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ARCHAEOLOGICAL DOCUMENTARY STUDY BUSHWICK URBAN RENEWAL AREA BOROUGH OF BROOKLYN BLOCK 3184, LOTS 40, 41 AND 42 CEQR #90-038K

> by ARNOLD PICKMAN

Submitted To New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development

June 1992



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Figure 16 - 1888 Sanborn Map Figure 17 - 1893 Bromley Map Figure 18 - 1907 Sanborn Map Figure 19 - 1933 Sanborn Map Figure 20 - 1951 Sanborn Map Figure 21 - 1991 Sanborn Map

APPENDIX A - Chart showing 1792 Land Ownership Along the Bushwick Road As Reconstructed from Road Opening Records

APPENDIX B - Tax Records: 1867-1870 and 1881-1885

#### I. INTRODUCTION

The New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development is planning to construct two-story rowhouses on a site within the Bushwick Urban Renewal Area.

The housing site is located on the block bounded by Central, Willoughby and Evergreen Avenues and Troutman Street in the Bushwick section of the Borough of Brooklyn (Figure 1). The site is designated as Block 3184, Lots 40, 41 and 42 on the present Borough of Brooklyn tax map. It is situated at the northwest corner of Central and Willoughby Avenues (Figure 2).

This archaeological documentary study has been conducted as part of New York City's environmental review procedure. The objectives have been to record the known history of the site, evaluate its archaeological potential and, if appropriate, recommend locations for field testing.

#### A. Procedures

The guidelines established for this study by the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission specify that detailed research is not necessary for lots where ground disturbance would preclude the presence of intact deposits. The Commission has specified that such disturbance could be considered to exist where "modern buildings... [have been constructed]...with a basement covering the entire footprint of the lot." The first step in the study was a review of maps to determine if this condition existed on any of the three lots. As discussed in the following chapter, the review indicated that open backyard areas have continued to exist on all three of the lots. Therefore a detailed review of lot histories was undertaken.

The study included a review of the archaeological sensitivity of the project area for archaeological resources associated with both the prehistoric and historic periods. To evaluate sensitivity for prehistoric sites, we reviewed summaries of known sites in Brooklyn compiled earlier in the twentieth century. In addition we also considered the topographic and physiographic characteristics of the project site prior to modern development as indicated by historic period maps. These characteristics were compared with those of reported prehistoric sites.

The assessment of the project site's historic period archaeological sensitivity has been based on an examination of primary sources including maps, land deeds, tax records, directories, census records and records of the Brooklyn Sewer Department. These data have been supplemented by a review of secondary sources.

A site visit was conducted by the principal investigator on June

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25, 1992.

## B. Project Site Description

The three lots which constitute the project site are vacant. Lot 42, at the corner of Willoughby and Central Avenues, is surrounded by a chain link fence. This lot has apparently been graded and its present gravelly surface is at or near the street grade. Lots 41 and 42 have an irregular earthen surface overgrown with weeds which is several feet below the grade of Central Avenue. Stone and brick, apparently deriving from the demolition of the structures which formerly stood here, were noted on the surface. The north wall of the foundation of the former structure on lot 40 is visible. The top of this wall is at the approximate grade of Central Avenue and several feet above the surface of the lot. It adjoins the foundation wall of the standing structure at 142 Central Avenue (see Figure 21).

## **II. DOCUMENTARY RESEARCH**

## A. Prehistoric Period

Knowledge of prehistoric sites in Brooklyn derives mainly from reports of collectors active in the latter part of the 19th and early portion of the 20th century, as well as ethnohistoric sources. These data were compiled in the early portion of the 20th century by Bolton (1920, 1922). Most of the reported Brooklyn sites were located in the southern portion of the Borough, especially at the heads of and adjacent to tidal creeks which extended inland from Jamaica Bay and Sheepshead Bay.

