

April 15, 2020

Marie Warsh, Historian and Director of Preservation Planning  
Central Park Conservancy  
14 East 60th Street  
New York, NY 10022

Re: Archaeological Monitoring Report  
Seneca Village Sign Installation, Central Park, New York

Dear Ms. Warsh:

Please accept this letter as a brief report on archaeological monitoring services provided in October 2019 in connection with the installation of historic interpretive signage at the site of Seneca Village in Central Park, New York (Figure A.1). This work entailed the observation and recording of excavations for the installation of historic interpretive signs by a subcontractor working for the Central Park Conservancy (CPC).

A total of 19 signs and a tri-sided kiosk were erected at the site of the former Seneca Village. As per prior consultation between the CPC and the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, the installation of ten signs and a three-legged kiosk were monitored by a professional historic archaeologist (Figure A.2; Table C.1). Determination as to which signs required monitoring followed placement of the sign locations on a georeferenced version of the Gardner Sage condemnation maps from 1856 (Figure A.3). The nine sign installations that were excluded from archaeological monitoring were in locations where prior ground disturbance had previously occurred as a result of landscape improvements or trenching for modern utilities. Note that the location of Sign 1, which was considered to have low archaeological sensitivity, was not monitored, since observation of the excavation for nearby Sign 16 showed prior ground disturbance and no archaeological sensitivity.

The monitoring work took place over a three-day period in mid-October 2019 and was conducted by James Lee, Principal Investigator. The goal of the monitoring was to recover any relevant archaeological data pertaining to properties within the early/mid-19th-century settlement of Seneca Village, with particular attention being given to intact pre-Park archaeological deposits and structural remains exposed by these excavations. The archaeological monitoring involved the following activities: observation of the excavations for the signs; the taking of notes, measurements and photographs as necessary; and the retrieval of artifacts from back dirt. Artifacts recovered during the course of the archaeological monitoring were transported to the Hunter Research laboratory in Trenton where they were processed, analyzed, cataloged and prepared for eventual storage at the New York City Archaeological Repository (NYCAR) (see attached Appendix D, Material Culture Inventory). These items will be returned to the Central Park Conservancy pending transmission to the NYCAR.

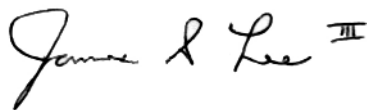
The results of the monitoring are summarized in Table C.2. Overall, no significant historic features were identified, and the artifacts recovered consist mostly of 19th- and 20th-century ceramics, glass and metal items (50 total; 43 historic and 7 modern). These artifacts are summarized in Table C.3 and detailed in Appendix D. Although some earlier redware,

pearlware and whiteware ceramic sherds were recovered that may date to the period of occupation of Seneca Village, the lack of recognizable, intact archaeological contexts makes any direct association difficult to prove. In most excavations a dark silty loam topsoil overlay a sandy silty loam (Photographs B.1 and B.2). Bedrock was encountered in four locations, at Signs 7, 8, 9 and 11 (Figure A.2) (Photographs B.3 and B.4). At Signs 5 and 13, no second context was encountered with topsoil extending to depths of 53 and 49 cm, respectively. A modern electrical conduit was encountered in the excavation for Sign 12 (Photograph B.5). The edge of a utility vault was encountered in Sign 15, accounting for an anomalous lens of clean sand (Photograph B.6).

The excavation of greatest interest was that conducted for the eastern Introductory Sign 3 (Figure A.2). After removal of the topsoil, a context of large stones was encountered at 30 cm below the ground surface that extended beyond the limit of excavation at 79 cm (Photographs B.7, B.8 and B.9). No artifacts were associated with these stones and they were not mortared or cut in a manner that would indicate their use as a foundation wall. This sign location, according to the georeferenced Gardner and Sage maps, is within the rear yards of a stable and barn complex owned by the City of New York and apparently related to the reservoir keeper's house located a little further to the northeast (Figure A.3). The stones were most likely put in this location as part of park landscaping fill. It is possible that they were taken from the rubble core of the reservoir walls when this feature, which was located roughly 140 feet to the east, was drained and dismantled and the area re-landscaped starting in 1929.

Please feel free to contact either Richard Hunter or me if you have any questions or comments.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James L. Lee III". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small "III" at the end.

