Stage IA Archaeological Assessment
East Side Access Ventilation Shaft
Park Avenue, New York City, New York

Prepared by:

URS
Burlington, New Jersey
ABSTRACT

This report details the findings of a Stage IA archaeological assessment URS Corporation (URS) conducted for AKRF, Inc. Work was initiated in response to the proposed construction of a ventilation shaft as part of the East Side Access Project, located in the borough of Manhattan. The proposed ventilation shaft is located on the sidewalk of Park Avenue between 37th and 38th streets. The purpose of the study was to provide information on the nature, location, and extent of intact and original soil surfaces within the project area and the depth of twentieth-century fills, if present, above these surfaces. This information is needed to determine if proposed subsurface construction activities will encounter intact surfaces that may contain archaeological resources.

The historical background research indicated that although the project area is located on a hilltop, it is not considered to be sensitive for prehistoric cultural resources because of its distance (0.5 to 0.8 miles) from a freshwater source and associated food resources. In addition, subsequent urban development within the project area that consisted of laying out new (and later widening) streets, associated utility lines, and the construction of residential and commercial structures would have altered the landscape and impacted potential prehistoric cultural resources; therefore, the potential for locating intact prehistoric cultural deposits is low and no further work is recommended.

The historical background research indicated that development within and adjacent to the project area began in 1832 with the construction of the New York & Harlem Railroad along Fourth Avenue (later Park Avenue). Construction crews had to cut their way through the solid schist of Murray Hill from 33rd and 41st Streets and widen the road from 100 to 140 feet to accommodate the double-track railroad. With the growth of population, the railroad became a dangerous impediment to east and west cross traffic. The presence of the railroad also retarded the use of Fourth Avenue for residential purposes. In 1848, the open cut through Murray Hill was filled in so that Fourth Avenue could be opened up to 38th Street. Because of the rail line, Fourth Avenue held little appeal as a residential street for those who could afford to live elsewhere. The first step in the transformation of Fourth Avenue into Park Avenue began in 1872, when the tracks were lowered. This resulted in intensive growth, so that by 1885 no vacant lots remained on the project area block. This and later development (sidewalk and road construction, utility lines, etc.) would have altered the landscape and impacted potential historic cultural resources. In addition, the location of the project area in what would have once been the front-yard area, where very little activity would have taken place, indicates a low potential for historic resources. Therefore, no further work is recommended.
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I. INTRODUCTION AND PROJECT DESCRIPTION

URS Corporation (URS) conducted a Stage IA archaeological assessment in support of the construction of a proposed ventilation shaft as part of the East Side Access Project, located in the borough of Manhattan (Figure 1.1). The proposed ventilation shaft will be located on the sidewalk of Park Avenue situated between 37th and 38th Streets (Figure 1.2).

The purpose of the study was to provide information on the nature, location, and extent of intact and original soil surfaces within the project area and the depth of twentieth-century fills, if present, above these surfaces. This information is needed to determine if proposed subsurface construction activities will encounter intact surfaces that may contain archaeological resources. All work for this project was conducted in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation’s “Protection of Historic and Cultural Properties” (36 CFR 800). In addition, the study was performed in compliance with the City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) (Executive Order No. 91 of 1977). This work was also conducted pursuant to the New York state guidelines for such projects, and pursuant to the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission’s (NYCLPC) established guidelines for Stage IA archaeological work in New York City, dated April 12, 2002. The cultural resource specialists who performed this work satisfied the qualifications specified in 36 CFR 61, Appendix A.

Edward Morin, RPA, served as the project’s Principal Investigator, while Historian Ingrid Wuebber conducted the background research. Lynda Bass prepared the graphics for the report, and Paul Elwork edited the text for style and consistency.
Figure 1.1  Project Area Location Map (Source: Portion of 7.5 Minute Topographic Map, Central Park and Brooklyn, New York Quadrangles, Maptech 1979).
Figure 1.2  Archaeological Area of Potential Effect (Source: Manhattan Land Book 1934–1955).
II. METHODS

Researching the history of the project area entailed gathering information from the Landmarks Preservation Commission at 1 Centre Street for documentation of National Register properties. In addition, the New York Public Library, at 42nd Street and Fifth Avenue, was utilized for research material, such as maps, newspaper articles, local histories, and photographs.
III. PREHISTORIC AND HISTORIC BACKGROUND

PREHISTORIC PERIOD

Archaeological traces of settlement in the greater New York City area extend back to the Paleoindian period, circa 11,000 to 10,000 B.P. (Cantwell and Wall 2001:40ff). Environmental conditions during the Paleoindian period were characterized by a dramatic reduction in sea level (300 feet) that left present-day coastal New York 120 miles inland from the paleo-coast, making New York City less attractive for settlement. The Paleoindians were highly mobile hunters and gatherers, moving about the landscape exploiting available food and lithic resources. They did not build permanent villages or stay in one place long enough for substantial archaeological deposits to accumulate. As a result, these sites tend to be shallow and ephemeral (Cantwell and Wall 2001). High mobility among Paleoindian groups, the rise of coastal waters during the late Holocene, and extensive urban development of riverine and coastal settings all contribute to the rarity of Paleoindian sites.

Despite the rarity of sites, artifacts indicate that Paleoindians inhabited the New York area. A total of 21 fluted projectile points—as well as 120 other stone tools—were recovered from the general vicinity of Port Mobil and surrounding beaches on Staten Island (Cantwell and Wall 2001). Several other Paleoindian projectile points were recovered from various sites on Long Island; three of these were made from local lithic materials, indicating intensive occupation of the area (Saxon 1978 in Strong 1997:37).

The Archaic period (10,000–3700 B.P.) was characterized by changes in social organization and technology. Sea level was rising throughout this period as the glaciers melted and receded; thus, much of the information concerning settlement of the coastal plain has been lost to inundation. No sites dating to the Early Archaic Period (10,000–8000 B.P.) have been documented in New York City, since it was still inland during this time. A few sites have been found on Staten Island, Ward’s Point, and Old Place. In addition, possible Early Archaic components have been documented at the Wading River, Jamesport, and Stony Brook Sites (Ritchie 1959). The Wards Point Site, at the southern end of Staten Island, is one example of an Early Archaic site; the site consisted of hearth features, diagnostic projectile points, and numerous cutting tools (Ritchie 1994; Cantwell and Wall 2001).