In the course of a previous cultural resources survey of an area in the vicinity of Flushing Avenue and Broadway the files of the American Museum of Natural History and the Museum of the American Indian (Heye Foundation) were examined for the presence of collections of prehistoric material recovered from this portion of Brooklyn. With the exception of a Museum of the American Indian collection from a site near the Brooklyn Bridge (possibly the same site discussed by Bolton - see below), all of the Brooklyn material in these repositories also derived from sites near the Borough's south shore (Salwen, Dublin and Pickman 1987).

Bolton (1920,1922) lists only a few prehistoric sites in the northern portion of Brooklyn. The closest to the project site was located near the East River shoreline and the present location of the Brooklyn Bridge (Bridge Street between Front and York Streets). According to Bolton (1922:133) an "extensive deposit", which apparently represents an occupational midden was uncovered at this location in 1826. The reported recovery of clay tobacco pipes from this site suggests the present of a contact period component. Bolton's reconstruction of the topography and physiography of this site based on the 18th century Ratzer map indicates that it was located "on the south side of a hill... between two other eminences on a neck of land", near the head of a stream which flowed into Wallabout Bay to the east.

Even though European material was found at the Brooklyn Bridge site, Bolton places the site of the contact period village of Marechkawick (see below) at the approximate location of Fulton Street, near Lawrence and Jay Streets in the present downtown section of the Borough. He notes that this location would have placed the village on a neck of upland between the marshes of Gowanus Creek and Wallabout Bay.

A prehistoric site somewhat closer to the project site than those noted above was located in Maspeth, Queens near Mount Zion cemetery (see Figure 3a), and northeast of Newtown Creek. This location is more than two miles from the project site.

Bolton (1922) notes that there are no reported sites at the heads of two inlets (Wallabout Bay/Creek and Bushwick Inlet) located north and west of the project site, but he notes thau since prehistoric sites are often found at the heads of such inlets, these areas would be good locations to examine for Native American remains. The location of coastal New York Native American archaeological sites on higher ground bordering tidal creeks and marshes has also been noted elsewhere in the literature (e.g. Smith 1950).

A Brooklyn Board of Health map drawn in 1875 (Figure 4) superimposes the the tidal creeks and surrounding marsh areas, as shown on 18th century maps, on the late 19th century street grid. The head of the stream shown extending southeast from Wallabout Bay would have been located ca. 6000 feet west of the project site and the head of the stream which extended southward from Bushwick inlet would have been ca. 8500 feet northwest of the site. The closest area of wetlands is shown extending southwest from the end of Newtown Creek. It would have been located some 2900 feet northeast of the project site.

Bolton (1922) notes that no sites were reported from the upland areas in the interior of the Borough and he attributes this to the absence of water courses in the interior. A notation on the 1875 Board of Health map also indicates that "there were no streams intersecting the uplands except as shown." The presence of bodies of water is not only a desirable feature for settlement locations, but would also attract game and therefore represent preferred hunting camp locations for prehistoric peoples.

Two 19th century maps (Figures 6 and 7a) show a prominent hill located southeast of the project area, a short distance south of the head of Newtown Creek and the adjacent marshes. The hill and an adjacent pond are also shown on the 1781 Taylor and Skinner map (Figure 5). This map also shows a hill and pond south of the Wallabout marshes and west of the Bushwick Road (see below). These hills may have been likely locations of hunting camps or even longer-term occupation sites. However the location of the hills as shown on the maps place them approximately 4200 feet southeast and 3000 feet west of the project site.

Bolton's map (see Figures 3a and 3b) shows the reported routes of Indian trails. The closest major trail to the project site followed the route of the Brooklyn and Newton Turnpike, which later became the approximate route of Flushing Avenue, located some seven blocks north of the project site. Bolton speculates that a secondary trail may have extended northward from this trail to the location of the town of Bushwick (see below), following the route of the historic period Old Bushwick Road. Bolton does not suggest that this trail extended south of Flushing Avenue.

