

HISTORICAL
PERSPECTIVES INC.



Phase IA Archaeological Documentary Study

Sylvan Grove Cemetery (Independence Park)
Block 2767, Lots 9 and 22
Staten Island, Richmond County, New York

Phase IA Archaeological Documentary Study

Sylvan Grove Cemetery (Independence Park)

Victory Boulevard and Glen Street

Block 2767, Lots 9 and 22

Staten Island, Richmond County, New York

Prepared For:

Ravine Construction, Inc.

176 Gervil Street

Staten Island, NY 10309

And

City of New York Parks and Recreation

Olmsted Center

Flushing Meadows Corona Park

Flushing, N.Y. 11368

Prepared By:

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December 2010

MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

SHPO Project Review Number (if available):

Involved State and Federal Agencies: **none**

Phase of Survey: **Phase IA Archaeological Documentary Study**

Location Information

Location: **Block 2767, Lots 9 and 22, northeast intersection of Victory Boulevard and Glen Street.**

Minor Civil Division: **08501, Staten Island**

County: **Richmond**

Survey Area

Length: **varies**

Width: **varies**

Number of Acres Surveyed: **2.75**

USGS 7.5 Minute Quadrangle Map: **Arthur Kill**

Archaeological Survey Overview

Number & Interval of Shovel Tests: **N/A**

Number & Size of Units: **N/A**

Width of Plowed Strips: **N/A**

Surface Survey Transect Interval: **N/A**

Results of Archaeological Survey

Number & name of precontact sites identified: **None**

Number & name of historic sites identified: **Sylvan Grove Cemetery (a.k.a. Sylvan Cemetery)**

Number & name of sites recommended for Phase II/Avoidance: **One, Sylvan Grove Cemetery recommended for archaeological monitoring during cemetery restoration**

Report Authors(s): **Julie Abell Horn, M.A., R.P.A., Historical Perspectives, Inc.**

Date of Report: **December 2010**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The New York City Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) has proposed improvements on Block 2767, Lots 9 and 22, located on the west side of Staten Island, at the northeast corner of Victory Boulevard and Glen Street (Figures 1 and 2). The DPR parcel is composed of two sections; the small southern tip of the triangular-shaped park and a larger formal cemetery to the north. Proposed improvements are twofold: to create a sitting area at the tip of the parcel, on Lot 22, which will be known as Independence Park, and to restore Sylvan Grove Cemetery (a.k.a. Sylvan Cemetery) on Lot 9, the larger of the two lots. The entire project site is approximately 2.75 acres in size, and is located in the residential community of Travis, formerly referred to as either Long Neck or Deckertown. It is bordered on the west by Glen Street, which now serves as a service road for Route 440/West Shore Expressway but was formerly known as Burying Hill Road.

The DPR, in cooperation with Friends of Abandoned Cemeteries of Staten Island (FACSI) through grant funding arranged by FACSI, has proposed undertaking improvements to Sylvan Grove Cemetery (DPR Contract Drawings, # R156-110M, January 2010). At the request of FACSI, the improvements to the cemetery on Lot 9, which include new perimeter fencing, restoration of fallen monuments, felling trees at grade and grinding stumps, and installation of memorial art, are tightly restricted. FACSI has requested no new subsurface disturbance of more than 6 to 12 inches below grade on Lot 9. In addition, FACSI has identified areas of increased sensitivity. Lot 22, which corresponds to the filled southern tip of the triangular shaped parcel, will be transformed into a sitting area and will be named Independence Park, in honor of the annual parade that passes by the property. In past years the parcel has become an informal gathering place for spectators of the parade. Work at Independence Park includes construction of concrete sidewalks, interior park paths, bluestone stepping stones, new park furniture including benches, trash receptacles, a flagpole, and a water fountain (with connections to water lines under Glen Street), and new planting including trees, shrubs, bulbs, and lawn.

Due to the historic and sensitive nature of the DPR property, Historical Perspectives, Inc. (HPI) has been contracted by DPR to conduct a Phase IA Documentary Study of Sylvan Grove Cemetery and Independence Park property. The Area of Potential Effect (APE) is the area that could be affected by project improvements. In this case, the APE includes the entire project site.

The Phase IA Archaeological Documentary Study concluded that the project site is located in an area where precontact period archaeological sites have been recorded. In fact, the entire Long Neck peninsula was noted as containing precontact resources prior to twentieth century development. The project site's original landform with its wide hilltop crest would have been a favorable location for Native American use, although due to its distance to fresh water, at approximately 1200 feet to the nearest marshland, sensitivity is lowered. Last, it is possible (although there is no clear evidence to support this) that the project site could have begun as a Native American burying ground, which later was continued as a colonial cemetery, a not uncommon practice.

The project site has a high historic period archaeological sensitivity due to its use as a monumented cemetery. The DPR noted that Sylvan Grove Cemetery is significant as one of the oldest extant cemeteries on Staten Island, and was the burying place of many of the Island's most prominent families (DPR n.d.). In 1923, 235 gravestones or markers representing just over 250 individuals were still visible on the landscape (Davis et al. 1924, Appendix A), and it is assumed that many more graves were never formally marked. Although gravestones are located only on Lot 9, it is possible that unmarked graves may have extended into Lot 22 as well.

Lot 9 is clearly sensitive for cemetery resources, including gravestones, markers, and human remains, in areas that have not been disturbed by earthmoving, and may retain sensitivity for disarticulated human remains that may have been redeposited in disturbed areas. Lot 22 has a lessened sensitivity for cemetery resources, especially at its tip, but cannot be discounted completely, especially near its border with Lot 9, as the degree of disturbance is only partially understood. Figure 19 illustrates general archaeological sensitivity for the project site.

In addition, the gravestones present in the cemetery have value as historic artifacts as well. Davis et al (1924) have catalogued the stones that were present in 1923, and this inventory is included in its entirety as Appendix A. The authors note that the earliest gravestones were made of red sandstone; as described above, in 1888 when Davis visited the cemetery he noted three of them, but by 1923, only one fragmentary sandstone marker remained. Most of the gravestones are of white marble, but Davis pointed out that one stone, that of Sarah Hicks, was made of

fossiliferous stone, and had impressions of fossils that were visible on the surface. Many of the gravestones contained short poems, and in at least two cases, sets of gravestones from children in the same family had lines of a single poem that extended across multiple stones. The gravestones also are invaluable in reconstructing family relationships for the nineteenth-century Travis community, since many stones noted both parents and spouses of the deceased, and children who might not normally have been recorded in any archival records (such as federal censuses, which were only made every ten years) are well represented.

Based on the conclusions outlined above, HPI recommends that a program of archaeological monitoring be enacted whenever any ground disturbance will occur on the project site. A Monitoring Protocol, developed in consultation with NYSOPRHP and LPC, would establish appropriate procedures. All archaeological monitoring should be conducted according to OSHA regulations and applicable archaeological standards (New York Archaeological Council 1994, NYSOPRHP 2005; LPC 2002; CEQR 2010). Professional archaeologists, with an understanding of and experience in urban archaeological excavation techniques, would be required to be part of the archaeological team.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The New York City Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) has proposed improvements on Block 2767, Lots 9 and 22, located on the west side of Staten Island, at the northeast corner of Victory Boulevard and Glen Street (Figures 1 and 2). The DPR parcel is composed of two sections; the small southern tip of the triangular-shaped park and a larger formal cemetery to the north. Proposed improvements are twofold: to create a sitting area at the tip of the parcel, on Lot 22, which will be known as Independence Park, and to restore Sylvan Grove Cemetery (a.k.a. Sylvan Cemetery) on Lot 9, the larger of the two lots. The entire project site is approximately 2.75 acres in size, and is located in the residential community of Travis, formerly referred to as either Long Neck or Deckertown. It is bordered on the west by Glen Street, which now serves as a service road for Route 440/West Shore Expressway but was formerly known as Burying Hill Road.

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Due to the historic and sensitive nature of the DPR property, Historical Perspectives, Inc. (HPI) has been contracted by DPR to conduct a Phase IA Documentary Study of Sylvan Grove Cemetery and Independence Park property. The Area of Potential Effect (APE) is the area that could be affected by project improvements. In this case, the APE includes the entire project site. This Phase IA Documentary Study was prepared to satisfy the requirements of SEQRA/CEQR, and to comply with the standards of the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation (NYSOPRHP) and the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) (New York Archaeological Council 1994; NYSOPRHP 2005; LPC 2002; CEQR 2010). According to NYSOPRHP standards, a Phase IA archaeological survey should include evaluation of both precontact and historic period archaeological potential. Where guidelines for the archaeological evaluation and report format of the LPC and the NYSOPRHP varied, those of the LPC, which specifically address New York City conditions and resources, took precedent. The HPI project team consisted of Julie Abell Horn, M.A., R.P.A., who conducted site visit, the majority of the research, and wrote the report; and Cece Saunders, M.A., R.P.A. who assisted with the research, managed the project, and provided editorial and interpretive assistance.

II. METHODOLOGY

The present study entailed review of various resources.

- Primary and secondary sources concerning the general precontact period and history of Staten Island, and specific events associated with the project site, were reviewed using materials available at the Staten Island Museum, the Staten Island Historical Society, the New York Public Library, and using online resources. Specific resources pertaining to the cemetery included *Staten Island Gravestone Inscriptions From The Sylvan Grove, Merrell and Hillside Cemeteries in the former town of Northfield...* (Davis, Leng, and Vosburgh 1924 but referred to by most previous researchers as the “Vosburgh” document because the work was transcribed and edited by him), the article “Sylvan Cemetery” in the *Staten Island Historian* (Johnson 2001), and the entry for Sylvan Grove Cemetery in *Realms of History: The Cemeteries of Staten Island* (Salmon 2006). The gravestone inscriptions from Davis et al. (1924) are included as Appendix A.
- Lynn Rogers, President of Friends of Abandoned Cemeteries of Staten Island (FACSI) provided a folder of research materials that had been collected by members Richard Dickenson, the former Staten Island Borough Historian (now deceased) and Marjorie Decker Johnson in the early 1980s. These materials

include a title examiner's report and an application for tax exemption, neither of which contain any specific bibliographic information. They are cited here as from the files of FASCI.

- Lynn Rogers is also the project liaison for FASCI, and provided personal communication to HPI regarding research sources and additional data.
- Patricia Salmon, Curator of History at the Staten Island Museum and author of *Realms of History: The Cemeteries of Staten Island* (2006), also provided personal guidance about research sources and data.
- Carlotta DeFillo, librarian at the Staten Island Historical Society, indicated that other than the Vosburgh study (Davis et al. 1924) and one newspaper clipping, the Historical Society has no additional materials compiled about the cemetery (DeFillo personal communication 2010).
- Information about the history of the Dickinson Methodist Chapel (later Church), which owned the cemetery for a number of years during the twentieth century, was provided by Beth Patkus of the C. Wesley Christman Archives of the New York Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church. Patkus (personal communication 2010) wrote "In 1972, the Dickinson Chapel merged with the Asbury Church, which sold its building at 1900 Richmond Avenue to the Nazarene Church. The merged Asbury-Dickinson Church worshipped at Dickinson for two years until it was merged with Christ Church to form Christ United Methodist Church in 1974." A query to Christ United Methodist Church, which is still an active church, revealed that their archives contain no records for Sylvan Grove Cemetery (Lee personal communication 2010).
- Historic maps were reviewed at the New York Public Library, the Staten Island Historical Society, the Staten Island Museum, and using various online websites. These maps provided an overview of the topography and a chronology of land usage and ownership for the study site. A selection of these maps (there was considerable redundancy) are provided as figures in this report.
- Tax assessment records and city directories, which are standard resources consulted as part of a documentary study, were neither useful nor relevant for this property. Nineteenth-century tax assessment records for this part of Staten Island, available at the Staten Island Historical Society, are only extant beginning in the mid-1890s, and nineteenth-century city directories generally did not cover this portion of Staten Island.
- Federal census records were not reviewed because the property did not contain any living occupants.
- The Department of Buildings does not have any records for the project site because there have never been any buildings on the property.
- The project site was owned by successive generations of several old Staten Island families and not all transfers of property between family members were formally recorded. Davis et al. (1924) as well as the title examiner's report (FASCI files) provide details of those deeds that were filed, and so independent deed research was not repeated as part of this study.
- Information about previously recorded archaeological sites and surveys in the area was compiled from data available at the NYSOPRHP and the LPC.
- Ravine Construction, Inc. provided various maps and site data for the property, which were created by the DPR.
- Last, a site visit was conducted by Julie Abell Horn of HPI on November 18, 2010 to assess any obvious or unrecorded subsurface disturbance (Photographs 1-21; Figure 2). While on site, Ms. Abell Horn met with Joseph Izzo of Ravine Construction, Inc., Lynn Rogers of FASCI, Joseph Ferlazzo, Borough Parks Historian for Staten Island from the DPR, and Tara Valenta, Landscape Architect for the project from the DPR.

III. CURRENT CONDITIONS AND ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

A. Current Conditions

As noted above, the proposed project site is located on Block 2767, Lots 9 and 22. In total, the site measures approximately 2.75 acres. The triangular-shaped property is bounded by Victory Boulevard on the southeast, Glen Street on the northwest, and private property southwest of Melvin Avenue on the northeast.

