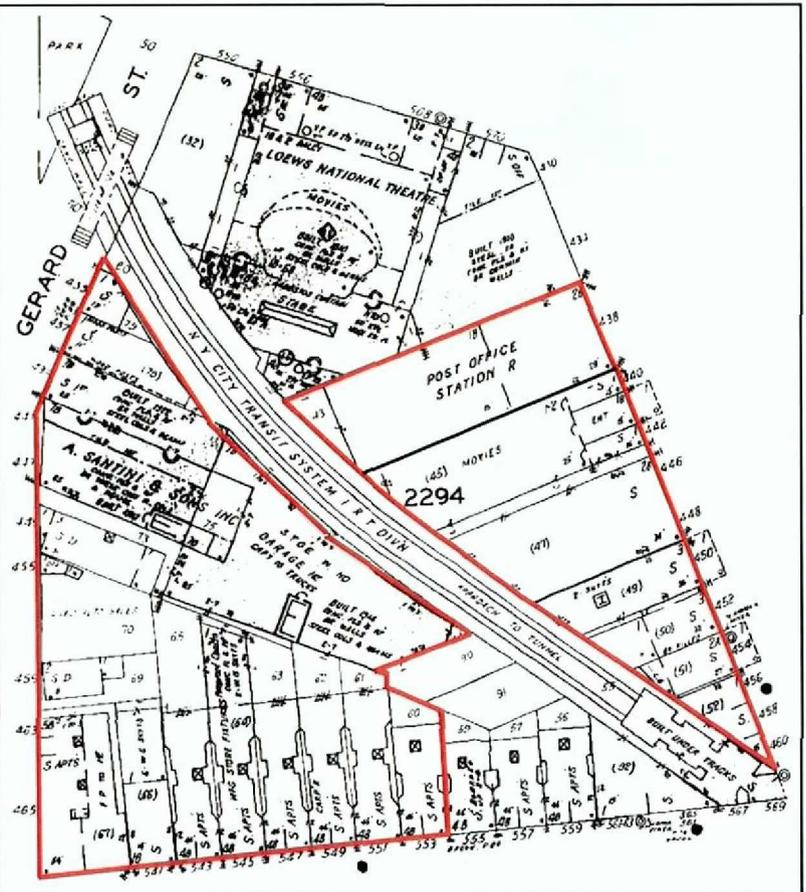


Fig. 22. 1951 Sanborn map showing the location of the project site.

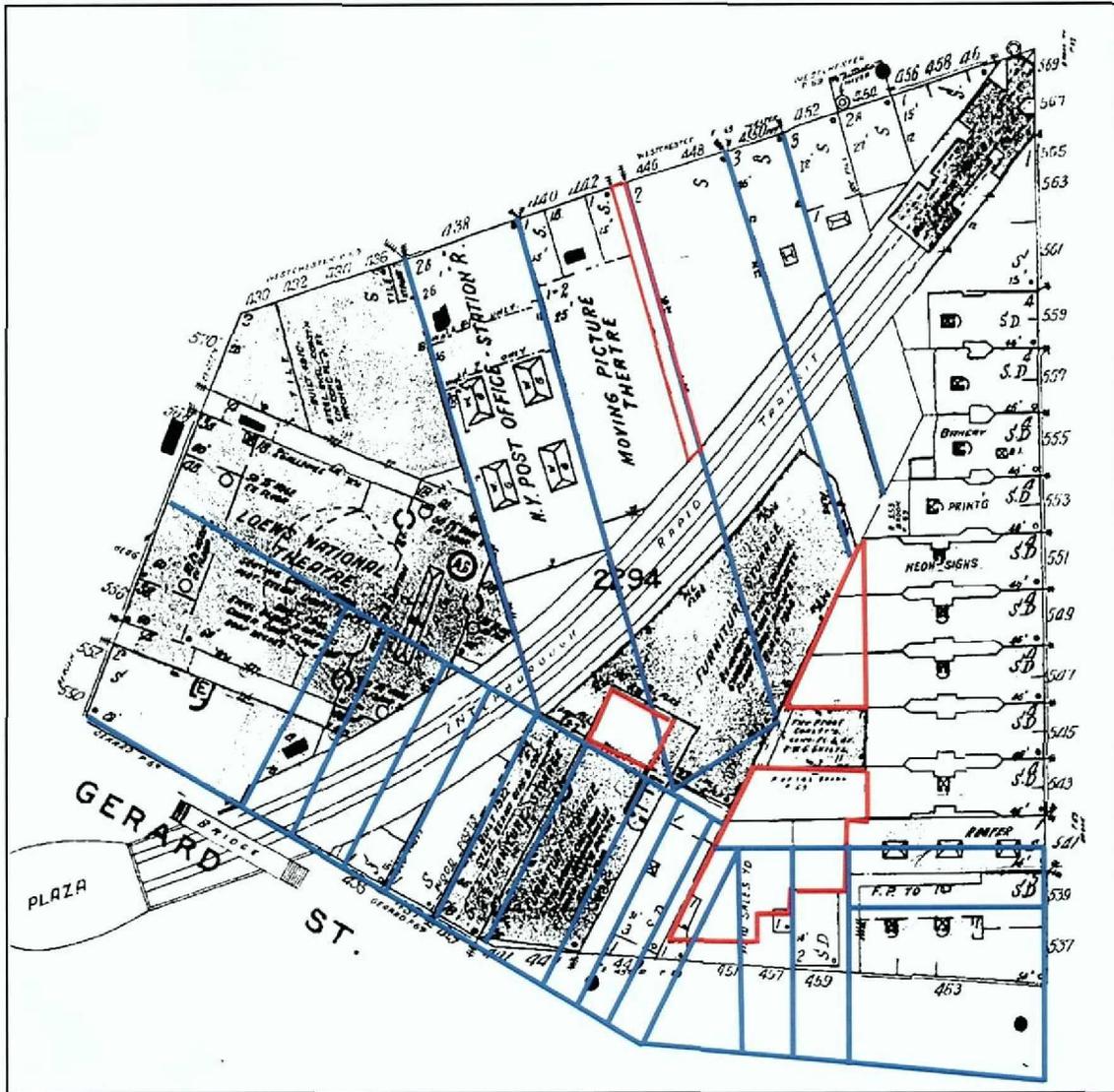


Fig. 23. Map showing the outline of the 1891 Sanborn map in blue over the 1945 Sanborn map, and the areas considered to be sensitive for archaeological remains outlined in red.