## B. Contact and Early Historic Periods

At the time of the arrival of the first Europeans in the early 17th century, Brooklyn was occupied by the Canarsie group of Native Americans, and according to Bolton (1922:32) the portion of Brooklyn which includes Bushwick was occupied by a subchieftaincy known as the Marechkawick or Mareyckawick. As noted above, the main village of this group was supposedly located in the present-day "downtown" section of Brooklyn.

In 1638 the Dutch Governor Kieft, on behalf of the West India Company, purchased a tract of land from the Canarsie which adjoined another tract known as "Rapalie's plantation." The purchased tract extended from Rennegackonck, which is identified as a small creek emptying into Wallabout Bay, eastward to Newtown Creek and from the East River to "the swamps of Mespaetches" (i.e. the marshes at the margins of Newtown Creek). This purchase thus included the later site of the town of Bushwick. The earliest settlement within this tract took place between 1641 and 1650 with the purchase of land by a number of Swedish, Norwegian and Dutch immigrants (Stiles 1869:304).

The town of Bushwick was founded and the village plot laid out in 1660 by Governor Pieter Stuyvesant. The original village included 22 house lots. It was named Boswyck ("the town of woods"). The location of the town was in the vicinity of the present Bushwick Avenue and Metropolitan Avenues, some 1.25 miles northwest of the project site. By the close of the Revolution another small settlement had developed at the intersection of the present intersection of Bushwick and Flushing Avenues (Stiles 1867; Armbruster 1942), which is approximately one-half mile northwest of the project site. This latter area became known as Bushwick Crossroads, and is so labeled on a 1852 map (see Figure 7a).

The project site is located within a tract lying adjacent to and southeast of the land conveyed under the 1638 Indian land sale noted above, which ended at the approximate location of the later Bushwick Crossroads area. According to Armbruster (1842:33), the Native Americans reserved this land for their own use. However, they later abandoned it during their wars with the European settlers.

The boundaries of the 1660 Stuyvesant patent for the Town of Bushwick did not include this tract. However, in 1661, when Stuyvesant visited the town, he granted it to the settlers. The tract extends east of the approximate present location of Broadway and "southward to the hills". The "hills" referenced in the grant description were at the location of the present Cemetery of the Evergreens and were later known as the "Green Hills." The project site lies, therefore, within the boundaries of this tract, which became known as the "new Bushwick Lots" or "New Bushwick". Although the settlers held the New Bushwick tract as tenants-in-common, each settler supposedly was allocated a tract of some 20 acres for his use. The land apparently consisted largely of woodland which was used as a fuel supply and also some open land which could be used as cattle pasturage (Stiles 1869:326; Armbruster 1942:33).

The major roadway established by the early settlers in the

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northern portion of Brooklyn followed the route of the major Indian trails. The road began on the East river at the terminus of a rowboat ferry established in 1638, later the location of the Fulton ferry landing. It ran southward through the site of the Indian village of Marechkawick (see above). The road branched in the vicinity of the present Atlantic Avenue and Fort Greene place, south of the village site (Bolton 1922). One branch ran southward from this point east of the present location of Flatbush Avenue, and the other, which was known as the Rockaway trail, extended eastward along the route of the later Bedford and Jamaica Highway, which followed an irregular course near the location of the present Fulton street, through a pass in the Green Hills, and then eastward to Jamaica. Both branches of this early road were known as the Ferry Road (Bolton 1922; Armbruster 1919).

Two roads extended northward from the Jamaica branch of the Ferry Road. The Cripplebush Lane ran northward from Bedford Corners, and the Bushwick Road ran northward from the point where the Ferry road passed though the gap in the hills to the Bushwick settlement, passing though the New Lots of Bushwick (Armbruster 1919). This road has been referenced in the literature (e.g. Armbruster 1942) as the "Old Bushwick Road" to distinguish it from the re-aligned "New Bushwick Road" established in the mid-19th century (see below). However, 18th century sources, such as those cited below, refer to this road as the New Bushwick Road or Lane referring to the fact that it ran through the area known as New Bushwick.