Settlement continued throughout the Early Archaic period, accompanied by a steady increase in population. Changes in the environment during the Middle Archaic (8000–6000 B.P.) led to a seasonal pattern of migratory land use. People moved from resource base to resource base, exploiting seasonal runs of fish, stands of nuts, and migrations of fowl. A shift to more intensive exploitation of estuaries and bays occurred. By the time of the Middle Archaic, people systematically exploited the coastal resources of Manhattan. The Middle Archaic sites found in the lower Hudson Valley area are, for the most part, shell middens whose compact nature and waterfront location protected many from destruction during eighteenth- and nineteenth-century development (Cantwell and Wall 2001:54). Dogan Point is an example of a massive shell midden with a well-defined Middle Archaic component on the Hudson River, north of New York.
City (Brennan 1974; Classen 1994, 1995). Technological changes during the Middle Archaic included the introduction of groundstone tools and stemmed projectile points.

Increased social complexity, larger seasonal camps, and more intensive exploitation of riverine settings characterized the Late Archaic (6000–3700 B.P.). The increase in numbers of sites and their distribution in a larger variety of environmental settings may be interpreted as indicating an increase in population during the Late Archaic. The technological changes from this period were marked by the introduction of steatite cooking vessels, as well as greater diversity of projectile point types. People used a variety of small projectile points, as well as a number of large bifacial blades. Many of the Late Archaic sites in the area, like those of the Middle Archaic, are also shell middens (Cantwell and Wall 2001:57), although intact Archaic sites of any period are scarce in New York City. The available evidence that comes from two sites (Tubby Hook and Inwood), located at the northern end of Manhattan along the Hudson River, suggests that people had established seasonal rounds by the Late Archaic (Cantwell and Wall 2001:57 and 59). Large groups occupied base camps during the summer; groups split up during other seasons to visit smaller hunting, fishing, or plant procurement stations.

The period of transition (Transitional, 3700–2700 B.P.) between the Archaic and Woodland periods saw an increase in social complexity marked by greater emphasis on mortuary traditions and associated with a culture known as Orient in New York City and in the surrounding region. An adoption of a more sedentary way of life occurred during this transitional period, corresponding to the commencement of horticultural practices and the introduction of pottery carved out of soft stone known as soapstone or steatite. However, the period’s “defining characteristic was a distinctive style of artifact, one we now call ‘Orient fishtail,’ which had been turning up all over New York City and the surrounding coastal areas... These tools... were long, slender, and waisted, extending in a flaring ‘tail,’ usually chipped out of local white quartz or quartzite” (Cantwell and Wall 2001:62–63). A great amount of evidence for the Orient culture no longer exists within the heavily developed urban areas. To date, the best evidence has been located on eastern Long Island at Brown’s Hill near Orient Point, Jamesport, Sugar Loaf Hill, and Stony Brook.

Increasing sedentism and reliance on plant food sources, characteristic of the Late Archaic, continued during the Woodland period (2700–400 B.P.). The most distinctive and important technical innovation that is diagnostic of the onset of the Woodland period is the advent of pottery manufacture and its use. It is apparent that Woodland period inhabitants of the coastal New York region relied heavily on the abundant shellfish resources of coastal bays (Black 1981: 10). Shell midden sites are particularly common in coastal zones of the lower Hudson Valley (Harrington 1909; Schaper 1989). Extensive shell midden sites, many of them multi-component, have been reported in the Pelham Bay Park area, as well as at Throgs Neck. Woodland ceramics typical of the coastal region are described in the Milo Rock Shelter report, where they were found along with well-preserved remains of shellfish (oyster, clam, and whelk), sturgeon, white-tailed deer, box turtle, and small mammals.

The shelters of these native peoples were most similar in form to what is commonly referred to as a wigwam; that is, shelters made from tree limbs and branches secured into the ground and fastened at their tops to create a dome-like shape. These ribbed structures were then covered in bark, reeds, and earth with small ventilation holes at the pinnacles to release smoke from interior
fires (Wilson 1902: 14). Animal skins were often used to cover the open entrances to these shelters.

Agriculture became established in the Northeast during the Late Woodland period (after 1000 A.D.), but the timing of the subsistence switch by coastal peoples from complete dependence on hunting and gathering to mixed foraging and agriculture is a matter of debate among archaeologists. By the time of European settlement in the early seventeenth century, native people kept well-established fields in which they grew the triad of corn, beans, and squash, along with some other domesticated plants. The Munsees—part of a larger group now called the Delaware or Lenape—occupied Lower Manhattan in the early seventeenth century (Cantwell and Wall 2001). Small, permanent communities characterize the Munsee settlement pattern, along with temporary sites for the collection of particular resources (Cantwell and Wall 2001:114). The Munsees farmed on a small scale, but also utilized the plant and animal resources of the land. Early writers described their fields and the large palisaded settlements that accompanied them (e.g., Van der Donck 1968), but archaeologists do not agree as to the temporal depth of this village-settlement pattern. Some see the pattern as extending back for several hundred years; others see it as a response to European trade (Cantwell and Wall 2001:94–95).

Pre-European sites on Manhattan are not common, as subsequent development has obliterated them. This appears to be the case in the project area. Although the project area was located on a hilltop, depicted in two topographic maps of the city (Viele 1859; Bridges 1811), the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission did not identify it as being sensitive for prehistoric cultural resources (NYCLPC 1982), possibly due to its distance from a freshwater source (0.5 to 0.8 miles) and subsequent urban development within the Murray Hill area that consisted of laying out new (and later widening) streets, associated utility lines, and the construction of structures. All of these factors would have altered the landscape and impacted potential prehistoric cultural resources; therefore, the potential for locating intact prehistoric cultural deposits is low.

HISTORIC PERIOD

Midtown Manhattan was once a patchwork of eighteenth-century farms and country estates owned by wealthy New Yorkers. The project area is located on the top of a hill from which the neighborhood derived its name—Murray Hill. The imposition of the street grid on Manhattan in 1811 established the current alignment of Fourth Avenue (now Park Avenue). The project area is located entirely within the original 140-foot-wide right of way of Park Avenue. The Park Avenue of the present day had its beginnings as a railroad right of way. Park Avenue's association with the socially elite dates back to the early twentieth century.