James Lee, M.A., RPA  
Vice President  
Principal Investigator/Archaeologist

copy: Richard Hunter, HRI

### **Appendices**

- A. Figures
- B. Photographs
- C. Tables
- D. Material Culture Inventory

**Appendix A**  
**FIGURES**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING: SENECA VILLAGE SIGN INSTALLATION, CENTRAL PARK, NEW YORK**

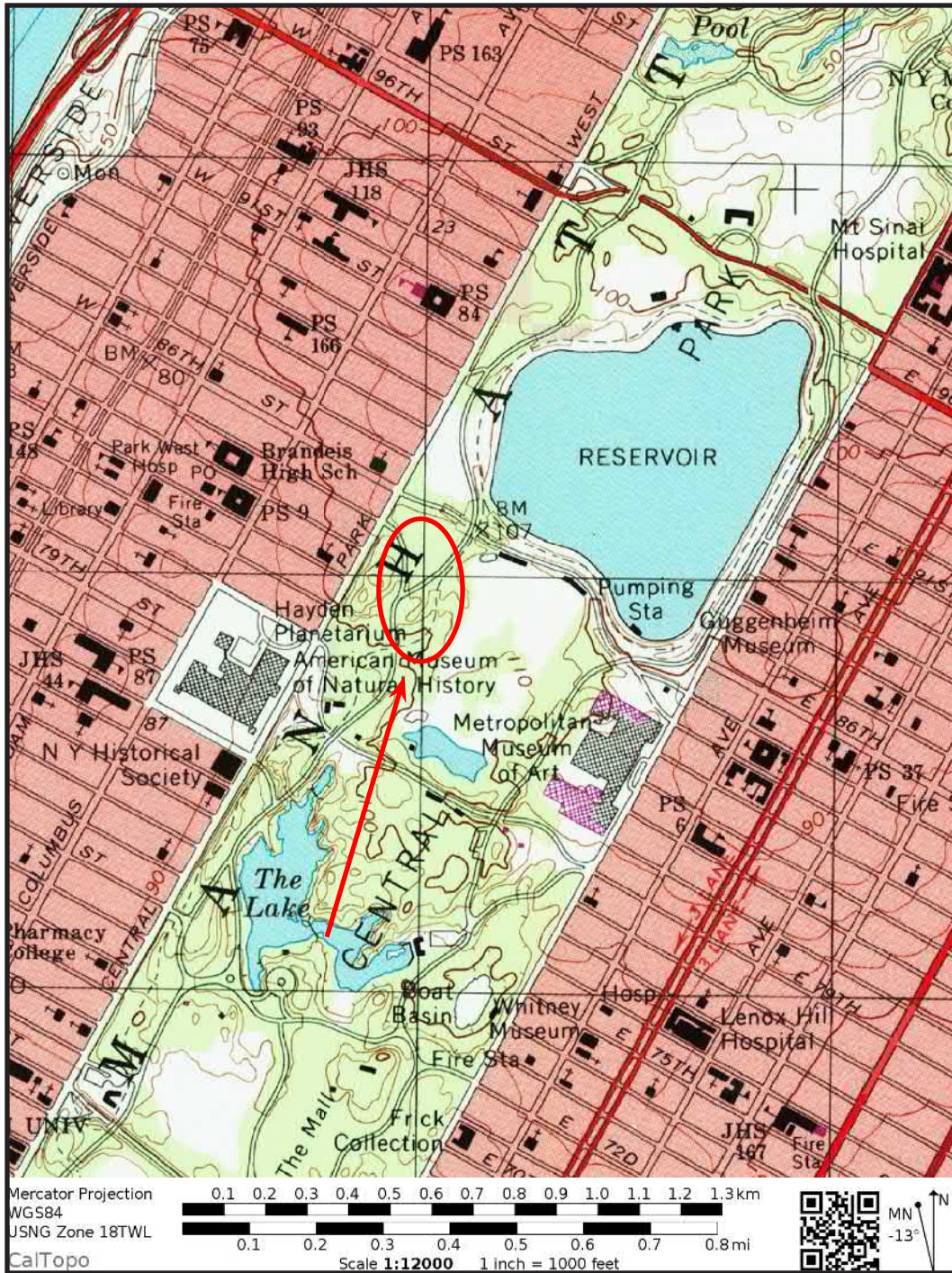


Figure A.1. Detailed Location of Project Area. Source: 7.5' USGS Central Park, N.Y.-N.J. Quadrangle (1966 [photorevised 1979]).