Lot 9, which constitutes the majority of the project site, contains the cemetery. The lot slopes upward from Victory Boulevard and Glen Street, so that the approximate topographical shape of the lot is a round hill (Photographs 1 and 2). Gravestones, in varying states of preservation, are interspersed throughout the lot (Photographs 3-7). In 1923,

when Davis et al. visited the cemetery, they recorded 235 gravestone entries representing just over 250 individuals. (Davis et al. 1924, Appendix A). Today, considerably fewer gravestones are still visible, due in part to vandalism and in part to thick vegetation. Most of the gravestones are located to the northeast of a pathway that leads from Victory Boulevard to the summit of the lot. The path is lined in places with wooden ties (Photograph 8). Davis et al. (1924) note that the orientation of the cemetery was facing Victory Boulevard (Photograph 9), with rows oriented parallel to Victory Boulevard, and curving around the slope of the hill in places. In all cases, orientation of graves appears to be with heads towards the top of the hill, rather than with heads oriented in a single cardinal direction. In 1923 they were able to identify rows northeast of the pathway, but not southwest of it. Today, many of the rows are no longer evident, as the cemetery has become overgrown with time, and vandalism over decades of neglect has resulted in a number of gravestones being damaged or moved (Photographs 5 and 10). Several family plots still were evident during the site visit, however, including the David Decker plot from 1870, which is enclosed by stone bollards and two sets of metal railings (Photograph 11), and several other unmarked plots surrounded by low iron circular rails (Photograph 12).

An aerial photograph from 1924 (see Figure 17), as well as subsequent aerial photographs, taken at intervals between 1947-2008 and available on www.historicaerials.com, show that there formerly were a number of pathways that traversed the cemetery, most of which cannot be seen today due to the understory that has filled in these areas over time. The exception is a wide trail at the southwestern end of the lot, bordering Lot 22, which runs around the base of the hill from Victory Boulevard to Glen Street (Photograph 13). Vegetation in the cemetery consists of deciduous trees, most probably dating to post-1923, when records note that many of the existing trees were cut down, and light to very heavy underbrush, depending on location. The understory is greatest along the northern portion of the lot, bordering the residential properties south of Melvin Avenue (Photograph 14).

As will be described in more detail, below, during the 1920s the area of Lot 9 bordering Glen Street was excavated for sand mining. A photograph from this period shows that the depth of excavation was over 10 feet in extent (Photograph 15). An aerial photograph from 1924 shows the horizontal extent of the mining (see Figure 17). Over time, this excavated area was backfilled to create the mostly level topography seen along the Glen Street frontage today (Photograph 16). However, there is still evidence of the grading and filling activities on the modern landscape. The ground surface is clearly turned over in places, and unnaturally flat in others (Photograph 17).

Lot 22 is a small triangular shaped lot located at the tip of the project site, where most of the proposed impacts for the project will be located (Photograph 18). Although as will be described more fully below, historic maps generally show Lot 22 as part of the cemetery, but it is unclear to what degree this area was used for burials (Title Examiner's Report in FACSI files). It is a relatively level lot today, but formerly contained a ravine, which was filled in during the last decade. This area contains only a few trees, and is not heavily wooded like the remainder of the property. There is a small landscaped area at the extreme tip of the lot, and a sign indicating the use of the property as a cemetery (Photographs 19 and 20). At the time of the site visit it was being used as a construction staging area, and contained piles of mulch (Photograph 21).

B. Topography and Hydrology

In its original state, as noted above, the majority of the project site was a natural hill, which sloped upward from Victory Boulevard and Glen Street. Topographic maps made in 1912, prior to the earthmoving that occurred on the property in 1923, show that elevations ranged from 24 feet above Richmond High Water Datum at the intersection of Victory Boulevard and Glen Street on Lot 22, to 54 feet above Richmond High Water Datum at the apex of the hill within Lot 9 (see Figure 15). The crest of the hill at that time extended very close to the line of Glen Street within Lot 9. In 1923, sand mining occurred along Glen Street within Lot 9, truncating the natural hill on this side of the property. This area was later backfilled to its current elevation, at approximately 35 feet above Richmond High Water Datum (Figure 2).

The project site is located on a peninsula of land historically known as Long Neck, and which includes all of the communities of Travisville and Linoleumville (Bien and Vermeule 1891, see Figure 13). Long Neck is surrounded by wetlands along Neck Creek on the north, and Fresh Kills on the south. The project site is roughly 1200 feet south of the southernmost wetlands surrounding Neck Creek, and approximately 1500 feet north of the northernmost wetlands surrounding Fresh Kills. The actual waterways are located further from the project site.

C. Geology

The project site sits within the western edge of the Piedmont Lowlands. As described by Boesch (after Wolfe 1977),

The Piedmont Lowlands make up about one fifth of the land area of Staten Island and consist of gently rolling terrain, generally between 50 and 100 feet in elevation, which gradually slopes to the southeast. The undulating surface is interrupted by an intrusive ridge, 200 to 250 feet in elevation, and by slightly lower, plateau-like topographic features. The rolling lowlands are generally underlain by Triassic and Jurassic age shales, siltstones, and sandstones of the Brunswick Formation of the Newark Group[,] while the ridges are composed of basaltic lava flows and diabase traprock. The plateau-like features developed on erosion resistant Lockatong Formation Argillites. (Boesch 1994: 3)

During the precontact era the woodlands of the Piedmont Lowlands consisted of broadleaf deciduous trees, which provided a habitat for “game birds, small mammals, deer, bear, and during at least a portion of the precontact period, elk” (Boesch 1994: 6). Mixed wetland ecologies provided numerous floral and faunal resources, the most important faunal resources being the shellfish found in saltwater and brackish environments. Freshwater faunal resources include “mussels, fish, certain amphibians and reptiles, migratory fowl, and semi-aquatic mammals. Anadromous fish species would have been present seasonally within Staten Island via streams emptying into the estuary system” (Boesch 1994: 5-6).

D. Soils

According to the soil survey for New York City, the project site falls within a soil mapping unit called “Pavement & buildings-Windsor-Verrazano complex, 0 to 8 percent slopes.” It is described as:

Nearly level to gently sloping urbanized areas of sandy outwash plains and dunes that have been partially filled for residential and commercial use; a mixture of sandy outwash soils and loamy-capped anthropogenic soils, with 50 to 80 percent of the surface covered by impervious pavement and buildings; located in Staten Island. (USDA 2005:21).

The Windsor and Verrazano soil series are further described in the table, below.

Name	Soil Horizon Depth	Color	Texture, Inclusions	Slope %	Drainage	Landform
Windsor Series	Oi: 0-2 in A: 2-3 in Bw1: 3-8 in Bw2: 8-13 in Bw3: 13-27 in C: 27-60 in	10YR 2/1 10 YR 2/1 10 YR 4/3 10 YR 5/6 7.5 YR 5/6 7.5 YR 5/6	SliDecPlaMat LoSa LoSa LoSa LoSa LoSa	0-8	Excessively	Outwash plains and terraces
Verrazano Series	A: 0-3 in Bw: 3-17 in BC: 17-24 in 2C1: 24-60 in 2C2: 60-80 in	10YR3/1 10YR 3/2 10YR 3/2 2.5Y 6/3 2.5Y 5/3	SaLo SaLo Lo Sa Sa	0-8	Well	Anthropogenic fill plains near coastal waterways

Key: Soils: Lo-Loam, Sa-Sand

Other: Sli-Slightly, Dec-Decomposed, Pla-Plant, Mat-Material

Figure 3 illustrates the location of the project site on the soil survey map for New York City.

No soil borings have been conducted on the project site. However, as noted above, the soils on the project site were mined for sand in 1923, confirming that the natural soils on the property are in fact sandy. The type of fill soil that was used to backfill the mined area along Glen Street and that was introduced on Lot 22 is unknown.

IV. BACKGROUND RESEARCH/HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

A. Precontact Summary

For this report, the word precontact is used to describe the period prior to the use of formal written records. In the western hemisphere, the precontact period also refers to the time before European exploration and settlement of the New World. Archaeologists and historians gain their knowledge and understanding of precontact Native Americans on Staten Island from three sources: ethnographic reports, Native American artifact collections, and archaeological investigations.

The Paleo Indian Period (c. 10,500 B.C. - c. 8000 B.C.) represents the earliest known human occupation of Staten Island. Approximately 14,000 years ago the Wisconsin Glacier retreated from the area leading to the emergence of a cold dry tundra environment. Sea levels were considerably lower than modern levels during this period (they did not reach current levels until circa 5,000 B.C., in the Early to Middle Archaic Period). As such, Staten Island was situated much further inland from the Atlantic Ocean shore than today, and was characterized by higher ground amid glacial lakes and rivers (Boesch 1994). The material remains of the Paleo Indians include lithic tools such as Clovis-type fluted projectile points, bifacial knives, drills, gravers burins, scrapers, flake cores, and flake tools, although sites generally are represented by limited small surface finds. The highly mobile nomadic bands of this period specialized in hunting large game animals such as mammoth, moose-elk, bison, and caribou and gathering plant foods. It has been theorized that the end of the Paleo-Indian Period arose from the failure of over-specialized, big-game hunting (Snow 1980:150-157). Based on excavated Paleo-Indian sites in the Northeast, there was a preference for high, well-drained areas in the vicinity of streams or wetlands (Boesch 1994). Sites have also been found near lithic sources, rock shelters and lower river terraces (Ritchie 1980). Paleo-Indian materials have been recovered at several sites on Staten Island including Port Mobil, the Cutting site, Smoking Point and along the beach in the Kreischerville area.

During the Archaic Period (c. 8000 B.C. - 1000 B.C.) a major shift occurred in the subsistence and settlement patterns of Native Americans. Archaic period peoples still relied on hunting and gathering for subsistence, but the emphasis shifted from hunting large animal species, which were becoming unavailable, to smaller game and collecting plants in a deciduous forest. The settlement pattern of the Archaic people consisted of small bands that occupied larger and relatively more permanent habitations sites along the coast of Staten Island, its estuaries and streams and inland areas (Boesch 1994). Typically such sites are located on high ground overlooking water courses. This large period has been divided up into four smaller periods, the Early, Middle, Late and Terminal Archaic.

The environment during the Early Archaic (c. 8000 B.C. - 6000 B.C.) displayed a trend toward a milder climate and the gradual emergence of a deciduous-coniferous forest with a smaller carrying capacity for the large game animals of the previous period (Ritchie and Funk 1971). The large Pleistocene fauna of the previous period were gradually replaced by modern species such as elk, moose, bear, beaver, and deer. New species of plant material suitable for human consumption also became abundant. The increasing diversification of utilized food sources is further demonstrated by a more complex tool kit. The tool kit of the Early Archaic people included bifurcated or basally notched projectile points generally made of high quality stone. Tool kits were more generalized than during the Paleo-Indian period, showing a wider array of plant processing equipment such as grinding stones, mortars and pestles. Although overall evidence of Early Archaic sites on Staten Island is sparse, it should be noted that the Old Place site, located approximately two and a half miles north of the project site, is recognized as one of the most important Early Archaic component sites in the area (Ritchie and Funk 1971; Ritchie 1980; Cantwell and Wall 2001). Other Early Archaic component sites on Staten Island include the Hollowell, Charleston Beach, Wards Point, Travis (or Long Neck), and Richmond Hill sites (Ritchie and Funk 1971; Boesch 1994).

The archaeological record suggests that a population increase took place during the Middle Archaic Period (c. 6000 - c. 4000 B.C.). This period is characterized by a moister and warmer climate and the emergence of an oak-hickory forest. The settlement pattern during this period displays specialized sites and increasing cultural complexity. The exploitation of the diverse range of animal and plant resources continued with an increasing importance of aquatic resources such as mollusks and fish (Snow 1980). In addition to projectile points, the tool kits of Middle Archaic peoples included grinding stones, mortars, and pestles. Such artifacts have been found throughout Staten Island, including the Old Place and Wards Point sites (Boesch 1994).

Late Archaic people (c. 4000 - c. 1000 B.C.) were specialized hunter-gatherers who exploited a variety of upland and lowland settings in a well-defined seasonal round. The period reflects an increasingly expanded economic base, in which groups exploited the richness of the now established oak-dominant forests of the region. It is characterized by a series of adaptations to the newly emerged, full Holocene environments. As the period progressed, the dwindling melt waters from disappearing glaciers and the reduced flow of streams and rivers promoted the formation of swamps and mudflats, congenial environments for migratory waterfowl, edible plants and shellfish. The new mixed hardwood forests of oak, hickory, chestnut, beech and elm attracted white-tailed deer, wild turkey, moose and beaver. The large herbivores of the Pleistocene were rapidly becoming extinct and the Archaic Indians depended increasingly on smaller game and the plants of the deciduous forest. The projectile point types attributed to this period include the Lamoka, Brewerton, Normanskill, Lackawaxen, Bare Island, and Poplar Island. The tool kit of these peoples also included milling equipment, stone axes, and adzes. A large number of Late Archaic Period sites have been found on Staten Island. These include the Pottery Farm, Bowman's Brook, Smoking Point, Goodrich, Sandy Brook, Wort Farm, and Arlington Avenue sites. In addition, the Old Place Site contained a Late Archaic component (Boesch 1994).

During the Terminal Archaic or Transitional Period (c. 1700 B.C. - c. 1000 B.C.), native peoples developed new and radically different broad bladed projectile points, including Susquehanna, Perkiomen and Orient Fishtail types. The use of steatite or stone bowls is a hallmark of the Terminal Archaic Period. Sites on Staten Island from the Terminal Archaic Period include the Old Place site, as well as the Pottery Farm, Wards Point, and Travis (or Long Neck) sites (Boesch 1994).

The Woodland Period (c. 1000 B.C. - 1600 A.D.) is generally divided into Early, Middle and Late Woodland on the basis of cultural materials and settlement-subsistence patterns. Settlement pattern information suggests that the broad based strategies of earlier periods continued with a possibly more extensive use of coastal resources. The Early Woodland was essentially a continuation of the tool design traditions of the Late Archaic. However, several important changes took place. Clay pottery vessels gradually replaced the soapstone bowls during the Early Woodland Period (c. 1000 B.C. to A.D. 1). The earliest ceramic type found on Staten Island is called Vinette 1, an interior-exterior cordmarked, sand tempered vessel. The Meadowood-type projectile point is a chronological indicator of the Early Woodland Period.