Murray Hill Farm

The Murray Hill neighborhood traces its origins back to the country estate of Robert Murray, a Quaker and wealthy shipping merchant in the decades before the Revolutionary War. The Murray family called their country home “Inclenberg,” a Dutch name meaning “Fire Beacon
Hill.” During the period when the Dutch controlled Manhattan, beacons were used to warn the inhabitants of New Amsterdam at the approach of armed Native-American parties.

Robert Murray was fortunate to arrive in New York in 1753, just when the city was entering an economic boom. He had already prospered as a miller and merchant in Pennsylvania. In New York, Robert Murray invested his capital in a variety of enterprises. He acquired three merchant vessels and had shares in a fourth. He built a wharf on the East River at Wall Street. He became a major underwriter in the marine insurance business. His retail store was an outlet for the goods he imported. Like many of his mercantile colleagues in the 1750s and 1760s, Robert Murray had a townhouse on Pearl Street near his commercial interests and established a “gentleman’s farm” north of the city. Being one of the most successful merchants of his day, he was able to satisfy his desire to build one of the city’s finest mansions (Monaghan 1998:10-20).

The city of New York owned the land Robert Murray chose for his countryseat as common land. Robert leased just under 30 acres lying between the Eastern Post Road (a.k.a. Boston Post Road) on the east and the Middle Post Road (a.k.a. Bloomingdale Road) on the west. On the city grid established in 1811, the farm’s southern boundary was located a few feet south of 33rd Street and extended north to a point between 38th and 39th Streets. At its widest part, it stretched from Lexington Avenue to a point between Madison and Fifth Avenues. By 1762, Robert Murray had built his mansion on the crest of the hill that would bear his name. On the modern street grid, the mansion was situated in the middle of Park Avenue between 36th and 37th Streets. None of the farm’s buildings appear to have been located in the project area (Bridges 1811; Harris and Presa 2002: 7; Monaghan 1998:3-4)(Figure 3.1). Incenleberg was often noted in contemporary accounts. It was reached from the Eastern Post Road—down an allee of magnolias, elms, spruce, and Lombardy poplars that gave way to wide lawns bordered by extensive gardens. The spacious mansion surrounded by broad verandas looked out over Kips Bay and the East River. The Murray mansion was the scene for lavish entertaining and was a stop for every distinguished foreign traveler passing through New York (Monaghan 1998:21-22).

Robert Murray, ever the shrewd businessman, invested in an iron mine on the eve of the Revolutionary War. He used his family and business connections to carry on trade with both the Continental and the British Armies. It is somewhat ironic, therefore, that Robert’s wife Mary Lindley Murray is credited with helping save the American army. A legend developed that Mary and her charming daughters delayed General Howe and his officers with hospitality while General Washington’s army retreated through Manhattan following the Battle of Brooklyn in September 1776. Historians have pointed out that General Howe would likely not have chased the retreating Americans without waiting for all his troops, cavalry, and artillery to be landed at Kips Bay. During the period of the British occupation of New York, from 1776 to 1783, British officers were frequent guests at Incenleberg. Following the war, the Murray family came under intense suspicion for their perceived unpatriotic activities and associations. Robert Murray’s eldest son Lindley was sent into exile in England in 1784, as a sort of scapegoat, to protect the family’s property and reputation (Monaghan 1998:59, 62-67, 84). In 1787, Lindley Murray published the first of a dozen books; his Grammar and English Reader textbooks made him one of the largest-selling authors in the world in the first half of the nineteenth century (Monaghan 1992:4, 121).
Figure 3.1  City Grid Superimposed Over Murray Hill (Source: Bridges 1811).
Robert Murray died suddenly of a heart attack or stroke in 1786 at the age of 65. His wife Mary Lindley Murray had died in 1780. Robert Murray’s five children—Lindley, Mary, John, Beulah, and Susannah—inherited the bulk of his estate. Robert left Inclenberg to his youngest child Susannah, the wife of Captain Gilbert Colden Willett, a Loyalist physician. In 1799, Gilbert Willett bought the Inclenberg estate from the city of New York for just over £907 (*New York County Deed Book* 118:630). All the other Murray heirs had established homes elsewhere, but must still have looked upon Inclenberg as the Murray family homestead (Monaghan 1998:108; *New York Times*, June 7, 1914, page sm2).

Gilbert Willett was set up in business by Susannah’s uncle, John Murray, who had been Robert’s business partner for many years. The enterprise failed. As part of the bankruptcy settlement, Gilbert sold Inclenberg to his wife’s uncle in 1800 (*New York Deed Book* 118:631; Monaghan 1998:109). John Murray had married Hannah Lindley, a cousin of his sister-in-law Mary Lindley Murray. John and Hannah had four children: John R. Murray, Susan (who married William Ogden), Mary, and Hannah. John Murray had a large house on Pearl Street as befitted a successful merchant and banker. His household was immortalized in the letters of Harriet and Maria Trumbull. The Trumbull sisters were the daughters of a Connecticut governor and the nieces of painter John Trumbull. During an extended visit to New York in 1801, the Trumbull sisters wrote admiringly of their rich and cultured acquaintances, Mary and Hannah Murray. In 1806, John Murray commissioned his friend John Trumbull to paint a portrait of Murray’s youngest daughters. Today *The Misses Mary and Hannah Murray* hangs in the Smithsonian American Art Museum. Mary and Hannah, exemplars of the New Republic’s cultured elite, are portrayed with sheet music and drawing books in hand. When John Murray died in 1808, Inclenberg became the home for his widow Hannah and all of his children. Special apartments were created for Mary and Hannah, who remained unmarried (Monaghan 1998:119).

Eight years later, in 1816, the children of John Murray confirmed their title to all the land that comprised the Murray Hill farm. The farm was entrusted to Mary and Hannah so that they could rent it out and use the proceeds to support their mother (*New York Deed Book* 118, 445, 694, 697). Inclenberg burned down in 1835. The Murrays immediately began selling off parts of the old farm. In 1835, the first sale was made to a congregation of the Reformed Protestant Dutch Church, who built the South Reformed Dutch Church on the southwest corner of Madison Avenue and East 38th Street. Before the year was out, the Murray heirs had sold off lots on both sides of Fourth Avenue (*New York Deed Book* 338:150).