Figure A.2. Map of Seneca Village Showing the Proposed Location of Signs and Those Monitored



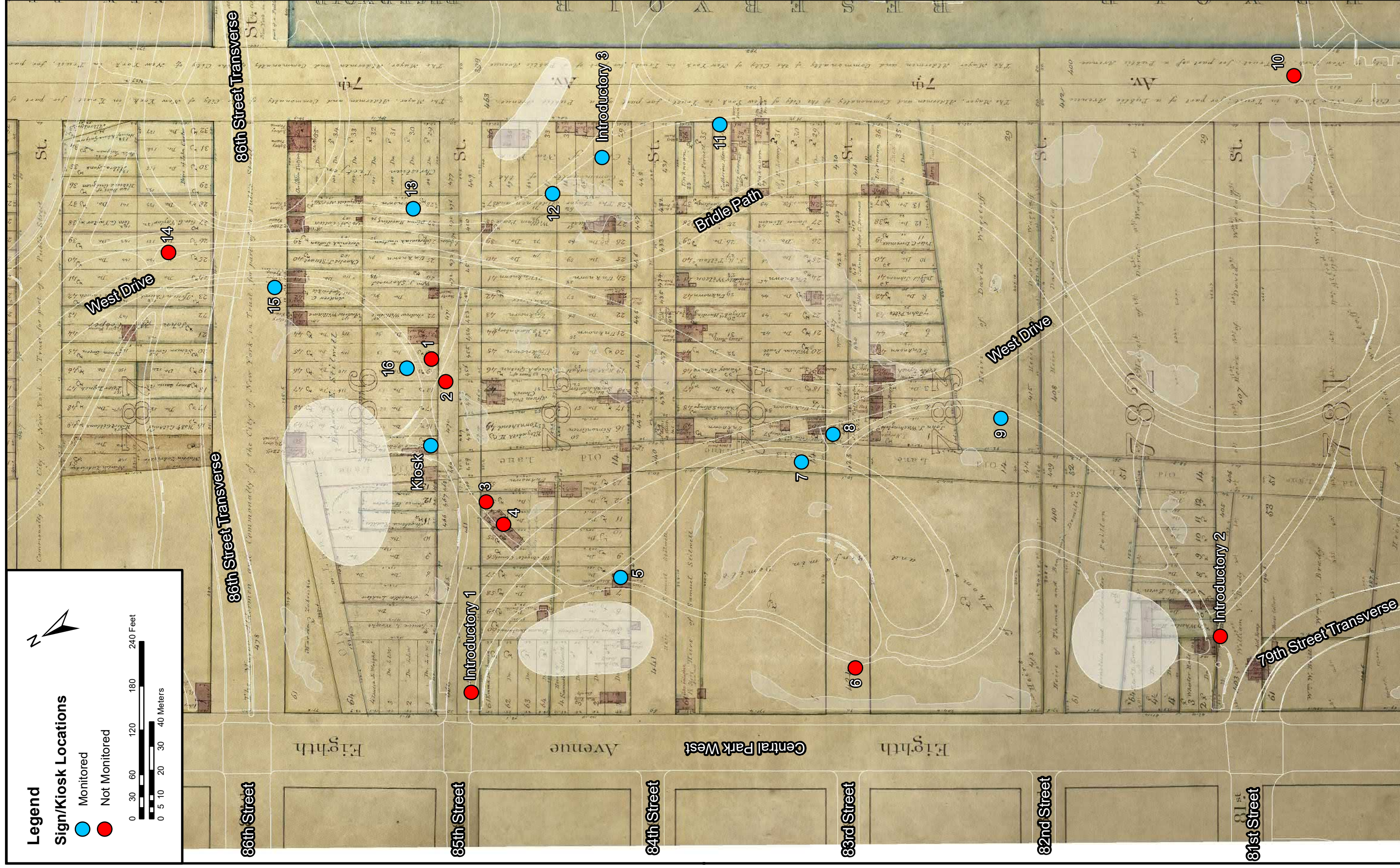


Figure A.3. Gardner Sage Condemnation Maps, 1856, Showing Locations of Signs



**Appendix B**  
**PHOTOGRAPHS**



Photograph B.1. View facing northeast showing the completed excavation for Sign 13 (Photographer: James Lee, October 2019 [HRI Neg.#19070/D1:022]).