Cord marked vessels became common during the Middle Woodland Period (c. A.D. 1 to c. 1000 A.D.). Jacks Reef and Fox Creek-type projectile points are diagnostic of the Middle Woodland. Another characteristic projectile point of the Early to Middle Woodland Period is the Rossville type, named for the site at Rossville where it predominated. It is believed to have originated in the Chesapeake Bay area and is found in New Jersey, southeastern New York and southern New England (Lenik 1989:29). The Early and Middle Woodland periods display significant evidence for a change in settlement patterns toward a more sedentary lifestyle. The discovery of large storage pits and larger sites in general supports this theory. Some horticulture may have been utilized at this point but not to the extent that it was in the subsequent Late Woodland period.

In the Late Woodland period (c. 1000 A.D. - 1600 A.D.), triangular projectile points such as the Levanna and Madison types, were common throughout the Northeast, including Staten Island (Lenik 1989:27). Made both of local and non-local stones, brought from as far afield as the northern Hudson and Delaware River Valleys, these artifacts bear witness to the broad sphere of interaction between groups of native peoples in the Northeast. Additionally, during this period collared ceramic vessels, many with decorations, made their appearance.

Woodland Period Native Americans in Staten Island and surrounding regions shared common attributes. The period saw the advent of horticulture and with it, the appearance of large, permanent or semi-permanent villages. Plant and processing tools became increasingly common, suggesting an extensive harvesting of wild plant foods. Maize cultivation may have begun as early as 800 years ago. The bow and arrow, replacing the spear and javelin, pottery vessels instead of soap stone ones, and pipe smoking, were all introduced at this time. A semi-sedentary culture, the Woodland Indians moved seasonally between villages within palisaded enclosures and campsites, hunting deer, turkey, raccoon, muskrat, ducks and other game and fishing with dug-out boats, bone hooks, harpoons and nets with pebble sinkers. Their shellfish refuse heaps, called "middens," sometimes reached immense proportions of as much as three acres (Ritchie 1980:80, 267). Habitation sites of the Woodland Period Indians increased in size and permanence. A large number of Woodland Period archaeological sites have been found on Staten Island in a variety of environmental settings. A favored setting for occupation during this period was well-drained ground near stream

drainages and coastal waterways. The Old Place Site, which also had a Woodland component, exhibited all of these locational characteristics.

During the early Contact period (1500 to 1700 A.D.) there was a continuation of the Late Woodland settlement patterns of the coastal Algonquians. By the 17th century the Dutch settlers of lower New York were in frequent contact with the many Native Americans who lived in the vicinity. Historic accounts describe both peaceful and violent interchanges between these two groups (Brasser 1978, Flick 1933). Through at least the 1650s, Native Americans known as the Raritans occupied portions of Staten Island and New Jersey's Raritan Valley (Ruttenber 1872). The Raritans were but one of many native groups which as a whole were known as the Delaware Indians by the European settlers. As the European population increased, and internecine warfare due to increased competition for trade with the Europeans intensified, the Raritans, and the Delaware in general, retreated inland away from the eastern coast. By the 1800s their migration had scattered them across the Mid West and even into Canada (Weslager 1972), where they have continued living to the present day. Journal accounts by European explorers, settlers, and travelers describe Native settlements and lifeways. However, only a few Historic Contact Period sites have been found on Staten Island. Sites include those at Wards Point, Old Place, Corsons Brook, Travis (or Long Neck), New Springfield, and at the PS56R Site in Woodrow (Boesch 1994; HPI 1996).

B. Previously Recorded Archaeological Sites and Surveys

Records on file at the NYSOPRHP and the New York State Museum as well as the Boesch (1994) *Archaeological and Sensitivity Assessment of Staten Island, New York* indicate that numerous precontact sites have been documented within one mile of the project site. Grumet (1981) also notes that the original alignment of Victory Boulevard was a former Native American trail. The following table summarizes archaeological sites that have been documented by the NYSM, the NYSOPRHP, and by Boesch (1994) within a one mile radius of the project site. In some cases, the sites appear to have been recorded duplicate times, often obtaining several different site number designations. Where the duplication was obvious, the sites and their attributes are combined into one listing in the table. Of note, NYSM site locations and descriptions often are vague, due to the fact that many of these sites were documented based on non-professional records (such as information from local landowners, avocational collectors, or historic accounts); descriptions and distances of these sites from the project site are given based on available mapping and other data, but should not be considered definitive.

Site # and Site Name	Distance from project site	Time Period	Site Type
Boesch 38 Travis Site	Adjacent	Early Archaic to Contact	Camp
NYSM #4598 Long Neck Sites	Overlapping	Unknown Precontact	Camps? Hamlets? Middens?
NYSM #4596	Circa 1700 feet north	Unknown Precontact	Precontact camps and traces of occupation
NYSM #4599	Circa 1500 feet south	Unknown Precontact	Precontact camps and middens
NYSM #4627 Chelsea 2	Circa 4000 feet north	Unknown Precontact	Camps
NYSM #7324	Circa 4500 feet north	Transitional period	Isolated point
NYSM #8323	Circa 600 feet north	Unknown Precontact	Unknown
NYSM #8501	Circa 4000 feet north	Unknown Precontact	Camp
NYSM #8502	Circa 1500 feet north	Unknown Precontact	Traces of occupation
NYSM #746, 4597; Chelsea Burying Ground NYSOPRHP 08501.000135	Circa 4500 feet north	Archaic? Transitional?	Burying Ground

Several of the archaeological sites listed in the table are worth describing in further detail.

Travis and/or Long Neck sites

The entire Long Neck peninsula, within which the project site is located, has a well documented history of precontact site activity. However, archaeologists have differed as to how to record and name site locations. Boesch (1994) reports that Skinner (1909) and Parker (1922) record a site called “Travis,” which he notes “is located in the area bounded by Glen Avenue, Cannon Avenue, and the Arthur Kill.” However, review of both the Skinner and Parker publications (the Parker document is essentially a reprint of the Skinner document) indicates neither author referred to a site specifically as “Travis,” although both recorded sites on the north and south sides of Long Neck (or Linoleumville), which later was numbered site #4598 by the NYSM. It appears that the “Travis” site was not recorded by the NYSM, but rather was documented by local archaeologists and collectors from Staten Island. Boesch (1994) writes “It was reportedly one of the largest sites on Staten Island and has drawn the attention of collectors for over half a century. The Staten Island Institute has catalogued in its collection over 1,140 artifacts from the site most of which came from the area that was the former location of the Richmond County Airport.” The former Richmond County Airport was located along the shore of the Arthur Kill, north of Victory Boulevard and east of the modern West Shore Expressway (Route 440). Mid-twentieth century publications on the “Travis” site include Burger (1941) and Anderson (1961).

It is unclear whether the Long Neck sites (NYSM #4598) recorded by Skinner and Parker may have overlapped the Travis site, as none of these sites appear to have had distinct boundaries. Skinner (1909) notes that there was a dune “with relics between Chelsea and Travisville.” He also describes the Long Neck sites as having “scattered lodges” and a shell heap with pits, and additionally notes that “relics are found all over the end of the Neck, but nowhere abundant” (Skinner 1909:9).

Surveys

In addition to the previously documented archaeological sites, a number of cultural resource investigations have occurred within a one or two mile radius of the project site, although the project site itself has never been subjected to an archaeological survey.

Although the archaeological studies in the project site vicinity were completed for a variety of clients in a range of locational settings, several issues were addressed repeatedly in these reports and are worth reiterating here. Most importantly, archaeologists working in this part of Staten Island knew definitively that the area was once highly sensitive for precontact period sites. The sheer number of sites recorded in this vicinity is a testament to this fact. However, pinpointing the locations of precontact sites that had been previously recorded by amateur archaeologists, on the basis of historic accounts, or using data from early nineteenth century scholars such as Skinner or Parker proved to be difficult, and sometimes impossible. Often, locations or vicinities where sites were supposed to have been situated yielded no precontact materials, even where disturbance to the ground surface was minimal (e.g. Roberts and Stehling 1988). In other cases, modern construction and other earthmoving activities associated with recent development in the area rendered project sites too disturbed to recover any precontact resources, even if they had existed (e.g. Lenik 1983; Hunter and Liebeknecht 2003). Lenik (1983:63-64) summed up the frustrations of trying to pinpoint the location of the Bloomfield and Bulls Head sites this way:

In summary, the early twentieth century survey reports, which are often cited in cultural resource management studies, must be examined critically and with a great deal of skepticism. These early reports are often vague as to location, and frequently refer to collections long since gone or dispersed, or to hearsay reports. Such data must be carefully cross-checked and correlated with historical maps and present-day maps. The names, places, roads and sites often change or disappear entirely as time passes by.

In general, the only locations where precontact sites or artifacts in an undisturbed context have been documented on the north shore of Staten Island have been north of Old Place Creek, where development through the late twentieth century has been less intense and intact soil horizons have survived (e.g. Payne and Baumgardt 1986; Louis Berger

Associates 2005). In nearly all cases, these areas were upland landforms (generally terraces or hummocks) in close proximity to waterways.

C. Historic Period Summary

Staten Island was the most sparsely settled portion of New York City during early Euro-American settlement. In 1630, while under Dutch rule, Michael Pauw purchased land from the Native Americans. Five years later, he sold it to the Dutch West India Company, which sold land rights to Pietersz De Vries in 1639. Native hostilities and Governor Kieft's War forced the abandonment of these settlements in 1643. In 1657, the Dutch repurchased the island. However, when the British gained control of the island in 1664, only a small group of settlers were present at South Beach on the northeastern shore. Labadist missionaries traveling through Staten Island in 1679 observed that "there are now about a hundred families on the island, of which the English constitute the least portion, and the Dutch and French divide between them about equally the greatest portion. They have neither church nor minister and live rather far from each other" (Dankers and Sluyter 1867:142). In a 1690 treaty English Governor Lovelace extinguished all Native American rights to Staten Island (Leng and Delavan 1924; Leng and Davis 1930).

The project site and what would later become the hamlet of Travis is located on Long Neck, a peninsula of land bordered on the north and south by marshlands associated with Neck Creek and Fresh Kills, respectively. According to a reconstructed map of colonial patents, the portion of Long Neck that includes the project site was granted to Andrew Cannon on December 23, 1686 and March 17, 1698 (Skene 1907; Figure 4). Cannon was a French Huguenot immigrant, whose given name was André. Cannon's grant was for 160 acres, which was double the size of most land grants of the time, and included land on both sides of Victory Boulevard. The Cannon home was built on the Arthur Kill near the end of Cannon Avenue, which was named after the family (Johnson 2001). The Anglo-Hessian map of 1780-1783 (Figure 5) clearly shows the Cannon family home overlooking the Arthur Kill. The project site is shown as vacant. The Taylor and Skinner map from 1781 (Figure 6) shows that the modern alignment of Victory Boulevard had not yet been laid out, and the semicircular loop formed by Cannon Avenue and modern day Glen Street was where all road traffic occurred. Thus the cemetery was located on the east side of this road. By creation of the 1835 Renard (Figure 7) and 1844 U.S.C.S. maps, what is now known as Victory Boulevard had extended along the south of the project site. None of these maps show any development on the project site, or labeling to indicate that it was a cemetery.

Although there is no clear evidence that this was the case based on gravestone records, it is likely that the Cannon family established the cemetery as a family homestead graveyard during the time that they owned it, and buried family members there, presumably in unmarked graves or with gravestones that are no longer extant. The assumption by researchers is that the family had established its burying space in the cemetery's most prominent location during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and continued to add family members to the plot during the nineteenth century, including gravestones from that point forward. There is a Cannon family plot at the crest of the cemetery's hill, with the first gravestones with the name Cannon that still survive dating to the 1830s. Members of the Cannon family intermarried with other local Staten Island residents, including the Decker and Wood families, so that subsequent Cannon heirs also bore those last names. Gravestones for the Decker and Wood families also can be found on or near the crest of the cemetery, near the original Cannon plot, with the earliest Decker stones dating to the first decade of the nineteenth century (Johnson 2001; Salmon 2006).

There also has been speculation that during the Revolutionary War, when the British occupied Staten Island, British soldiers who died may have been buried in the project site, on the western side of the cemetery near the boundary of the two modern lots, Lots 9 and 22. During the war the British had a camp at the foot of what is now Victory Boulevard, near the Blazing Star Ferry (which is shown on the 1781 Taylor and Skinner map [Figure 6]), and likely would have had access to the project site. Lynn Rogers indicates that local residents spoke of this practice when interviewed during the twentieth century, although there is no firm documentation to corroborate this local lore (Rogers personal communication 2010; Ferlazzo personal communication 2010).

The cemetery property, as part of a larger 23 acre plot, was conveyed in 1781 from Charles and Ann Decker to James Wood, Sr. (Davis et al. 1924). It is presumed that both grantor and grantee were related in some way to the Cannon family, and the land continued to remain in the larger family group. Subsequent changes in ownership were not formally recorded, but are summarized in Davis et al. 1924. According to the authors, James Wood, Sr. conveyed 13 acres of his 23 acre parcel, which included the cemetery, to his son, James Wood, Jr., prior to 1826,

when James Wood, Jr. died. After his death, the 13 acres including the cemetery were part of partition proceedings among the Wood heirs, with the parcel ultimately being assigned to Edward J. Decker (who had married Elizabeth Wood) in an unrecorded deed. Edward J. Decker's will, made in 1834, the same year he died, indicated that after his wife's death (which occurred the same year) the 13 acres should be sold at auction to provide for the benefit of their five children. Captain James Wood, his brother-in-law, was named as the executor of Decker's estate (Davis et al. 1924). Gravestone inscriptions note that through about 1834, the very large majority of all extant stones were from family members of the Cannon, Decker or Wood families. Some daughters who had married and are noted with their husband's names are represented, as are their children, but for the most part very few non-family members are found represented on gravestones during this period.