Hannah Murray, the unmarried sister of John, Susan, and Mary, died in 1836 (Monaghan 1998:119–120; *New York Will Book* 75:492). John and his sister Mary Murray transferred the Murray Hill property, still in their possession, to their sister Susan Ogden, who had been widowed. When the chancery court partitioned the Murray estate in 1842, it was awarded to Mary Murray (*New York Deed Books* 388:150; 431:206).

*Murray Hill Development*

Mary Murray was about 60 years old when she gained control of the family farm. She had witnessed many of the rapid changes that had affected downtown residential neighborhoods following commercial intrusions. Open uptown tracts were a considerable temptation for a
restless, unsentimental upper class anxious to invest in rapidly changing tastes in architecture and interior design by moving to “new residential enclaves” (Hornberger 2002:62-63). Mary Murray resolved to develop Murray Hill as a more-stable neighborhood for the city’s wealthy elite. In 1847, she drew up the Murray Hill Restrictive Agreement. The agreement limited construction to brick or stone dwellings, churches, and private stables (Harris and Presa 2002:4). The affected area was located on both sides of 34th Street, up to the south side of 38th Street and between the former alignments of the Eastern Post Road and Middle Post Road. Lexington Avenue and Madison Avenue supplanted these early roads, but were laid out according to the 1811 grid. Therefore, sections of Lexington and Madison were vulnerable to commercial development. At this time, Manhattan’s most-exclusive neighborhood was still located in the lower portions of Second Avenue and Fifth Avenue, from Washington Square to 23rd Street. Union Square was still a center of fashion and the northern extent of Murray Hill was considered to be delightfully rural. Just a generation before, a glass factory had operated near Murray Hill, and a small hamlet of workers was located nearby (New York Times, November 2, 1881, page 5).

Wealthy New Yorkers built their mansions along Fifth Avenue and led the march uptown. The rolling countryside north of the city was drastically modified by leveling hills and filling wetlands as the city inexorably marched uptown guided by the grid plan. Downtown churches finding their wealthy congregations moving ever farther northward in the 1840s and 1850s sometimes leapfrogged ahead of residential development. Such was the case with the Brick Presbyterian Church. It had occupied a corner near City Hall Park since 1767. In 1856 the old church was sold off and a new church established on the northwest corner of Fifth Avenue and 37th Street. Church leaders chose a prime location beyond the built-up section of New York. East Thirty-seventh Street was located on the brow of Murray Hill, making it the most desirable street in the neighborhood. Construction of the new church, the most expensive building in New York, established Murray Hill as the next real estate hotspot (Lockwood 1976:222–223). Murray Hill offered residents a healthier prospect with unobstructed access to sunshine, fresh air and good drainage. Coventry Wadell was the first to build a mansion in the Murray Hill neighborhood. His grand Gothic Revival mansion was built on the west side of Fifth Avenue between 37th and 38th streets. An 1852 map of illustrates the very beginnings of residential development in the Murray Hill neighborhood (Figure 3.2). Only two structures were located on the project area block (Dripps 1852). Lots on East Thirty-Seventh Street between Fifth and Sixth Avenues became highly prized because a deed covenant required the brownstone townhouses to have seven-foot-deep front gardens. Another wealthy pioneer in Murray Hill was Isaac Newton Phelps who built three brownstone mansions on the east side of Madison Avenue between 36th and 37th streets in the early 1850s (Harris and Presa 2002:10; New York Times, June 7, 1914, page sm2; Lockwood 1976:225-227)(Figure 3.3). By 1860 wealthy New Yorkers had made Fifth Avenue the preeminent avenue for mansion dwellers, stretching in a continuous line from Washington Avenue to the crest of Murray Hill at 37th Street (Lockwood 1976:177). The incursion of commercial tenants into the Union Square area in the 1860s touched off an exodus of affluent residents into Murray Hill, sheltered from intrusive elements by the Restrictive Agreement (Lockwood 1976:290). Murray Hill experienced intense building during the 1860s and 1870s. By 1885 no vacant lots remained on the project area block (Robinson 1885).
Figure 3.2  Project Area and Vicinity in 1852 (Source: Dripps 1852).
Figure 3.3  Project Area and Vicinity, Circa 1859 (Source: Perris 1857—1862).
Fourth Avenue Becomes Park Avenue

The New York & Harlem Railroad was chartered in 1831. The following year, the railroad laid its tracks along Fourth Avenue, a narrow unpaved road passing through sparsely settled farmland and shantytowns set amongst the uneven terrain of Manhattan several miles north of the settled parts of the city. Construction began at 32nd street and immediately encountered the rail line’s first great obstacle—Murray Hill. Construction crews cut their way through the solid schist of Murray Hill from 33rd to 41st Streets. Fourth Avenue was widened from 100 to 140 feet to accommodate the double track railroad. By 1834 the New York & Harlem Railroad reached the village of Yorkville at 84th Street. It reached Harlem after blasting a tunnel through Mount Prospect in 1837, the same year the railroad purchased its first steam locomotive. Its southern terminal was located at the intersection of the Bowery and Prince Street (Collins 1930:44). Residents of lower Manhattan blocked the operation of steam locomotives in the built up parts of New York fearing accidents and explosions. Steam locomotives pulled trains into the city as far south as 42nd street and then switched to horsepower. The railroad’s horse stables were located on the west side of Fourth Avenue between 32nd and 33rd streets. In 1857 the New York & Harlem built depots on the west side of Fourth Avenue between 26th and 27th Streets. The railroad used horsepower from 1858 until 1871 (Trager 1990:8).