Photograph B.2. View facing northeast showing the excavation for the kiosk (Photographer: James Lee, October 2019 [HRI Neg.#19070/D1:084]).





Photograph B.3. View facing northeast showing the excavation for Sign 7. Bedrock was encountered at the base of the excavation (Photographer: James Lee, October 2019 [HRI Neg.#19070/D1:082]).





Photograph B.4. View facing northeast showing the excavation for Sign 8. Bedrock was encountered at the base of the excavation (Photographer: James Lee, October 2019 [HRI Neg.#19070/D1:077]).





Photograph B.5. View facing northwest showing the excavation for Sign 12. Note the electrical conduit running along the southwestern edge of the excavation (Photographer: James Lee, October 2019 [HRI Neg.#19070/D1:032]).





Photograph B.6. Plan view showing the excavation for Sign 15. Note the layer of sand and the edge of a utility vault (Photographer: James Lee, October 2019 [HRI Neg.#19070/D1:016]).





Photograph B.7. View facing east showing the stones recovered from the excavation of the eastern introduction sign (Photographer: James Lee, October 2019 [HRI Neg.#19070/D1:038]).





Photograph B.8. View facing north showing the large excavation necessary for the eastern introductory sign. Note the rocky context present below the topsoil (Photographer: James Lee, October 2019 [HRI Neg.#19070/D1:039]).





Photograph B.9. View facing west showing the installed eastern introductory sign (Photographer: James Lee, October 2019 [HRI Neg.#19070/D1:075]).



**Appendix C**  
**TABLES**



## ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING: SENECA VILLAGE SIGN INSTALLATION, CENTRAL PARK, NEW YORK

**Table C.1. Seneca Village Sign Installation and Monitoring Recommendations.**

<b>Sign #/Location</b>	<b>Comments on Archaeological Sensitivity</b>	<b>Recommendations for Installation</b>
<b>Kiosk</b>	close to site of AME Zion greenhouse; archaeology compromised by installation of existing kiosk and park landscaping; low sensitivity	archaeological monitoring of installation of kiosk
<b>Intro Sign #1 (W. 85th)</b>	no known Seneca Village features in this area (burial removed from somewhere nearby in late 19thc); road construction will have removed all archaeological deposits of interest; no sensitivity	no action
<b>Intro Sign #2 (W. 81st)</b>	close to site of Wheeler Hale house; archaeology compromised by park landscaping and playground and path construction; very low sensitivity	no action
<b>Intro Sign #3 (east side of village)</b>	located to rear of City-owned stable/barn/shed; archaeology compromised by park landscaping and path construction; low sensitivity	archaeological monitoring of installation of sign
<b>1. AME Zion Church</b>	on AME Zion property west of church site; archaeology compromised by park landscaping and path construction; low sensitivity	archaeological monitoring of installation of sign
<b>2. African Union Church</b>	on edge of W. 85th Street; archaeology likely compromised by road and reservoir water line construction and and path construction and electric utilities; no sensitivity	no action for current location, but reevaluate if need to relocate because of presence of electric utilities.
<b>3. The Wilson House</b>	within right-of-way of W. 85th Street; archaeology likely compromised by road and reservoir water line construction and path construction and electric utilities; no sensitivity	no action for current location, but reevaluate if need to relocate because of presence of electric utilities.
<b>4. All Angels' Church</b>	within right-of-way of W. 85th Street; archaeology likely compromised by road and reservoir water line construction and path construction and electric utilities; no sensitivity	no action for current location, but reevaluate if need to relocate because of presence of electric utilities.
<b>5. Irish Americans</b>	near site of house of Robert Green; archaeology likely to have been compromised by park landscaping and path construction; low sensitivity	archaeological monitoring of installation of sign
<b>6. Summit Rock</b>	no known Seneca Village features; rock outcrop with shallow soil cover; archaeology compromised by park landscaping; no sensitivity	no action
<b>7. Lanes, Lots, and Streets</b>	within right-of-way of "Old Lane"; possibility that old road surface may survive beneath park landscaping; low to moderate sensitivity	archaeological monitoring of installation of sign
<b>8. Housing</b>	within right-of-way of W. 83rd Street; close to site of house of S.W. Hutchins; archaeology compromised by road and path construction; low sensitivity	archaeological monitoring of installation of sign
<b>9. Tanner's Spring</b>	no known Seneca Village features aside from the spring; landscape is heavily modified and has likely compromised any archaeology; low sensitivity	archaeological monitoring of installation of sign
<b>10. Receiving Reservoir</b>	beyond limits of Seneca Village; location much disturbed by reservoir construction and demolition; no sensitivity	no action
<b>11. Livelihoods</b>	close to site of house of Henry Garnet; on edge of 7th Avenue; archaeology compromised by park landscaping and path construction; low sensitivity	archaeological monitoring of installation of sign
<b>12. Geology</b>	located to rear of City-owned stable/barn/shed; archaeology compromised by park landscaping and path construction; low sensitivity	archaeological monitoring of installation of sign
<b>13. Reservoir Keepers</b>	no known Seneca Village features in immediate vicinity; archaeology likely compromised by park landscaping and path construction; low sensitivity	archaeological monitoring of installation of sign
<b>14. Downtown Connections</b>	no known Seneca Village features in immediate vicinity; archaeology likely compromised by park landscaping and West Drive construction; very low sensitivity	no action
<b>15. Andrew Williams</b>	close to site of house of Andrew Williams and others; archaeology compromised by park landscaping, path construction and utilities installation; low sensitivity	archaeological monitoring of installation of sign
<b>16. Gardens</b>	near site of AME Zion church; archaeology compromised by park landscaping and path construction; low sensitivity	archaeological monitoring of installation of sign



**ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING: SENECA VILLAGE SIGN INSTALLATION, CENTRAL PARK, NEW YORK**

**Table C.2. Summary of Monitoring Activities.**

Sign	Monitored	Context	Depth	Description	Artifacts
1	N		n/a		n/a
2	N		n/a		n/a
3	N		n/a		n/a
4	N		n/a		n/a
5	Y	1	0-53 cm	Silty Loam (10YR 6/4)	Historic and modern glass
6	N		n/a		n/a
7	Y	1	0-48 cm	Silty Loam (10YR 4/1)	Modern glass, historic ceramic in Context 1 Whiteware sherd in Context 2
		2	48-61 cm	Sandy Silty Loam (Mottled 10YR 4/1 and 10YR 6/3)	
		3		Bedrock	
8	Y	1	0-40 cm	Sandy Silty Loam (10YR 3/4)	Modern glass in Context 1
		2	40-61 cm	Sandy Silty Loam (10YR 6/4)	
		3		Bedrock	
9	Y	1	0-27 cm	Silty Loam (10YR 4/1)	Brick, modern glass and plastic in Context 1
		2	27-50 cm	Sandy Silty Loam (10YR 6/3)	
		3		Bedrock	
10	N		n/a		n/a
11	Y	1	0-5 cm	Silty Loam (10YR 4/2)	Brick, historic ceramic in Context 2
		2	5-61 cm	Silty Loam (10YR 3/2)	
		3	61 cm	Bedrock	
12	Y	1	0-24 cm	Silty Loam (10YR 4/3)	Brick, historic ceramic in Context 1 Modern electrical conduit in Context 2
		2	24-60 cm	Silty Sandy Loam (10YR 6/6)	
13	Y	1	0-49 cm	Silty Loam (10YR 4/2)	Historic ceramic and glass, modern plastic
14	N		n/a		n/a
15	Y	1	0-20 cm	Silty Loam (10YR 4/1)	Historic ceramics in Context 1 Asphalt, large rocks in Context 3
		2	20-26 cm	Sand (10YR 7/6)	
		3	26-59 cm	Silty Loam (10YR 4/2)	
16	Y	1	0-20 cm	Silty Loam (10YR 4/2)	Historic ceramics and glass, coal, plastic from Context 1 Historic ceramic from Context 2
		2	20-56 cm	Silty Loam (10YR 6/4)	
Kiosk	Y	1	0-24 cm	Silty Loam (10YR 4/3)	No cultural material
		2	24-83 cm	Sandy Silty Loam (7.5YR 6/6)	
Intro. South	N		n/a		n/a
Intro. North	N		n/a		n/a
Intro. East	Y	1	0-30 cm	Silty Loam (10YR 4/2)	Modern plastic and metal, brick in Context 1
		2	30-79 cm	Large Stones in Silty Loam Matrix (10YR 4/3)	