In 1835, the 13 acres of land passed to John Wood for \$1235. The property was described in Davis et al. (1924:11) as being "on the east side of the road leading from the Turnpike to the New Blazing Star Ferry containing thirteen acres of land, bounded northerly by woodland of Matthais Decker, easterly by land of Isaac M. Tyson, southerly by land of Elias Price, and westerly and northerly by said road." John Wood was the second son of James Wood, Sr., who had purchased the land in 1781, thereby ensuring that the property remained in the Decker-Wood family (Davis et al. 1924). The gravestone inscriptions indicate that after the mid-1830s, in addition to the Cannon, Decker, and Wood families, individuals from other families began to be buried in the cemetery, and it is assumed that John Wood had begun selling grave plots in the cemetery to local residents.

Certainly, by the 1830s the population of Travis had grown to the degree that a church was warranted for the local residents. In 1842, the first Methodist Episcopal chapel was constructed at Travisville, on property donated by Abraham Decker and lying immediately northeast of the cemetery. It was known as Long Neck Church. Prior to this period residents worshipped at local homes, most frequently John Wood's, a community leader and the owner of the cemetery property until his death in 1864, when it passed to his son, Edward J. Wood. at the time. The church building was used exclusively for church services from 1842-1868, after which it was sold to the school district for use as a school house. However, there was some delay in building the new church, the plot for which (at 3980 Victory Boulevard) had been purchased in 1866. The school building continued to be used on Sundays for church services until 1871, when the new church, named the Dickinson Chapel, finally was finished (Hubbell 1898; Davis et al. 1924).

Historic maps made during the 1850s show the location of the church building adjacent to the project site (Dripps 1850 [Figure 8], Butler 1853, Whiting and Dorr 1857 [Figure 9]). The 1860 Walling map (Figure 10), however, also depicts the cemetery next to the church, and shows that it did not encompass the entire project site, but only a rectangular portion fronting Victory Boulevard. This area corresponds to the main section of the extant cemetery on Lot 9, where the majority of the gravestones are located. The 1872 Dripps map (Figure 11) also shows the division of land within the project site, but does not explicitly label the cemetery next to the church. The 1874 Beers map (Figure 12), by contrast, is the first historic map to show the entire project site as part of the cemetery, which for the first time is labeled "Sylvan Cemetery." The former church building next to the project site is now marked as a school building. "E. Wood" is shown to be the owner of the parcel along the east side of the road, including the cemetery.

The name "Sylvan Cemetery" is curious, Johnson (2001) writes, because traditionally a family cemetery would be named for that family, such that if named during the nineteenth century, the cemetery should have been called "Wood Cemetery." Johnson notes that none of the deeds for the property use any nomenclature for the cemetery, and suspects that the term "sylvan" may have been a play on words, since sylvan is another word for woods. The name "Sylvan Grove Cemetery" appears to have been used by William T. Davis first in his 1888 journal, and later for the gravestone inscription document (Davis et al. 1924). Both monikers appear to have been used for the cemetery over the years.

In 1887, Edward J. Wood died, leaving the cemetery property to his daughter Mary A. Leonard, the wife of Cornelius Leonard. Mary A. Leonard continued the practice of selling cemetery plots to local residents. One such deed, made by Mary A. Leonard to Thomas Snow in 1891, was provided by FASCI, although curiously there is no gravestone inscription for a Snow family member in Davis et al. 1924, suggesting that not all graves in the cemetery were marked (or perhaps that the stones had been removed by 1924). The Snow deed was for a plot measuring 16x16 feet, and cost \$35. Apparently the income from burial plot sales was not great. In 1898, Mary A. Leonard filed for an exemption from paying taxes, noting that "the income from this property has been ridiculously small,

being as follows: 1893=\$13, 1894=\$23, 1895=\$33, 1896=\$34, 1897=\$6, 1898=\$8, total in 6 years is \$117.” It was noted that “about half or a little more” of the plots had been sold (FACSI files). Whether the official exemption was granted is unknown, but apparently Leonard was not paying taxes for some time (Johnson 2001). Davis et al. 1924 note that during the time that Leonard owned the property, there was much vandalism and neglect of the property, resulting in the defacement or removal of many gravestones and the fence, littering the area with trash, and stealing firewood. William T. Davis, the senior author, had visited the cemetery in 1888 and noticed three old brownstone gravestones then; in 1923 there was only one broken piece left (Johnson 2001).

Mary A. Leonard continued to own the cemetery property during the first decades of the twentieth century. The cemetery is shown again on the 1907 Robinson map (Figure 14) and the 1917 Bromley map (Figure 16) as encompassing the entire project site, although curiously the 1910 and 1917 Sanborn maps do not identify the property as a cemetery at all. Davis et al. (1924, Appendix A) note 25 gravestones with dates of death from 1900-1922, the last year Leonard owned the property. Beginning in 1909, they report that there was a blight that killed the majority of the large chestnut trees on Staten Island, including those in the cemetery, and Leonard had them cut down and sold for firewood, along with “all the growing trees” on the property. In 1922, Leonard sold Lot 22, which had no gravestones on it, to local resident George (Geza) Nagyvathy, and bequeathed Lot 9, the main portion of the cemetery, to the Dickinson Methodist Church (Davis et al. 1924, Johnson 2001). As noted in the Methodology section, Christ United Methodist Church, with which the Dickinson Methodist Church merged in 1974, does not contain any Sylvan Grove Cemetery records in its archives, suggesting that Leonard only donated the property to the Church, and not any burial records she had maintained.

The Dickinson Methodist Church never actively used Sylvan Grove Cemetery for burials during the time they owned it. However, after receiving the cemetery parcel from Leonard, the Dickinson Methodist Church made an arrangement with West New Brighton contractor James Kelly to “fix up” the cemetery in exchange for being allowed to mine sand from the northern and western sides of the cemetery parcel. A photograph taken in 1923 from Davis et al. 1924 (Photograph 16), as well as an aerial photograph from 1924 (Figure 17), show the vertical and horizontal extent of the sand mining on the project site. The 1923 photograph shows that the depth of excavation was over 10 feet, and the aerial photograph shows that the excavation extended along much of the length of Glen Street and around the back of the lot in the area now bordering the residential lots at Glen Street and Melvin Avenue. Johnson (2001) notes that the excavation extended “up to the crest of the hill, leaving gravestones tottering on the edge.” In addition to the sand mining, Davis et al. 1924 report that “in the spring of 1923, Kelly’s men cut off all the secondary growth of trees and shrubs and let them lie where they fell.” The trees were still on the ground in the fall of that year, when Davis et al. returned to the cemetery to copy the gravestone inscriptions. Aerial maps on www.historicaerials.com from 1947-2008 show that the mined area was devoid of vegetation for many years but it eventually was backfilled and some woodland grew back.

In 1931, when a new Reverend Carl C. Mellberg was appointed at the Dickinson Methodist Church and found out that they owned the cemetery, he organized a group of volunteers to clean up the cemetery once again, with help from a “Depression Relief Committee.” However, the restoration was short lived, and vandals again began to deface and destroy gravestones, sending the cemetery back into disrepair. In 1953, the City of New York seized the cemetery property, as well as the Nagyvathy lot to the south, for nonpayment of taxes. Apparently the church had failed to file as a charitable organization, and decided not to contest the city’s decision (Johnson 2001). Sanborn maps from both 1937 and 1951 (Figure 18) show that only Lot 9 was labeled as Sylvan Cemetery.

The City of New York has owned both lots of the project site since the 1950s, but never maintained its upkeep, allowing both lots to fall into disrepair. Vandalism and neglect caused many gravestones to be damaged, moved, or lost to heavy understorey. In the early 1980s, Friends of Abandoned Cemeteries of Staten Island (FACSI) was founded, and as part of their mission they began to clean up the cemetery. Most notably, the southern tip of the triangular shaped parcel was a marked decline or “ravine” and held no historic gravestones. FACSI members filled this ravine area with truckloads of dirt and wood chips in the late twentieth century. FACSI has since secured funding to allow the present project, which includes restoration of the cemetery grounds, to be undertaken.

V. CONCLUSIONS

A. Disturbance Record

As described above, there has been significant disturbance to the original ground surface on the project site along the Glen Street frontage, specifically from the 1923 sand mining on Lot 9, which may have extended into Lot 22 in places. This area was excavated to more than 10 feet below grade, and then backfilled. Evidence of this grading and filling is still obvious on the project site in this area. Additionally, Lot 22, the smaller of the two lots, once contained a ravine that was filled in by FACSI. It is presumed that this ravine was man-made, as it does not appear on the 1912 topographic map. The numerous burial shafts on the property constitute ground disturbance as well.

B. Precontact Archaeological Sensitivity

The project site is located in an area where precontact period archaeological sites have been recorded. In fact, the entire Long Neck peninsula was noted as containing precontact resources prior to twentieth century development. The project site's original landform with its wide hilltop crest would have been a favorable location for Native American use, although due to its distance to fresh water, at approximately 1200 feet to the nearest marshland, sensitivity is lowered. Last, it is possible (although there is no clear evidence to support this) that the project site could have begun as a Native American burying ground, which later was continued as a colonial cemetery, a not uncommon practice.

B. Historic Period Archaeological Sensitivity

The project site has a high historic period archaeological sensitivity due to its use as a monumented cemetery. The DPR noted that Sylvan Grove Cemetery is significant as one of the oldest extant cemeteries on Staten Island, and was the burying place of many of the Island's most prominent families (DPR n.d.). In 1923, 235 gravestones or markers representing just over 250 individuals were still visible on the landscape (Davis et al. 1924, Appendix A), and it is assumed that many more graves were never formally marked. Although gravestones are located only on Lot 9, it is possible that unmarked graves may have extended into Lot 22 as well.

Lot 9 is clearly sensitive for cemetery resources, including gravestones, markers, and human remains, in areas that have not been disturbed by earthmoving, and may retain sensitivity for disarticulated human remains that may have been redeposited in disturbed areas. Lot 22 has a lessened sensitivity for cemetery resources, especially at its tip, but cannot be discounted completely, especially near its border with Lot 9, as the degree of disturbance is only partially understood. Figure 19 illustrates general archaeological sensitivity for the project site.

In addition, the gravestones present in the cemetery have value as historic artifacts as well. Davis et al (1924) have catalogued the stones that were present in 1923, and this inventory is included in its entirety as Appendix A. The authors note that the earliest gravestones were made of red sandstone; as described above, in 1888 when Davis visited the cemetery he noted three of them, but by 1923, only one fragmentary sandstone marker remained. Most of the gravestones are of white marble, but Davis pointed out that one stone, that of Sarah Hicks, was made of fossiliferous stone, and had impressions of fossils that were visible on the surface. Many of the gravestones contained short poems, and in at least two cases, sets of gravestones from children in the same family had lines of a single poem that extended across multiple stones. The gravestones also are invaluable in reconstructing family relationships for the nineteenth-century Travis community, since many stones noted both parents and spouses of the deceased, and children who might not normally have been recorded in any archival records (such as federal censuses, which were only made every ten years) are well represented.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the conclusions outlined above, HPI recommends that a program of archaeological monitoring be enacted whenever any ground disturbance will occur on the project site. A Monitoring Protocol, developed in consultation with NYSOPRHP and LPC, would establish appropriate procedures. All archaeological monitoring should be conducted according to OSHA regulations and applicable archaeological standards (New York Archaeological Council 1994, NYSOPRHP 2005; LPC 2002; CEQR 2010). Professional archaeologists, with an understanding of

and experience in urban archaeological excavation techniques, would be required to be part of the archaeological team.

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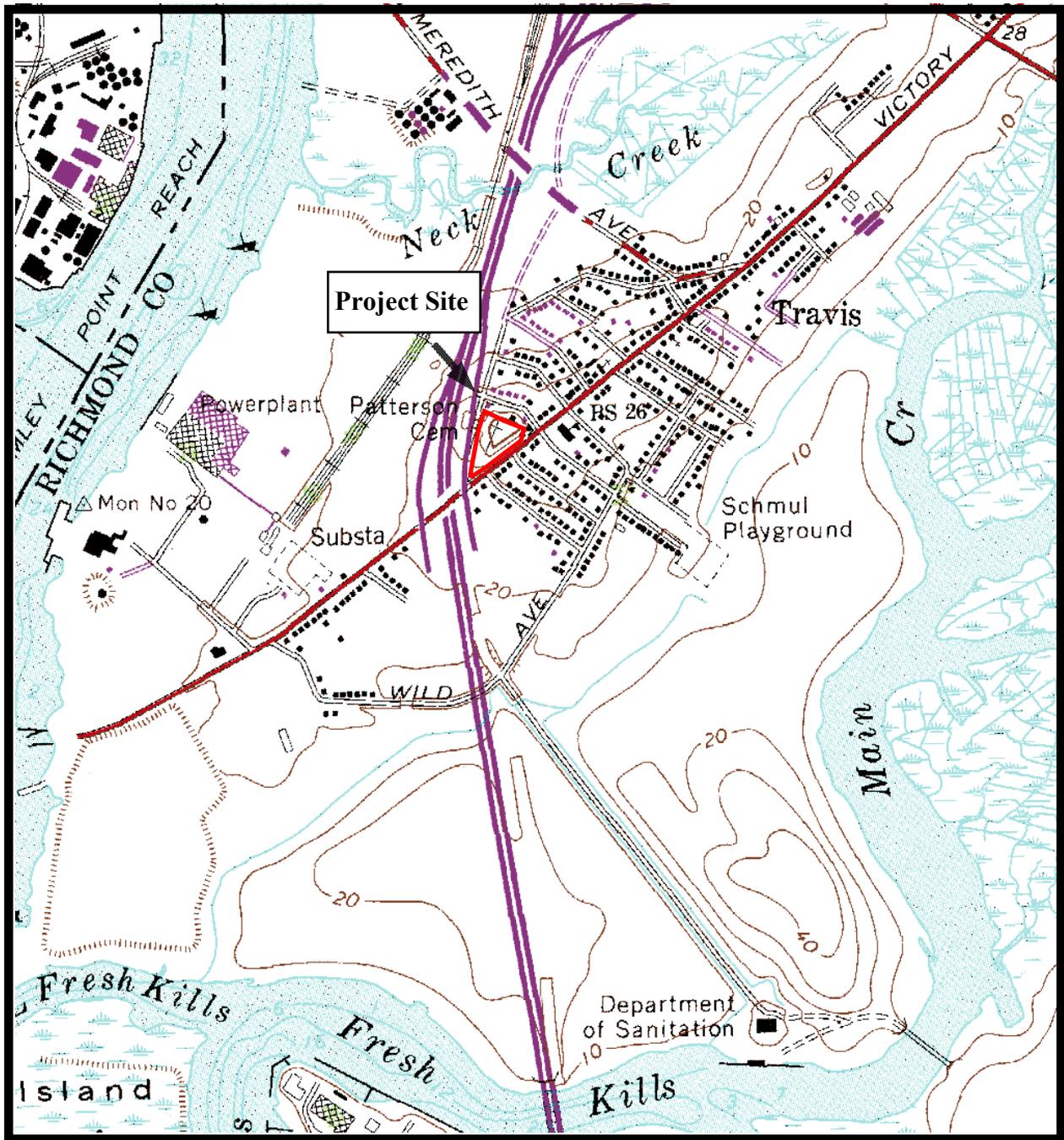
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Figure 1: Project site on *Arthur Kill, N.Y.-N.J.* topographic quadrangle (U.S.G.S. 1976).