With the growth of population, the railroad became a dangerous impediment to east and west cross traffic (Collins 1930:64). The presence of the railroad also retarded the use of Fourth Avenue for residential purposes. Shantytowns and factories dotted Fourth Avenue. The East Side was home to exclusive residential enclaves such as Grammercy Park and Murray Hill and squalid tenement districts such as the Gashouse area below 32nd Street. One neighborhood gang, the Fourth Avenue Tunnel Gang, used the railroad tunnel under Park Avenue between 32nd and 42nd streets as their hideout (Kisseloff 1989:384–385). In 1848, the open cut through Murray Hill was filled in so that Fourth Avenue could be opened up to 38th Street. The connection of Park Avenue to the affluent avenues to the west set the stage for Murray Hill’s rapid development in the 1850s and 1860s (Harris and Presa 2002:9; New York Times, January 27, 1935, page N1; September 15, 1935, page E11; June 14, 1936, page RE1). Because of the rail line, Fourth Avenue held little appeal as a residential street for those who could afford to live elsewhere. The first step in the transformation of Fourth Avenue into Park Avenue began in 1872 when the tracks were lowered (Collins 1930:88). Streetcars ran through the Park Avenue tunnel until 1935 when the tunnel was converted for automobile use and reopened in 1937 (Watson 1976:84–85). In 1888 Fourth Avenue was renamed Park Avenue north of 32nd Street, although its appearance had not yet seemed to warrant the name change. The use of steam locomotives necessitated large openings in Park Avenue for ventilation. (Collins 1930:73–74). The present appearance of Park Avenue with its center malls occurred after the trains were electrified thus eliminating the coal smoke that enshrouded the avenue (Figure 3.4). Toward the close of the nineteenth century, the exclusive residential nature of Fifth Avenue was broken in the section between Twenty-third and Fifty-seventh Streets by the incursion of businesses. Affluent residents of the neighborhood moved to the elegant apartment hotels rising along Park Avenue after 1910 (Collins 1930:79–80, 106).
Figure 3.4  Project Area and Vicinity, Circa 1897 (Source: Bromley and Bromley 1897).
The Neighborhood Changes

The first serious challenge to the Murray Hill Restrictive Agreement came in the form of apartment houses erected on 34th Street, at the corner of Lexington Avenue. Though some Murray Hill residents expressed concern, the alarm was not sufficient to try to block construction. However, when plans for the 12-story Cameron Office Building at the corner of Madison and 34th were announced in 1908, J. P. Morgan led a neighborhood crusade to try to prevent its construction. The skyscraper builders were victorious. Three years of court battles ended in a ruling in the State Supreme Court to uphold the right to build tall commercial buildings (i.e., 12 to 16 stories high) at the edges of the restricted zone (New York Times, June 7, 1914, page sm2).

In 1914, about 400 private homes were located within the Murray Hill restricted zone, or just outside it. Unlike previous generations of affluent New Yorkers, residents of Murray Hill expressed considerable loyalty to their neighborhood. It was not unusual to find families who had remained in the same home for many years. Despite the commercial encroachment surrounding them, many had decided to stay and fight to preserve Murray Hill as a residential enclave. The Murray Hill Association was incorporated in 1914 to coordinate efforts to enforce the clauses of the 1847 Restrictive Agreement (New York Times, June 7, 1914, page sm2).

In 1911, George F. Baker and his family went so far as buy an unrestricted lot at the northwest corner of Madison Avenue and 38th Street for a million dollars in order to prevent the construction of a tall apartment house. The Bakers lived in neighboring homes and did not want the character of their block to change. Unable to interest anyone in building a mansion on the lot, Baker erected a four-story professional office building, more in keeping with the scale of the neighborhood (New York Times, June 7, 1914, sm2). Despite his best efforts, the intrusion of Baker's office building broke the ban. Other wealthy residents turned their properties over to commercial interests before retreating to uptown precincts. Cornelius Vanderbilt left his Murray Hill home on Fifth Avenue at 34th Street and moved up Fifth Avenue to a new mansion at 57th Street. The former Vanderbilt home was converted into the Princeton Club. Cornelius Vanderbilt's son Alfred inherited the property and replaced the building with a hotel in 1912. Murray Hill residents were not pleased to learn a large hotel was going up in their neighborhood, but 34th Street was already a busy cross town thoroughfare with a streetcar line, and many of the houses had been converted into commercial properties (New York Times, January 23, 1916, page 16; October 16, 1925, page 1; July 7, 1929, page 136). Park Avenue in the vicinity of the project area had witnessed the replacement of single-family town houses on corner lots with apartment buildings or apartment hotels. Eventually, even the mid-block townhouses were bought up to combine for institutional purposes, such as the Scandanavia House (Figure 3.5).

Development of the Park Avenue Streetscape

The proposed Park Avenue shaft is located under the sidewalk and roadway that today fronts a 21-story condominium building at 52 Park Avenue and Scandinavian House at 58 Park Avenue.

Scandinavian House is a six-story building built in 2000 to promote educational and cultural exchanges between the United States and the Scandinavian countries. Scandinavian House
Figure 3.5 Project Area and Vicinity, Circa 1955 (Source: Bromley and Bromley 1955).

3.13
replaced two adjoining townhouses at 56 and 58 Park Avenue. No. 58 Park Avenue was a six-story limestone townhouse built in 1909 for Henry Welsh Rogers (New York Times, August 12, 1909, page 12). For many years it was the home of Grace Rainey Rogers, an art collector and philanthropist. Following World War II many of the former single-family townhouses along Park Avenue were converted into institutional or commercial properties. The Rogers townhouse became the headquarters of the American-Russian Institute in 1952 and later became a library for several foreign countries (New York Times, December 10, 1954, page 50). During the 1970s the townhouses at No. 58 and No. 56 Park Avenue served as the East German mission to the United States. No. 56 was a five-story brownstone that had been derelict since the late 1960s (New York Times, January 22, 1978, page R1; February 14, 1999, page 11).

The six-story townhouse built at 58 Park Avenue in 1909 took the place of an earlier townhouse that had been the home of millionaire Franklin B. Lord (New York Times, February 28, 1909, page 12). A house was built at 58 Park Avenue in the 1850s. It was, along with a house on the corner of East 37th Street, one of the first houses built on the block (Dripps 1852; Perris 1857–1862).