**Table C.3. Artifact Summary.**

Artifact Type	Sign #										Grand Total
	5	7	8	9	11	12	13	15	16	Intro. East	
<b>Ceramic</b>											<b>13</b>
Pearlware					2			2	1		5
Whiteware		2			1	1					4
Yellowware		2									2
Ironstone							1				1
Porcelain (tile)									1		1
<b>Glass</b>											<b>15</b>
Bottle	2	1	1				1		5		10
amber							1		2		3
clear	2	1	1						3		7
Flat		2		1							3
clear		2		1							3
Indet. Glass	2										2
aqua	1										1
clear	1										1
<b>Other</b>											<b>15</b>
Brick		1		1	1	3				2	8
Mortar									1		1
Ferrous metal	1										1
Coal cinder											2
Mica		1			2						3
<b>Modern</b>		<b>1</b>		<b>1</b>			<b>1</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>50</b>



**Appendix D**

**MATERIAL CULTURE INVENTORY**



**APPENDIX D**  
**MATERIAL CULTURE INVENTORY**

<b>Sign 5, Context 1</b>	<b>Catalog #</b>	<b>2</b>
Historic		
1 Glass, Curved, bottle body fragment, large embossed character on exterior, clear, embossed character illegible	Row #	2
1 Glass, Curved, indeterminate type fragment, embossed ripple design on exterior, clear	Row #	3
1 Glass, Curved, indeterminate type fragment, aqua	Row #	4
1 Glass, Curved, milk bottle rim fragment, capseat finish, mold seam around outer diameter, clear, press and blow, (SHA 2019)	Row #	1
1 Metal, Ferrous metal, indeterminate type fragment	Row #	5
<i>Total Artifacts in Context 1: 5</i>		
<i>Total Artifacts in Shovel Test 5 : 5</i>		
<hr/>		
<b>Sign 7, Context 1</b>	<b>Catalog #</b>	<b>3</b>
Modern		
1 Synthetic, Plastic, indeterminate type fragment, red	Row #	2
Historic		
1 Fired Clay, Refined Earthenware, Whiteware, Sponge Ware, flatware body fragment, blue sponged interior, blue, (MAC Lab 2019), 1820 - 1870	Row #	7
2 Fired Clay, Refined Earthenware, Yellowware, indeterminate type body fragment, undecorated, 1828 - 1940	Row #	8
1 Fired Clay, Structural, Earthenware, brick fragment	Row #	1
1 Glass, Curved, bottle shoulder fragment, embossed letter on exterior, clear, embossed letter may be an "A"	Row #	3
1 Glass, Flat, indeterminate type fragment, embossed intersecting lines on exterior, clear	Row #	5
1 Glass, Flat, window fragment, clear	Row #	4
1 Mineral, Mica, indeterminate type fragment	Row #	6
<i>Total Artifacts in Context 1: 9</i>		
<b>Sign 7, Context 2</b>	<b>Catalog #</b>	<b>4</b>
Historic		
1 Fired Clay, Refined Earthenware, Whiteware, indeterminate type body fragment, undecorated, one surface missing, 1815 - 1940	Row #	1
<i>Total Artifacts in Context 2: 1</i>		
<i>Total Artifacts in Shovel Test 7 : 10</i>		
<hr/>		
<b>Sign 8, Context 1</b>	<b>Catalog #</b>	<b>5</b>
Historic		
1 Glass, Curved, bottle body fragment, clear	Row #	1
<i>Total Artifacts in Context 1: 1</i>		
<i>Total Artifacts in Shovel Test 8 : 1</i>		
<hr/>		
<b>Sign 9, Context 1</b>	<b>Catalog #</b>	<b>6</b>
Modern		
1 Synthetic, Plastic, bottle cap whole	Row #	1
Historic		
1 Fired Clay, Structural, Earthenware, brick fragment	Row #	3
1 Glass, Flat, window fragment, clear	Row #	2

**APPENDIX D (Cont.)**  
**MATERIAL CULTURE INVENTORY**

*Total Artifacts in Context 1: 3*

*Total Artifacts in Shovel Test 9 : 3*

<b>Sign 11, Context 2</b>	<b>Catalog #</b>	<b>7</b>
Historic		
1 Fired Clay, Refined Earthenware, Pearlware, bowl body fragment, undecorated, crazing, mends to 7.3, 1780 - 1890	Row #	4
1 Fired Clay, Refined Earthenware, Pearlware, bowl base fragment, undecorated, foot ring, crazing, mends to 7.4, 1780 - 1890	Row #	3
1 Fired Clay, Refined Earthenware, Whiteware, Transfer Printed, indeterminate type body fragment, transfer printed floral design, light blue, crazing, 1818 - 1867	Row #	5
1 Fired Clay, Structural, Earthenware, brick fragment	Row #	2
2 Mineral, Mica, indeterminate type fragment	Row #	1