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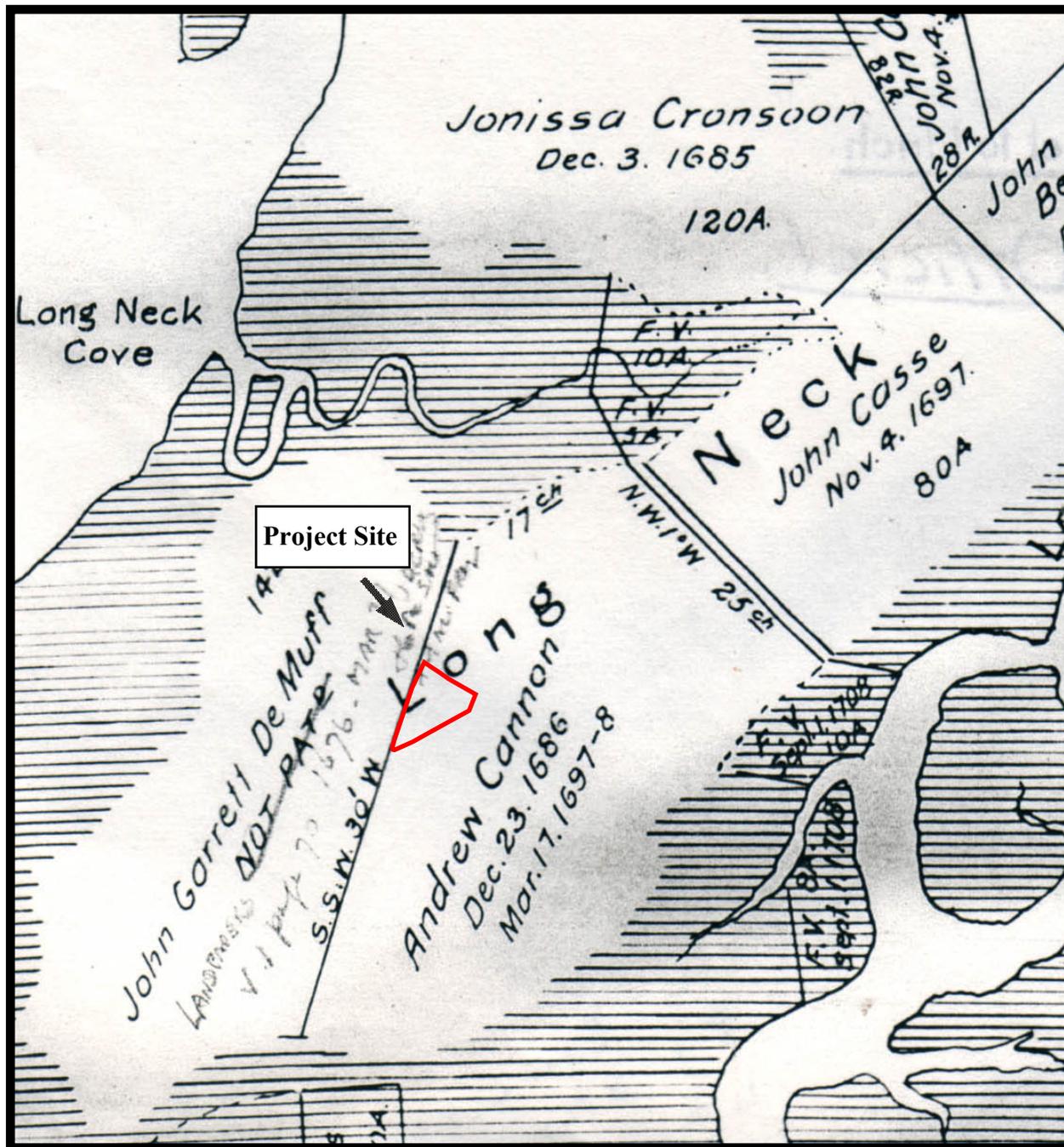


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Figure 3: Project site on *New York City Reconnaissance Soil Survey* (USDA 2005).

0 1000 2000 3000 4000 5000 FEET



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Figure 4: Project site on *Map of Staten Island, Richmond Co., N.Y.* showing the Colonial Land Patents from 1668-1712 (Skene 1907).

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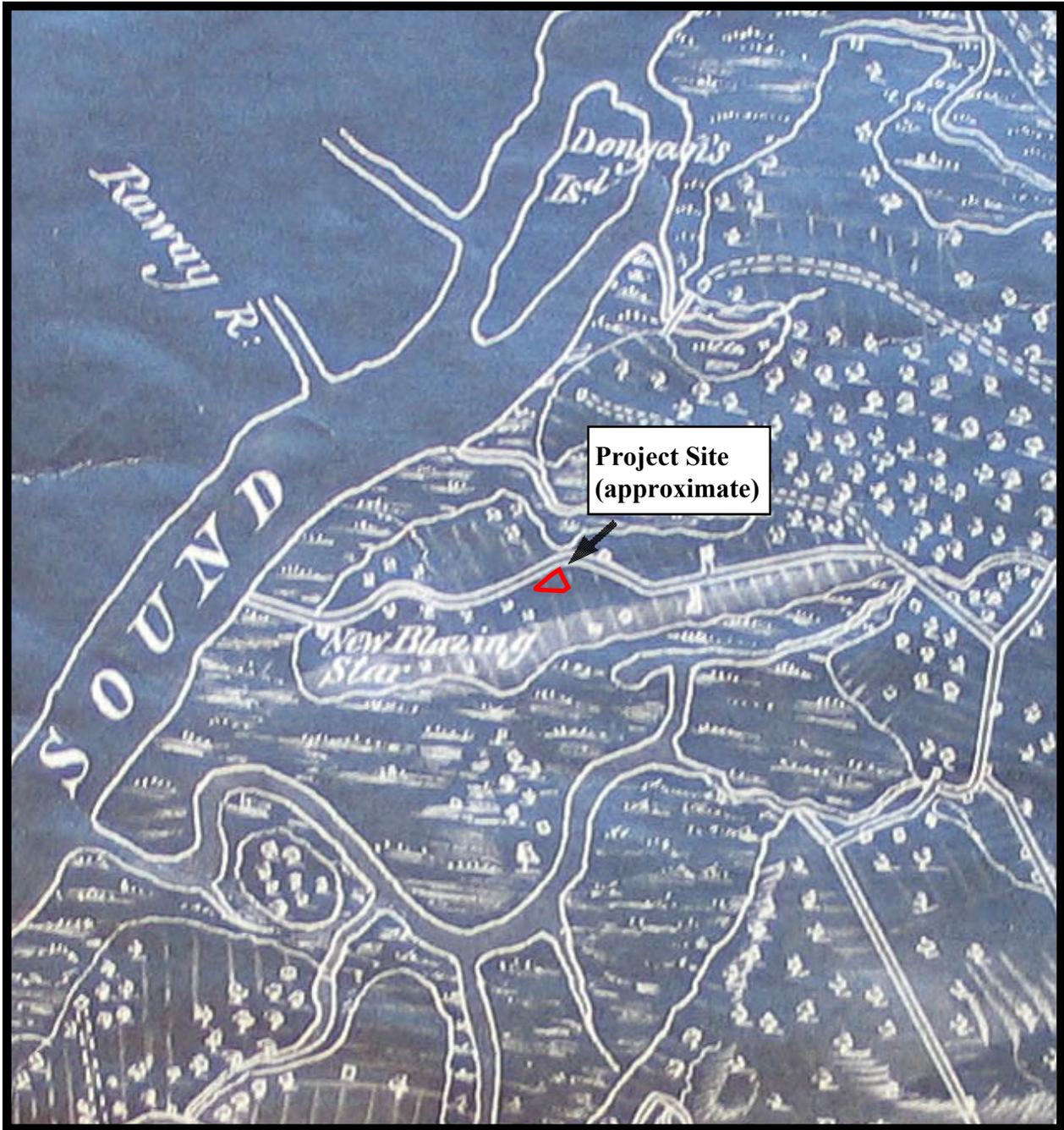


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Figure 5: Project site on *Plan (No. 31) du Camp Anglo-Hessois dans Staten Island, Baie de New York de 1780 à 1783* (Anglo Hessian 1780-1783).

No scale.

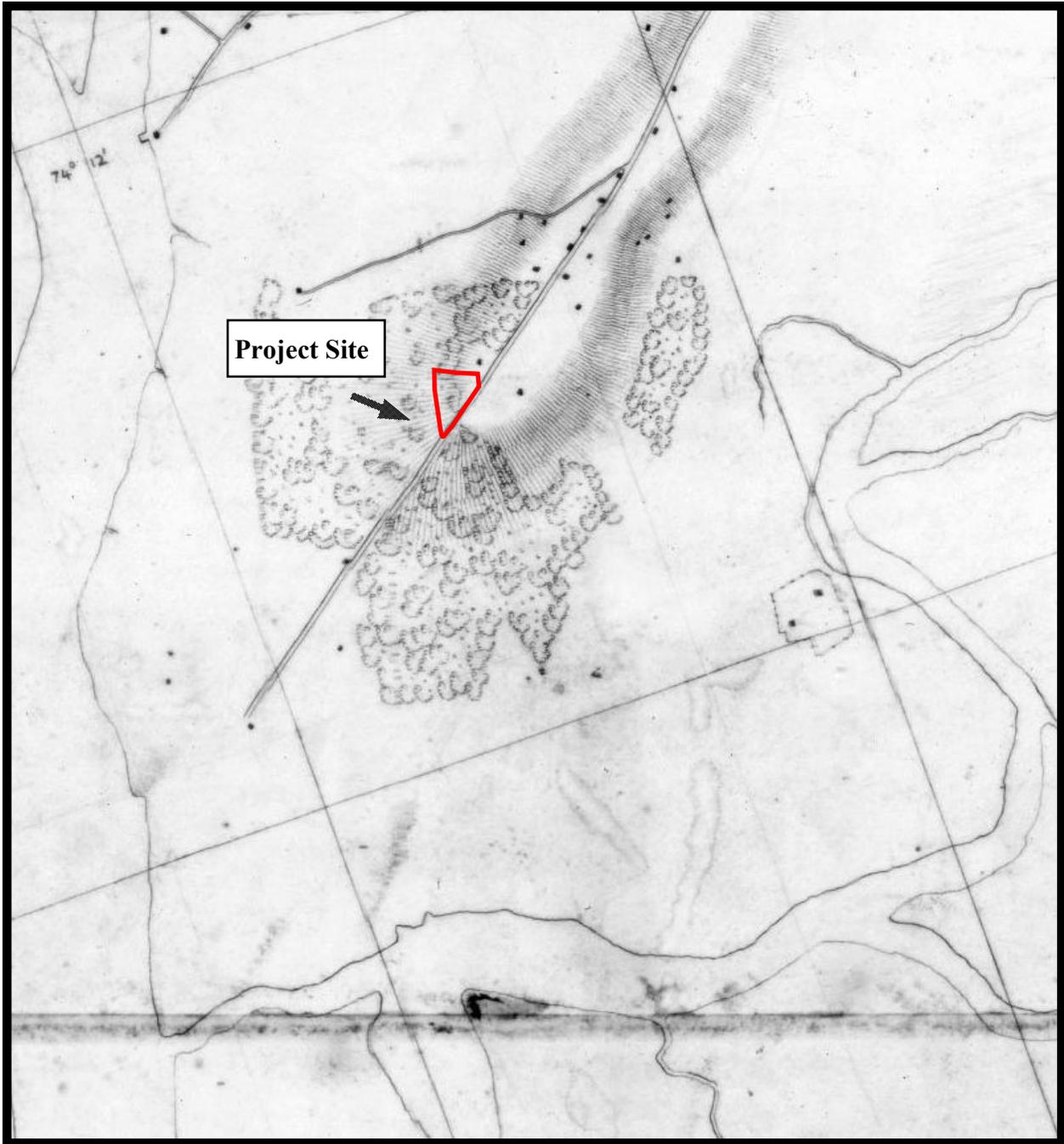


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Figure 6: Project site on *A Map of New York & Staten Island and Part of Long Island* (Taylor and Skinner 1781).

No scale.



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Figure 7: Project site on *Staten Island* (vicinity of *Fresh Kills* and *Island of Meadows*) (Renard 1835-6).

0 500 1000 1500 2000 2500 Ft

A horizontal scale bar with alternating black and white segments, corresponding to the measurements 0, 500, 1000, 1500, 2000, and 2500 feet.



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Figure 8: Project site on *Map of Staten Island or Richmond County* (Dripps 1850).

No scale.