Sometime between 1860 and 1885, townhouses filled all of the remaining lots along the west side of Park Avenue between 37th and 38th Streets (Perris 1857-62; Robinson 1885). In 1901, James C. Fargo converted the four-story townhouse at 56 Park Avenue into a five-story townhouse (New York Times, May 2, 1901, page 11). Fargo was associated with Wells-Fargo and was the president of the American Express Company (New York Times, February 9, 1915, page 9). Trinity Church bought the townhouse in 1922 to house its rector. The house was vacant for several years until it was converted into apartments in 1938 (New York Times, December 22, 1937, page 48).

A dramatic change to the streetscape of Park Avenue began in the era between the world wars when single-family townhouses and mansions gave way to luxury apartments and hotels. Four-story townhouses at 64 and 66 Park Avenue were torn down in 1925 and replaced by a 16-story apartment hotel. The Murray Apartments on the southwest corner of Park Avenue and 38th Street today operates as The Kitano hotel (New York Times, October 24, 1925, page 26). A similar transition occurred at the northwest corner of Park Avenue and 37th Street. The mansion of financier Charles H. Coster was replaced by a 17-story luxury apartment building in 1940 (New York Times, June 15, 1939, page 47).

The 21-story luxury condominium building that now occupies the lots at 52 and 54 Park Avenue was built in the 1980s (New York Times, May 31, 1998, page 14). Wealthy New Yorkers had built their townhouses on these lots when the Murray Hill was built up in the 1860s and 1870s. In 1899, the heiresses of Howard Potter’s estate altered their four-story home at 52 Park Avenue and the adjoining four-story townhouse at 54 Park Avenue into five-story dwellings. Over the next 25 years, the Potter family alternately occupied or leased out their townhouses (New York Times, August 19, 1898, page 10; February 19, 1899, page 10; October 2, 1904, page 16; January 23, 1906, page 2; July 24, 1922, page 11). The Potter family sold their townhouse at 54 Park Avenue to Dr. George Evans, Jr. in 1923 (New York Times, August 8, 1923, page 26).
Dr. Evans maintained his residence and professional office at 54 Park Avenue. He also rented office space to other doctors (*New York Times*, August 15, 1926, page E7; March 16, 1930, page N4). By 1953, the buildings at 52–54 Park Avenue were described as apartment houses. They were sold to a construction company in 1953 to make way for a new 15-story apartment building (*New York Times*, January 22, 1953, page 39).
IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Pre-European sites on Manhattan are not common, as subsequent development has obliterated them. This appears to be the case in the project area. Previous studies of both prehistoric and Contact period settlement patterns within the region have indicated that the preferred locations for occupation were elevated and well-drained areas within 150 to 1,000 feet of freshwater sources. Although early historic maps (Viele 1859 and Bridges 1811) indicated that the project area was originally located on a hilltop, it is not considered to be sensitive for prehistoric cultural resources because of its distance from a freshwater source (0.5 to 0.8 miles). In addition, subsequent urban development within the project area that consisted of laying out new (and later widening) streets, associated utility lines, and the construction of residential and commercial structures would have altered the landscape and impacted potential prehistoric cultural resources; therefore, the potential for locating intact prehistoric cultural deposits is low and no further work is recommended.

The historical background research indicated that development within and adjacent to the project area began in 1832 with the construction of the New York & Harlem Railroad along Fourth Avenue (later Park Avenue). Construction crews had to cut their way through the solid schist of Murray Hill from 33rd and 41st Streets and widen the road from 100 to 140 feet to accommodate the double-track railroad. With the growth of population, the railroad became a dangerous impediment to east and west cross traffic. The presence of the railroad also retarded the use of Fourth Avenue for residential purposes. In 1848, the open cut through Murray Hill was filled in so that Fourth Avenue could be opened up to 38th Street. The connection of Park Avenue to the affluent avenues to the west set the stage for Murray Hill’s rapid development in the 1850s and 1860s. Because of the rail line, Fourth Avenue held little appeal as a residential street for those who could afford to live elsewhere. The first step in the transformation of Fourth Avenue into Park Avenue began in 1872, when the tracks were lowered. This resulted in intensive growth, so that by 1885, no vacant lots remained on the project area block. This and later development (sidewalk and road construction, utility lines, etc.) would have altered the landscape and impacted potential historic cultural resources. In addition, the location of the project area in what would have once been the front-yard area—where very little activity would have taken place—indicates a low potential for historic resources. Therefore, no further work is recommended.
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APPENDIX A
Resumes of Key Personnel
Ingrid Wuebber
Research Historian

Overview
Ms. Wuebber has over 25 years experience researching, analyzing, and writing contextual and site-specific histories for industrial, military, transportation, commercial, and residential properties in the Northeast, Mid-Atlantic, Southeast, and Midwest.

Project Specific Experience
Phase IA Archeological Investigation, Rehabilitate Battery Weed Seawall and Dock, Fort Wadsworth Unit, Gateway National Recreation Area, Staten Island, New York, conducted for the National Park Service, Denver Service Center. Research Historian responsible for documentary, cartographic and photographic research for developing a program for the assessment of archaeological resources at Battery Weed in Fort Wadsworth, Staten Island, New York. The goal of the investigation was to collect and synthesize documentary information regarding the prehistory and history of the project area; prepare a series of recommendations for further archaeological work, to include field testing if required; and to prepare a project report documenting the investigation for use by National Park Service personnel.

Modified Phase I Cultural Resources Inventory, Floyd Bennett Field, Jamaica Bay Unit, Gateway National Recreation Area, Brooklyn, New York, conducted for the National Park Service, Denver Service Center. Principal Investigator for a cultural resources inventory in support of the proposed replacement of aging electrical cables. The goals of the investigations were to 1) identify areas of disturbance and fill that may be excluded from further investigation; and 2) identify areas with the potential for prehistoric and historic archaeological sites that should be avoided or mitigated during the replacement of the electrical cables.

Addendum, Phase IA Archaeological Study, 3-7 Wooster Street, Borough of Manhattan, New York City, New York, conducted for Extended Management Company, Inc., Newark, New Jersey. Research Historian responsible for conducting documentary, cartographic, and photographic research for an addendum Phase IA study in order to provide additional background research to adequately address revisions requested by the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission to another firm’s previously conducted study.