*Total Artifacts in Context 2: 6*

*Total Artifacts in Shovel Test 11 : 6*

<b>Sign 12, Context 1</b>	<b>Catalog #</b>	<b>8</b>
Historic		
1 Fired Clay, Refined Earthenware, Whiteware, hollow ware body fragment, undecorated, crazing, 1815 - 1940	Row #	4
2 Fired Clay, Structural, Earthenware, brick fragment	Row #	1
1 Fired Clay, Structural, Earthenware, indeterminate type fragment, resembles a roofing tile, some mortar present	Row #	2
1 Mineral, Coal, slag fragment	Row #	3

*Total Artifacts in Context 1: 5*

*Total Artifacts in Shovel Test 12 : 5*

<b>Sign 13, Context 1</b>	<b>Catalog #</b>	<b>9</b>
Modern		
1 Composite, Plastic and Paper, pen cap whole, barcode attached with paper sticker to pen cap	Row #	1
Historic		
1 Fired Clay, Refined Earthenware, Ironstone, indeterminate vessel body fragment, undecorated, crazing, 1865 - 1890	Row #	3
1 Glass, Curved, bottle body fragment, amber	Row #	2

*Total Artifacts in Context 1: 3*

*Total Artifacts in Shovel Test 13 : 3*

<b>Sign 15, Context 1</b>	<b>Catalog #</b>	<b>10</b>
Historic		
1 Fired Clay, Refined Earthenware, Pearlware, Transfer Printed, Negative Dark Blue, hollow ware body fragment, negative dark blue floral design interior, dark blue, crazing, 1821 - 1840	Row #	2
1 Fired Clay, Refined Earthenware, Pearlware, Transfer Printed, Negative Dark Blue, indeterminate vessel rim fragment, negative dark blue wavy line around rim interior, dark blue, crazing, 1821 - 1840	Row #	1

*Total Artifacts in Context 1: 2*

*Total Artifacts in Shovel Test 15 : 2*



**APPENDIX D (Cont.)  
MATERIAL CULTURE INVENTORY**

<b>Sign 16, Context 1</b>	<b>Catalog #</b>	<b>11</b>
Modern		
1 Composite, Plastic, indeterminate type fragment, external ridges, pink	Row #	5
Historic		
1 Composite, Mortar, indeterminate type fragment, black material adhered to two sides	Row #	4
1 Fired Clay, Structural, Porcelain, tile fragment, hexagonal, white	Row #	3
3 Glass, Curved, bottle body fragment, clear	Row #	1
2 Glass, Curved, bottle body fragment, amber	Row #	2
1 Mineral, Coal, waste material fragment, black	Row #	6
<i>Total Artifacts in Context 1: 9</i>		

<b>Sign 16, Context 2</b>	<b>Catalog #</b>	<b>12</b>
Historic		
1 Fired Clay, Refined Earthenware, Pearlware, hollow ware body fragment, undecorated, ridge on exterior, crazing, 1780 - 1890	Row #	1
<i>Total Artifacts in Context 2: 1</i>		
<i>Total Artifacts in Shovel Test 16 : 10</i>		

<b>Intro. East, Context 1</b>	<b>Catalog #</b>	<b>1</b>
Modern		
1 Composite, Plastic and Metal, smoking pipe mouth and neck, modern vapor smoking pipe mouthpiece and cartridge	Row #	4
1 Metal, Ferrous metal, fence post fragment, corroded, encrusted	Row #	5
1 Synthetic, Plastic, straw whole, blue stripes	Row #	3
Historic		
1 Fired Clay, Structural, Earthenware, brick fragment, burned	Row #	1
1 Fired Clay, Structural, Earthenware, brick fragment	Row #	2
<i>Total Artifacts in Context 1: 5</i>		
<i>Total Artifacts in Intro East Trench : 5</i>		

**Total Number of Artifacts: 50**

**\* Item Discarded in Laboratory**