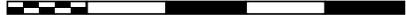


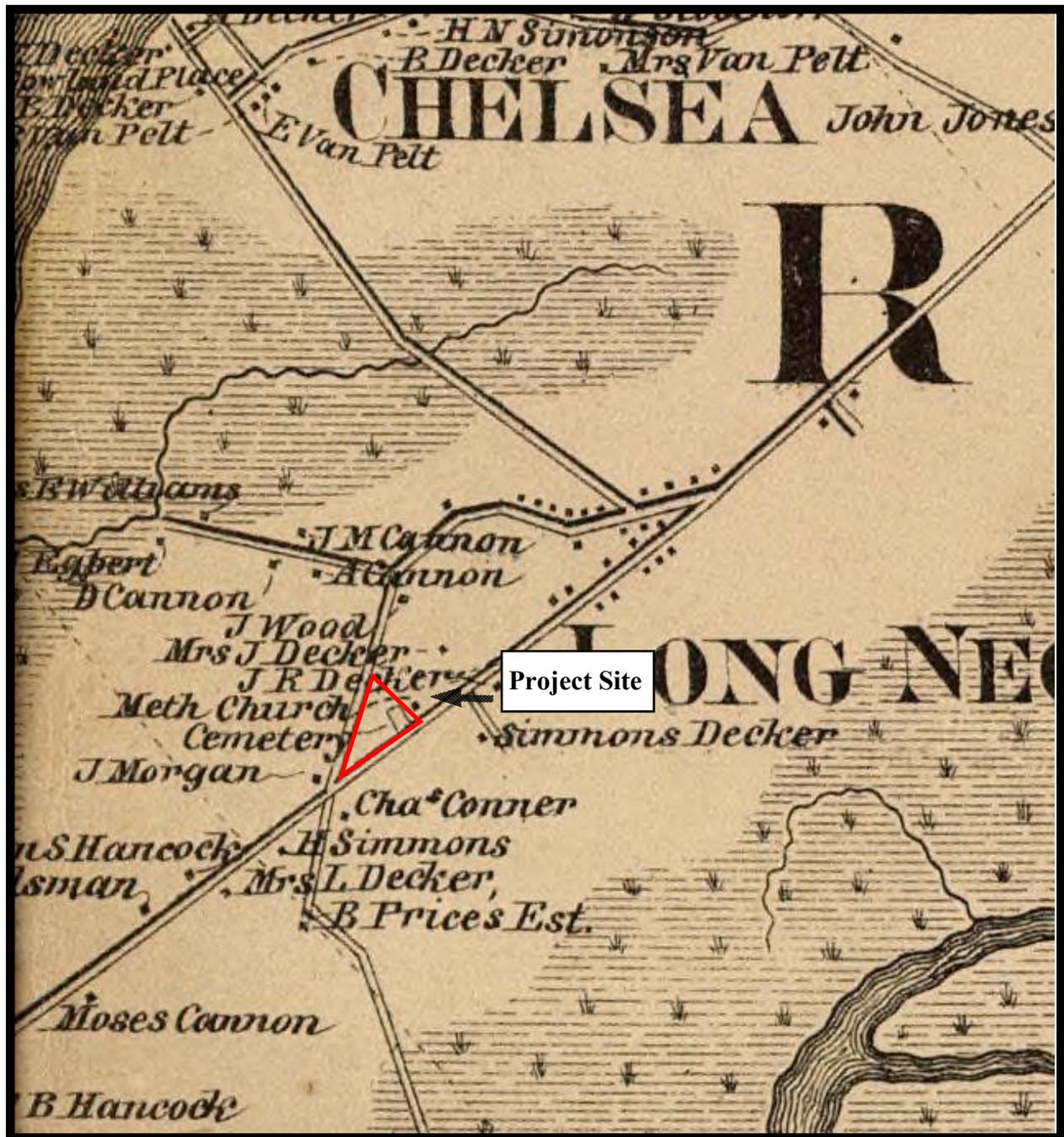
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Figure 9: Project site on *Northwest Part of Staten Island and Bergen Point* (Whiting and Dorr 1857).

0 250 500 750 1000 1250 Ft



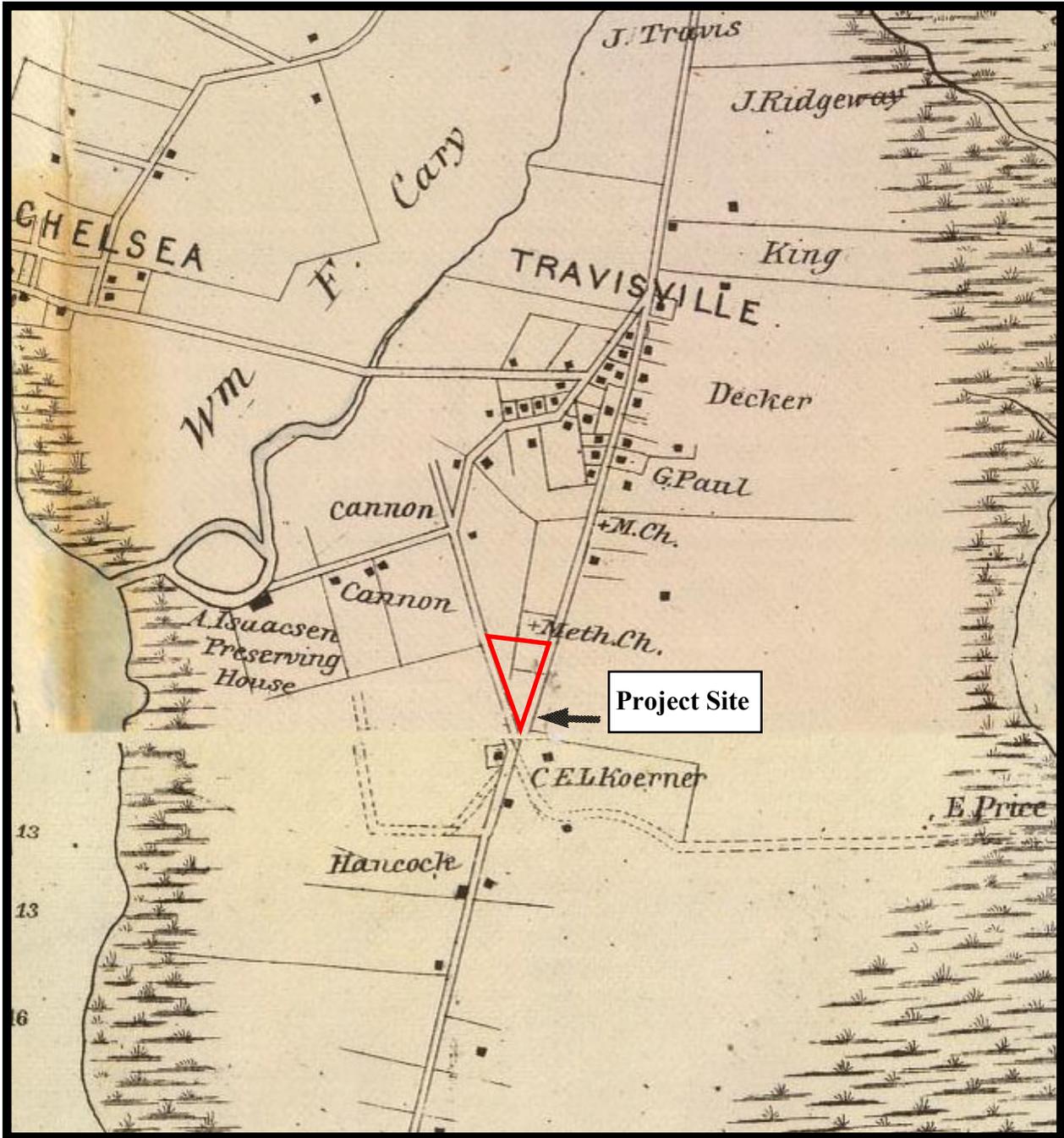


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Figure 10: Project site on *Map of the City Of New-York and Its Environs from Actual Surveys* (Walling 1860).

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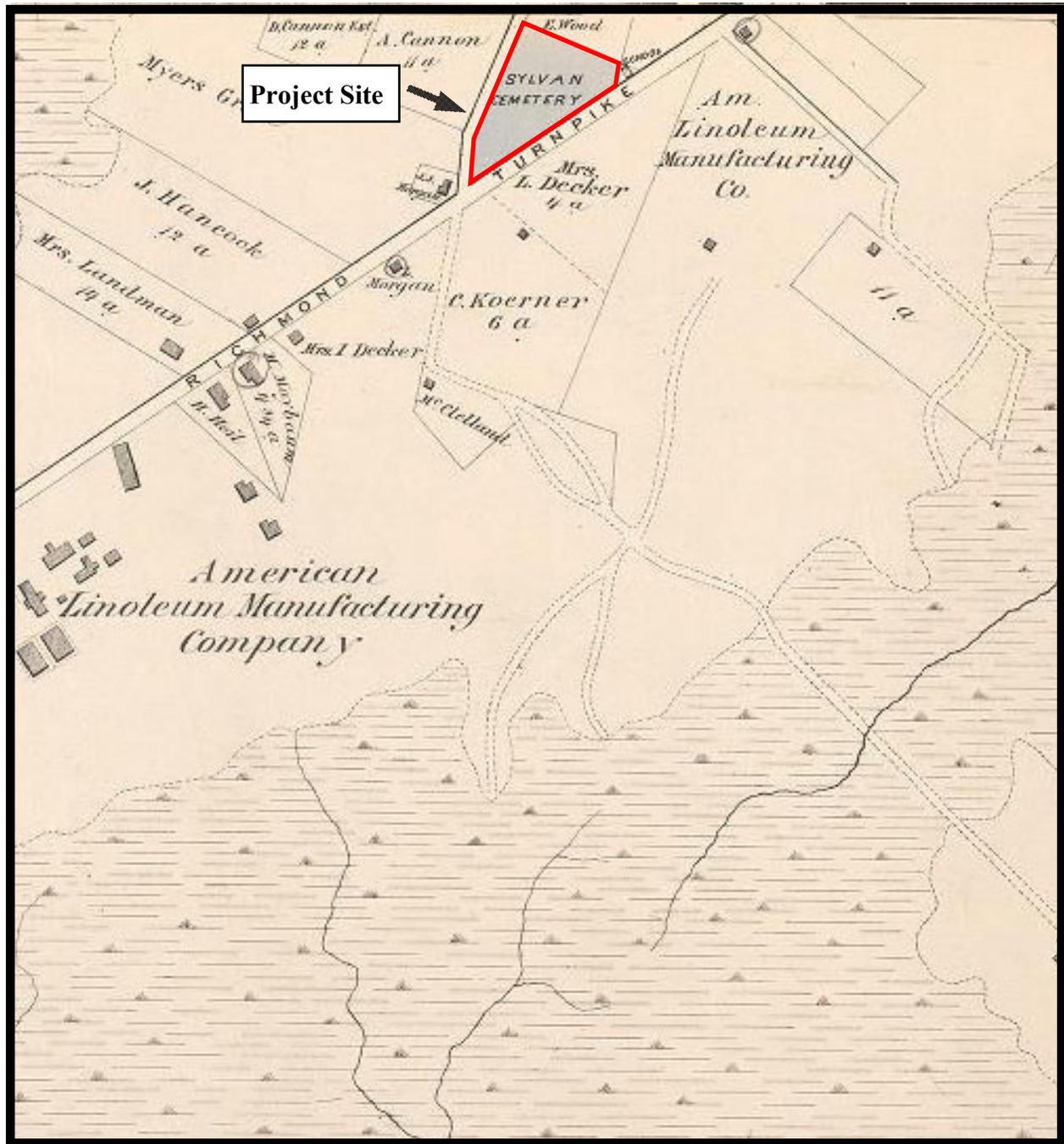
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Figure 11: Project site on *Map of Staten Island, Richmond County, New York*
 (Dripps 1872).

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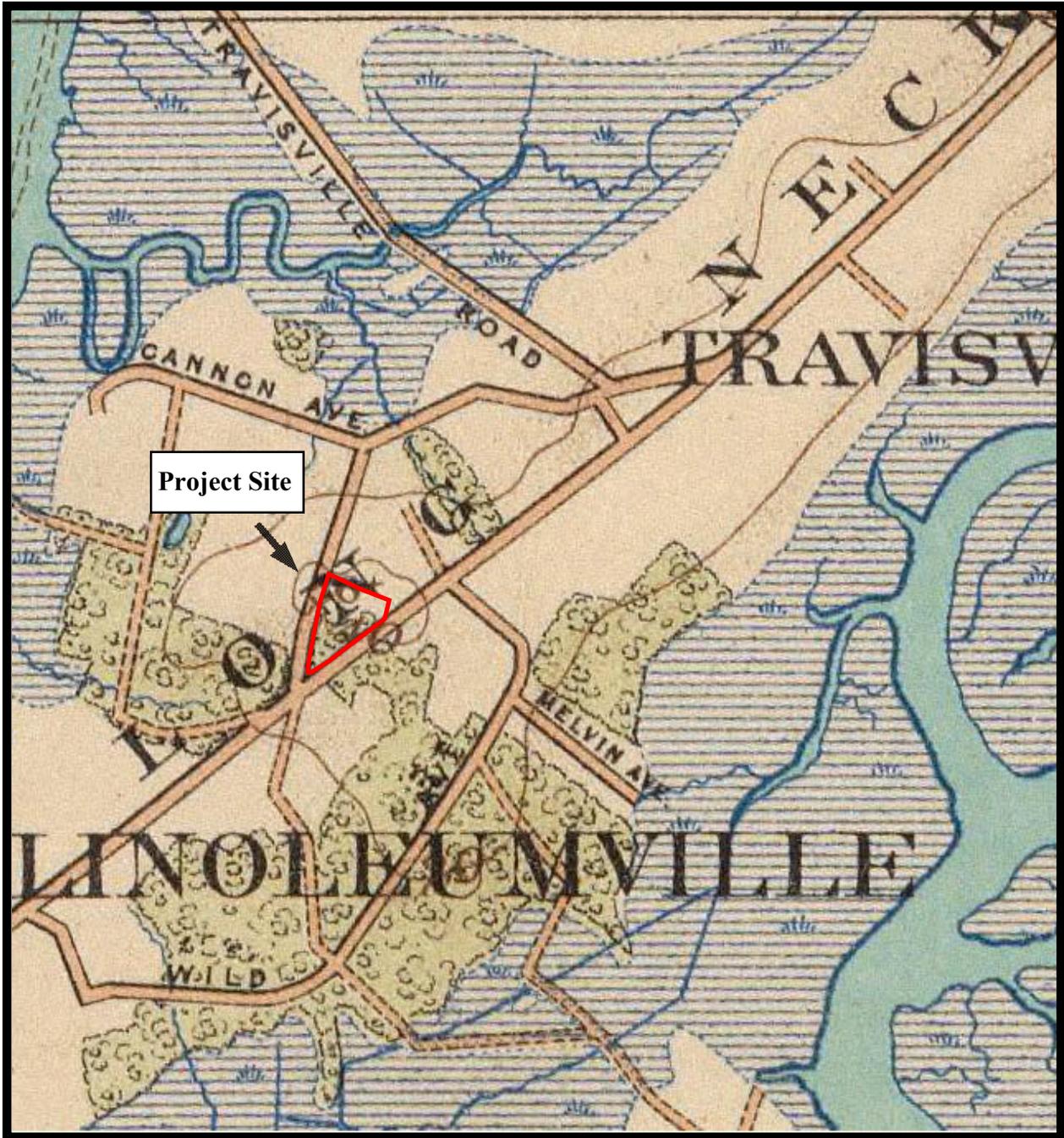


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Figure 12: Project site on *Atlas of Staten Island, Richmond County, New York* (Beers 1874).