Phase IA Archaeological Assessment of the Shaft 17B Complex in Sunnyside, Queens, New York, conducted for Jenny Engineering Corporation, Springfield, New Jersey. Research Historian responsible for conducting documentary, cartographic, and photographic research for an archaeological assessment of a 63,950 square foot area for a proposed shaft complex. The study provided information on the potential for the presence of archaeological resources within the site that are associated with British military occupation during the Revolutionary War.
Phase IA Documentary Study, East Side Access Ventilation Shaft, 38th Street, New York, New York, conducted for the MTA New York City Transit/Long Island Railroad. Research historian responsible for documentary, cartographic and photographic research of a proposed site for a ventilation shaft in a 25 x 100-foot lot. The purpose of the study is to provide information on the nature, location, and extent of intact and original soil surfaces within the project area and the depth of 20th-century fills above these surfaces. This information is needed in order to determine if proposed construction activities will extend to a depth that will encounter the historic and/or prehistoric surfaces that may contain archaeological resources. Conducted for the MTA New York City Transit/Long Island Railroad.

Phase I Archeological Investigations within the Gateway National Recreation Area at the Jacob Riis Bathhouse, Jamaica Bay Unit, New York, conducted for the National Park Service, Denver Service Center. Research Historian responsible for conducting documentary, cartographic, and photographic research for archaeological investigations at the Jacob Riis Bathhouse, Breezy Point, New York. Excavations through the concrete floor of the courtyard revealed heavily disturbed sandy fill related to the construction of the bathhouse. Disturbance included numerous utilities and a buried roadbed composed of oiled clinker and gravel. No further work was recommended since the investigations revealed that the development of the courtyard would not impact any archaeological deposits.

Phase I Archeological Investigations within the Gateway National Recreation Area at the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, Broad Channel Island, Jamaica Bay Unit, New York, conducted for the National Park Service, Denver Service Center. Research Historian responsible for conducting documentary, cartographic, and photographic research for the archaeological investigations at the Visitor Contact Station and Building 101 of Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge. Excavations revealed levels of recently disturbed soil capping a thick layer of landfill. The recovered artifacts consisted of architectural/structural material (with a small number of container glass fragments). No further work was recommended because the investigations indicated that proposed development of the two sites would not impact any archaeological deposits.

Cultural Resources Assessment, 1440 Story Avenue, Bronx, New York, conducted for the MTA New York City Transit. Research Historian responsible for documentary, cartographic and photographic research of a 12-acre site proposed for a warehouse. The study provided information on the potential for the presence of archaeological resources within the site.

Phase IB Archaeological Field Investigation, 101-117 Worth Street, New York, New York, conducted for AKRF, New York, New York. Research Historian responsible for conducting documentary, cartographic, and photographic research for Phase IB archaeological investigations of mid 19th to mid 20th century foundation remains and yard areas. Responsible for budgeting and design of research, direction of fieldwork, laboratory analysis, and report preparation. The Phase IB investigation consisted of both machine-excavated test trenches and hand-excavated test units, as well as monitoring of construction activities within a 150 x 260-foot site in lower Manhattan. The test trenches were utilized to determine the presence or
absence of early intact surfaces, foundations, and/or shaft features within the project area. Test units were then used to further investigate potential intact surfaces and features encountered during trench excavation. The archaeological monitoring of construction activities afforded a wider exposure of the project area than otherwise provided by the excavation of test units and test trenches. The investigation identified two sections of intact stonewalls associated respectively with the Broadway Tabernacle Church (1835 – 1857) and a late-nineteenth-century commercial building, along with the truncated remains of a mid-nineteenth-century well and a buried Holocene surface.

*Modified Phase IA Cultural Resources Inventory. Floyd Bennett Field, Jamaica Bay Unit, Gateway National Recreation Area, Brooklyn, New York,* conducted for the National Park Service, Denver Service Center. Research Historian responsible for conducting documentary, cartographic, and photographic research to help identify areas of disturbance and fill and delineated areas with the potential for prehistoric or historic sites on New York City's first municipal airfield. Floyd Bennett Field was built on Barren Island, the site of noxious smelling industries and its community of workers.

**Professional Societies/Affiliations**

- Society for Industrial Archaeology
- New Jersey Archaeological Society
- National Genealogical Society

**Chronology**

- 1999–present: URS Corporation
Edward M. Morin, M.S., RPA
Program Manager/Senior Archaeologist

Overview
Mr. Morin has over 25 years of experience in conducting and supervising archaeological investigations. He has directed archaeological and historical assessments, National Register evaluations, and archaeological data recovery efforts. Prior to joining URS, Mr. Morin served as Staff Archaeologist with the National Park Service, Denver Service Center, Applied Archeology Center, and Senior Archaeologist for Louis Berger & Associates, Inc. In those positions, his responsibilities included conducting and contracting archaeological investigations at historic and industrial sites within the Northeast, and Mid Atlantic States; budgeting and design of research; direction of fieldwork, laboratory analysis, and report preparation; and project management. Mr. Morin’s particular expertise is in the area of historic archaeology, but he has conducted a number of survey investigations of prehistoric sites.

Examples of Relevant Projects

Phase I A Archeological Investigation, Rehabilitate Battery Weed Seawall and Dock, Fort Wadsworth Unit, Gateway National Recreation Area, Staten Island, New York, conducted for the National Park Service, Denver Service Center. Principal Investigator for developing a program for an archaeological resources investigation at Battery Weed in Fort Wadsworth, Staten Island, New York. The goal of the investigation was to collect and synthesize documentary information regarding the prehistory and history of the project area; prepare a series of recommendations for further archaeological work, to include field testing if required; and to prepare a project report documenting the investigation for use by National Park Service personnel.

Phase III Data Recovery of an 18th Century Section of Battery Wall, Battery Park, New York, New York, conducted for Dewberry/LMS. Co-Principal Investigator for data recovery investigation of the remains of an 18th century stonewall associated with the Battery that once protected Fort George in Lower Manhattan.

Modified Phase I Cultural Resources Inventory, Floyd Bennett Field, Jamaica Bay Unit, Gateway National Recreation Area, Brooklyn, New York, conducted for the National Park Service, Denver Service Center. Principal Investigator for a cultural resources inventory in support of the proposed replacement of aging electrical cables. The goals of the investigations were to 1) identify areas of disturbance and fill that may be excluded from further investigation; and 2) identify areas with the potential for prehistoric and historic archaeological sites that should be avoided or mitigated during the replacement of the electrical cables.

Addendum, Phase IA Archaeological Study, 3-7 Wooster Street, Borough of Manhattan, New York City, New York, conducted for Extended Management Company, Inc., Newark, New Jersey. Principal Investigator for an addendum Phase IA study in order to provide additional

Areas of Expertise
- Cultural Resource Management Studies
- Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act
- Archaeological Surveys and Excavations
- Historic Preservation
- Regulatory Agency Liaison and Coordination
- Public Outreach

Years of Experience
With URS: 7 Years
With Other Firms: 20 Years

Education
- M.S./1980/ Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute/Archaeology
- M.A./1978/ St. Louis University/American Studies
- B.A./1975/ Westfield State College/History

Continuing Education
- 8-Hour Annual OSHA Refresher Course (URS HS&E, 10/2005)
- Two-Day Seminar in NEPA, Project Development & Section 4(f) (FHWA, Trenton, New Jersey, 2002)
- Cultural Resource Management in New York State (Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, Niagara, Canada, 2001)
- Section 106 Principles and Practices (SRI Foundation, Dover, Delaware, 2000)

Registration/Certification
- Register of Professional Archaeologists
background research to adequately address revisions requested by the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission to another firm’s previously conducted study.

**Phase IA Archaeological Assessment of the Shaft 17B Complex in Sunnyside, Queens, New York,** conducted for Jenny Engineering Corporation, Springfield, New Jersey. Principal Investigator for conducting and archaeological assessment of a 63,950 square foot area for a proposed shaft complex. The study provided information on the potential for the presence of archaeological resources within the site that are associated with British military occupation during the Revolutionary War.

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**Phase I Archaeological Investigations within the Gateway National Recreation Area at the Jacob Riis Bathhouse, Jamaica Bay Unit, New York,** conducted for the National Park Service, Denver Service Center. Principal Investigator for conducting archaeological investigations at the Jacob Riis Bathhouse, Breezy Point, New York. Excavations through the concrete floor of the courtyard revealed heavily disturbed sandy fill related to the construction of the bathhouse. Disturbance included numerous utilities and a buried roadbed composed of oiled clinker and gravel. No further work was recommended since the investigations revealed that the development of the courtyard would not impact any archaeological deposits.

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**Cultural Resources Assessment, 1440 Story Avenue, Bronx, New York,** conducted for the MTA New York City Transit. Principal Investigator for conducting documentary study or a 12-acre site proposed for a warehouse complex. The study provided information on the potential for the presence of archaeological resources within the site.

**Phase IB Archaeological Field Investigation, 101-117 Worth Street, New York, New York,** conducted for AKRF, New York, New York.
Principal Investigator for Phase IB archaeological investigations of mid 19th to mid 20th century foundation remains and yard areas. Responsible for budgeting and design of research, direction of fieldwork, laboratory analysis, and report preparation. The Phase IB investigation consisted of both machine-excavated test trenches and hand-excavated test units, as well as monitoring of construction activities within a 150 x 260-foot site in lower Manhattan. The test trenches were utilized to determine the presence or absence of early intact surfaces, foundations, and/or shaft features within the project area. Test units were then used to further investigate potential intact surfaces and features encountered during trench excavation. The archaeological monitoring of construction activities afforded a wider exposure of the project area than otherwise provided by the excavation of test units and test trenches. The investigation identified two sections of intact stonewalls associated respectively with the Broadway Tabernacle Church (1835 – 1857) and a late-nineteenth-century commercial building, along with the truncated remains of a mid-nineteenth-century well and a buried Holocene surface.

Reconstruction of the Stone Street Historic District, New York, New York, conducted for the New York City Department of Design and Construction. Principal Investigator for archaeological monitoring of the Stone Street reconstruction project. Provided the oversight and inspection of an archaeological contractor conducting monitoring services associated with the installation of a water main, catch basins and streetscape improvements.


Archaeological Data Recovery Program of the VanDeventer-Fountain House Site, Naval Station Staten Island, Staten Island, New York, conducted for Northern Division Naval Facilities Engineering Command, Philadelphia. Principal Investigator for archaeological investigations of 18th to early 20th century domestic deposits and structural remains.

Stage I Archaeological Reconnaissance for the Proposed S.D.#10-Stony Brook Force Main, conducted for the Suffolk County Department of Public Works, Hauppauge. Principal Investigator for archaeological subsurface testing along a proposed utility corridor to determine the presence or absence of archaeological sites.

Phase II Archaeological Investigation of the Washington Street Urban Renewal Area, Site I, for Shearson Lehman/American Express, New York, New York, conducted for the New York City Public Development Corporation. Field Supervisor responsible for conducting the day-to-day excavations and crew supervision at the site, in addition to involvement with analysis and write up. Involved the testing of nineteenth century industrial and commercial remains in a 450 x 500-foot project area. It was the first West Side archaeological site systematically tested in lower Manhattan.

Phase III Mitigation of Barclays Bank, 100 Water Street, New York, New York, conducted for London and Leeds Corporation. Crew Chief responsible for the supervision of a six-person archaeological field crew, in addition to involvement with analysis and report write up. Involved the mitigation of late
seventeenth to early nineteenth century domestic deposits and structural remains on a 100 x 200-foot site for the proposed construction of the Barclays Bank Office Tower.

*Phase II Archaeological Investigation of Barclays Bank, 100 Water Street, New York, New York*, conducted for London and Leeds Corporation. Crew Chief responsible for the supervision of a six-person archaeological field crew, in addition to involvement with analysis and report write up. Involved the testing of late seventeenth to early nineteenth century domestic deposits and structural remains to determine National Register significance. Conducted for the London and Leeds Corporation.

**Professional Societies/Affiliations**

Professional Archaeologists of New York City  
Council for Northeast Historical Archaeology, Board Member  
Society for Historical Archaeology  
Society for Industrial Archaeology  
Archaeological Society of New Jersey  
Council for Maryland Archaeology

**Chronology**

1999- present: URS Corporation  
1980: Macon County Conservation District  
1980: Center for Archaeological Investigations, Southern Illinois University  