0 250 500 750 1000 1250 Ft

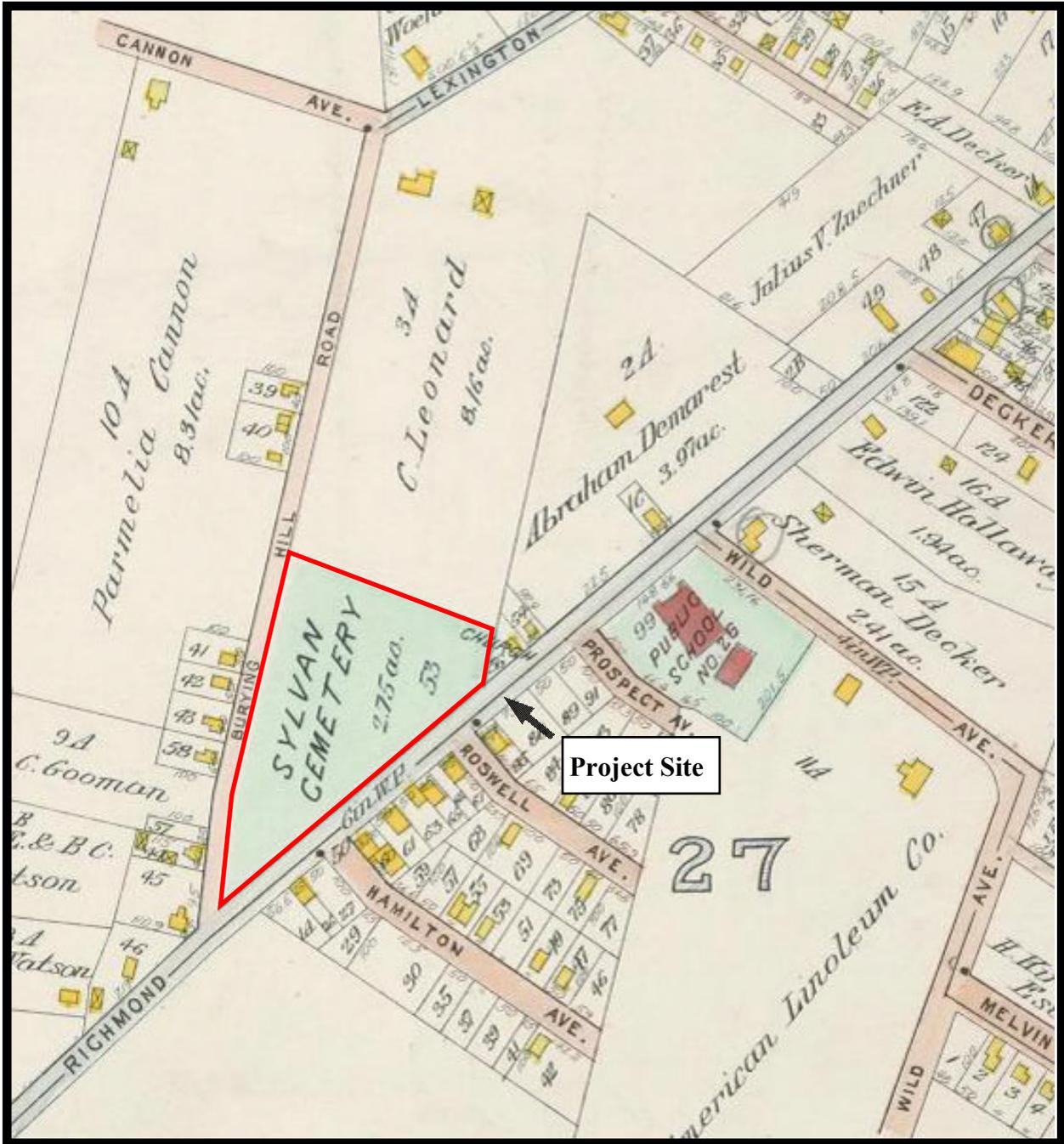


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Figure 13: Project site on *Staten Island, New York 15 Minute Quadrangle* (Bien and Vermeule 1891).

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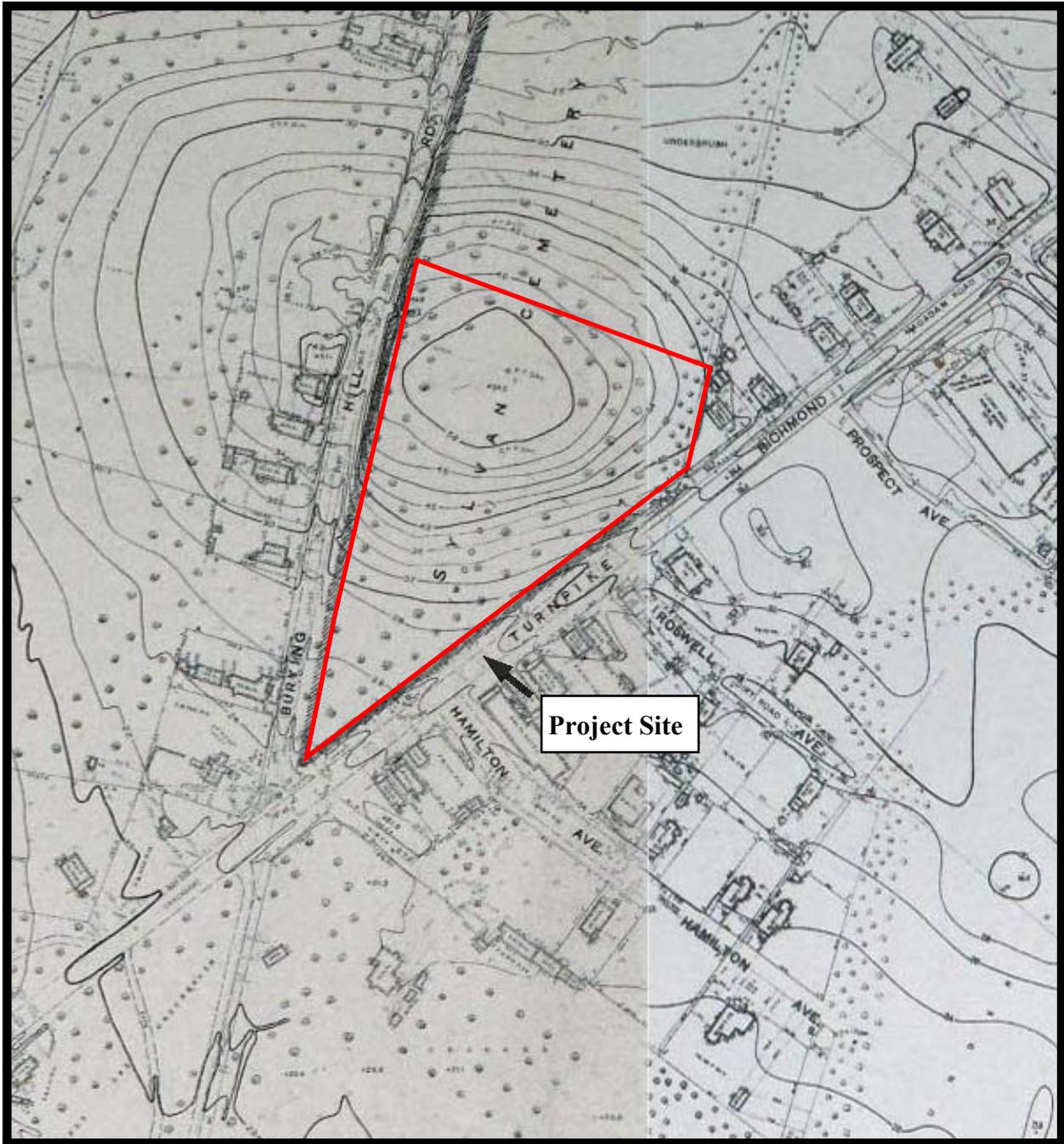


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Figure 14: Project site on *Atlas of the Borough of Richmond, City of New York* (Robinson 1907).



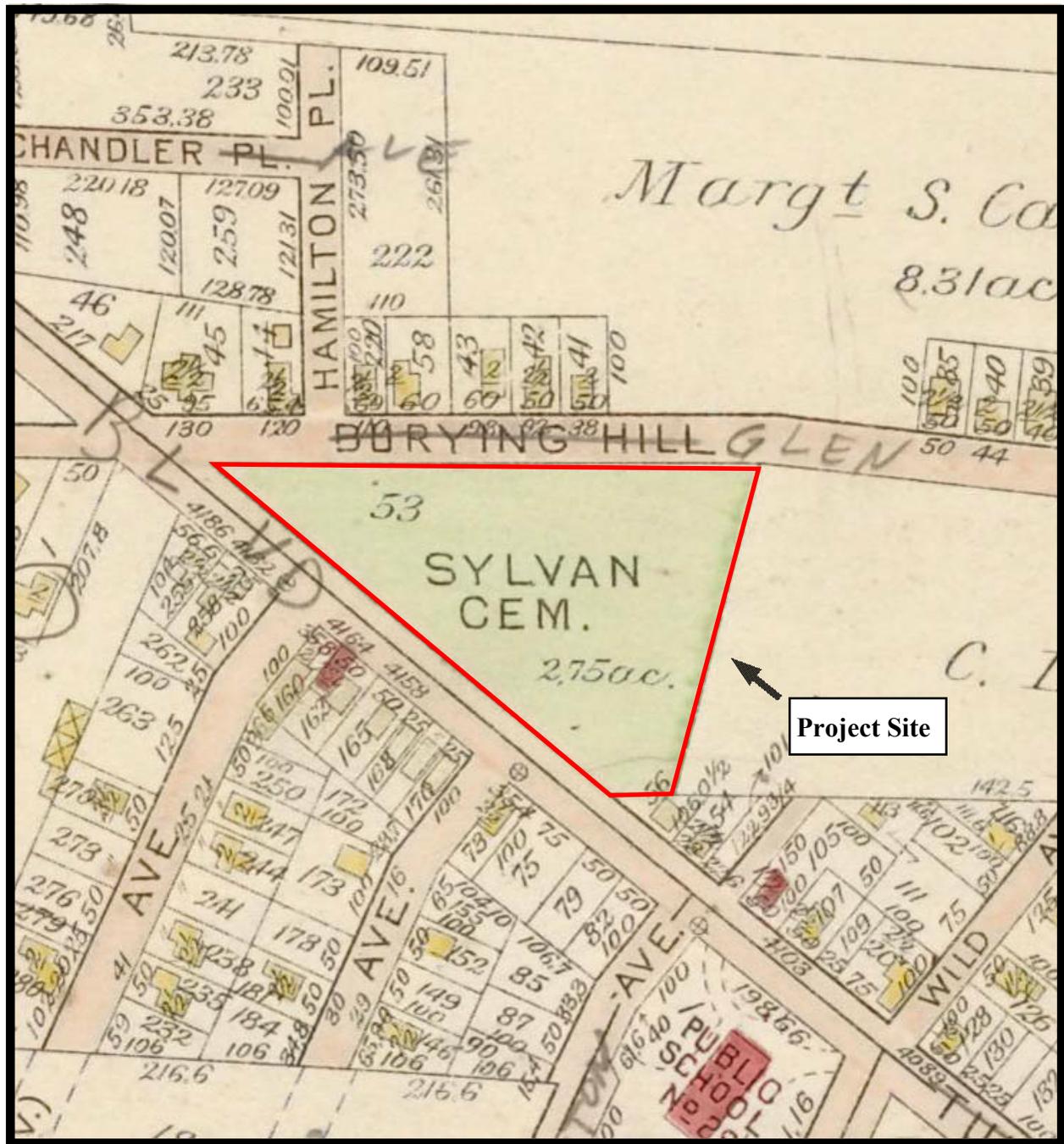


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Figure 15: Project site on *Borough of Richmond, Topographical Survey* (Borough of Richmond 1912).





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Figure 16: Project site on *Atlas of the City of New York, Borough of Richmond, Staten Island* (Bromley 1917).

0 200 400 600 800 1000 Ft

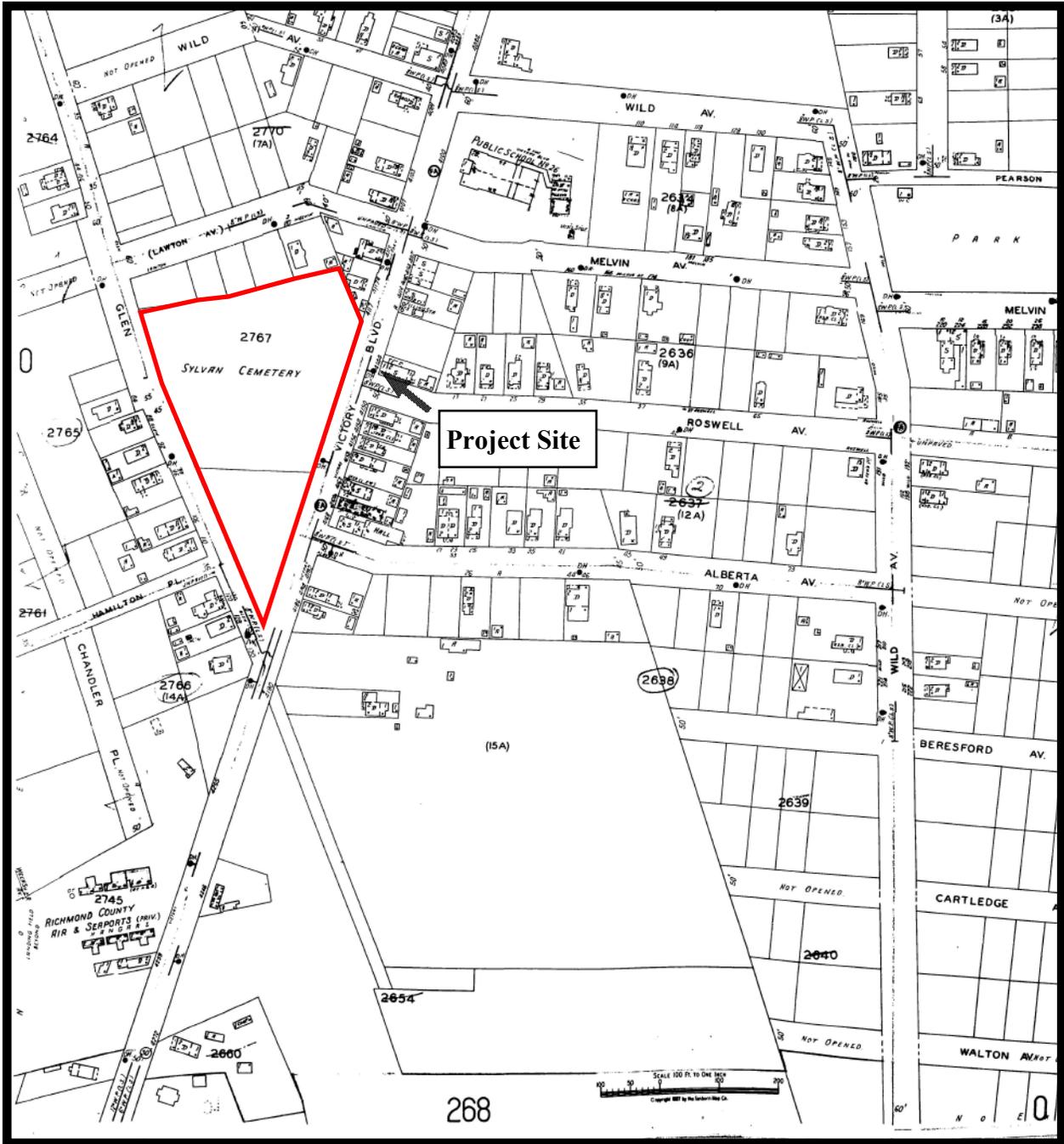




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Figure 17: Project site on *Sectional aerial maps of the City of New York* (New York City Bureau of Engineering 1924).



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Figure 18: Project site on *Insurance Maps of Staten Island, New York* (Sanborn 1951).





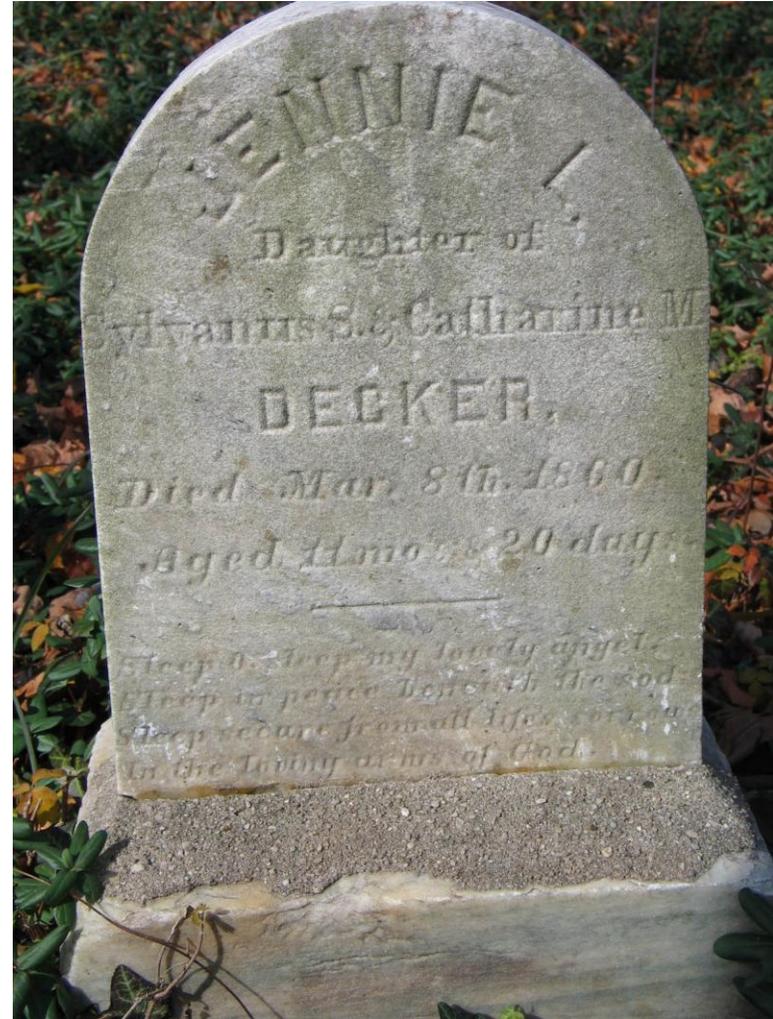
Photograph 1: Lot 9, the main cemetery property, showing gravestones on the slope of the hill. View looking northwest from Victory Boulevard.



Photograph 2: Lot 9, the main cemetery property, at the top of the hill, with Victory Boulevard in the background. View looking southeast from interior of property.



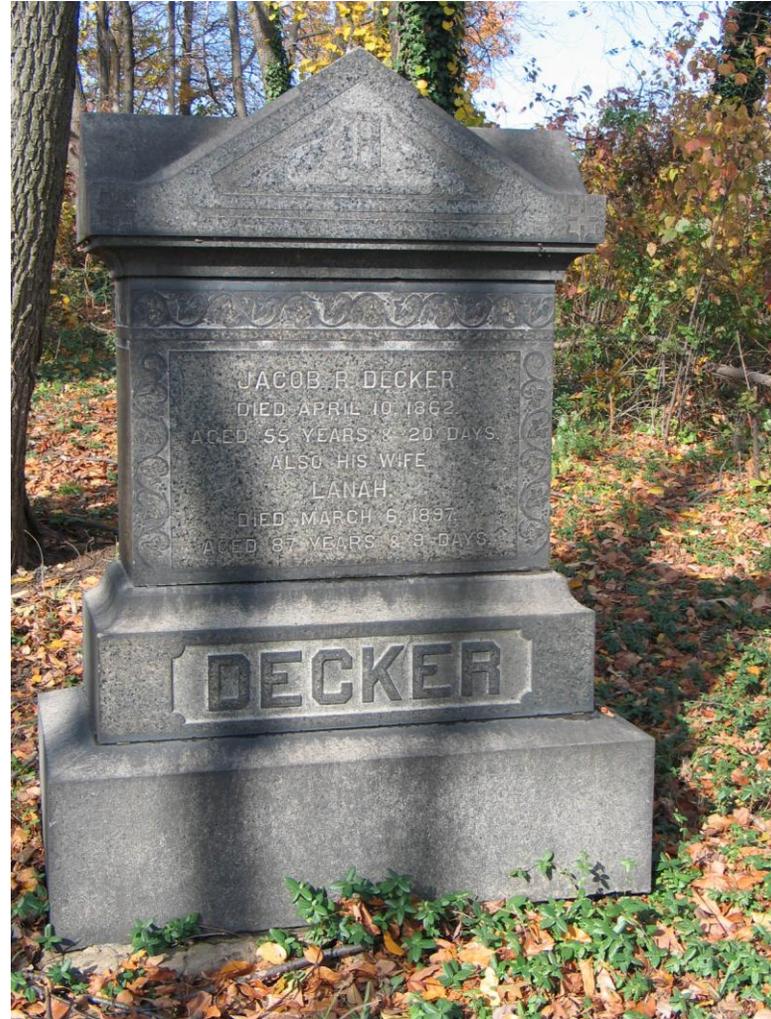
Photograph 3: Example of an infant gravestone. View looking northwest from interior of property.



Photograph 4: Example of an infant gravestone. View looking northwest from interior of property.



Photograph 5: Example of damaged gravestone. View looking northwest from interior of property.



Photograph 6: Example of large gravestone. View looking northwest from interior of property.



Photograph 7: Example of a gravestone. View looking northwest from interior of property.



Photograph 8: Pathway leading from Victory Boulevard to the summit of the lot, lined with wooden ties. View looking southeast from interior of property.



Photograph 9: Orientation of gravestones facing Victory Boulevard, with backs of gravestones shown. View looking southeast from interior of property.



Photograph 10: Example of a gravestone moved from its original location and used as a table. View looking southeast from interior of property.



Photograph 11: David Decker family plot from 1870. View looking northwest from interior of property.



Photograph 12: Example of unmarked family plot, enclosed by low iron rails. View looking west from interior of property.



Photograph 13: Wide trail at the southwestern end of the cemetery, between two lots. View looking southeast from Glen Street with Victory Boulevard in background.



Photograph 14: Area of dense understory surrounding gravestones at northeastern end of Lot 9, bordering residential properties south of Melvin Avenue. View looking northeast from interior of property.



Photograph 15: Historic photograph from 1923 showing sand mining on Lot 9. Note gravestones in left background. View looking northeast from Glen Street. Courtesy Staten Island Museum.



Photograph 16: Previously mined area on Lot 9 today. Note artificially flat topography from backfilling. View looking southwest from Glen Street.



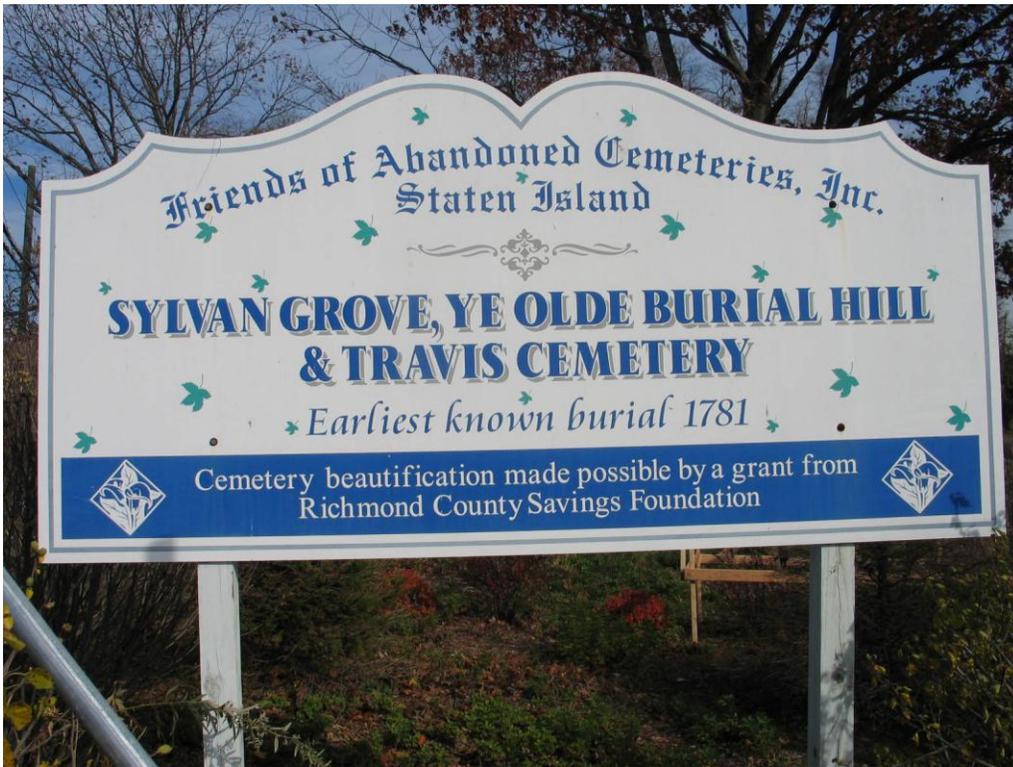
Photograph 17: Disturbance along western side of Lot 9. View looking northwest from interior of property with Glen Street in background.



Photograph 18: Lot 22. View looking northwest from Victory Boulevard.



Photograph 19: Lot 22 showing the small landscaped area at the extreme tip of the lot, and a sign indicating the use of the property as a cemetery. View looking north from Victory Boulevard.



Photograph 20: Detail of sign on Lot 22. View looking northeast from intersection of Victory Boulevard and Glen Street.



Photograph 21: Lot 22 showing its current use as a DPR construction staging area. View looking east from Glen Street.

**APPENDIX A
STATEN ISLAND GRAVESTONE INSCRIPTIONS**

**Due to copyright issues, Appendix A has been removed.
The original document may be seen at the Staten Island Museum.**