Bolton's (1922) map (see Figure 3b) shows the old route of the Bushwick Road superimposed on the modern street grid. As described by Armbruster (1942:64), the old road followed the route of the present Bushwick Avenue as far south as Menahan Street (shown as Ralph St. on the Bolton map), which is some ten blocks southeast of the project site. At Menahan Street the route shifted eastward and followed the route of the present Evergreen Avenue for about six blocks, then continued southeastward between the location of the present Evergreen and Central Avenues to the Cemetery of the Evergreens.

#### C. Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries

Subsequent to the initial 17th century grant to the Bushwick settlers, the land encompassing the Bushwick New Lots came into the possession of individual land owners. It remained as farmland '--- into the latter portion of the 19th century.

The documentary evidence discussed below indicates that in the 19th century, the boundary lines between two farms, the Suydam and Vandervoort farms, passed through the project site. However, the history of land ownership in the 18th century is less certain. The Brooklyn Historical Society's block abstract files indicate that at least a portion of block 3184 was within the boundaries of a tract transferred in 1759 from Folkert Rappelye, a "yeoman of Brookland" to Folkert Folkertsen of Bushwick (Kings County Deeds, Liber 7:145). This deed transferred a total of 200 acres consisting of several separately described parcels. One of these, described as that on which "the house and barn stands" was bounded on the south by the "road that leads to New York Ferry", north by land of John Stockholm's children, west by land of Abraham Bogaert, and east by land of the children of Isaac Remsen and land previously owned by Folkertsen. As discussed above, the Ferry Road was in the vicinity of the Cemetery of the Evergreens, well south of the project site. A second parcel extended south of the Ferry Road. A third property, which is apparently the one including a portion of block 3184, was described in the deed as "the piece of land with the woodland." It bounded on the west by the Road that leads to Bushwick Church (i.e. the old Bushwick Road), on the south by land already in the possession of Folkert Folkertsen, on the east by land owned by Jacob Duryea and on the north by land of Jacob Duryea and Andries Stockholm. As we will see, other documentary evidence suggests that this tract was probably located south of the project site.

The Taylor and Skinner map of 1781 (see Figure 5) shows the portion of the Bushwick Road south of the "crossroads" with dashed lines, suggesting that at this time the road was not a major thoroughfare. While this map shows houses adjoining the southern portion of the Road, none are shown in the vicinity of the project site. The southernmost house adjoining the Bushwick Road shown on this map, at the point where the road angles sharply to the southwest to meet the Ferry Road, may be the house referenced in the 1759 deed.

Two entries in the Bushwick Town records indicate that prior to 1792 the Bushwick Road was, in fact a farm road known by the local residents as "the Narrow Lane." It was formally laid out by the road commissioners on June 18, 1792. The records indicate the names of the land owners from whom the town subsequently acquired the land.

We the Subscribers being Commsiones for Laying Out Publick highways in the Township of Bushwick in Kings County having Surveyed and laid out ye Publick highway in Said township Near or Opposite to Elexander Wayle Running South East to the hills true New Bushwick Begines at the Cross Roads between the land of Leanord May Desd and Jonaton Williams and So on along the Land of Jacobus D.B. Voise and Jonaton Williams and Hermanus Stockholm and the Said Jacobus D.B. Voise So to the Land of Andries Stockholm and Jacob Suydam and So on true the Land of Said Jacob Suydam and true the land of Johannes Durye and along the land of Gabrial Durye and true the land of Nickles Lefferts Desd along the Land of Rulif Neefees to the house of Isack Cornell Eqr to the hills the same as it lays in fence Wee allow the Same to be Recorded in Witness wee have her unto Set our hands this Eightwent Day of June 1792 [Signed] John Skillman, Jacobus D.B. Voise, Nicholas Wyckoff (Bushwick Town Records original spelling and punctuation).

Another entry dated January 25, 1793 records the purchase of a part of the route from Andries Stockholm.

Bushwick January ye 25, 1793 Then Received from Jacobus Debevoise, Nickles Wyckoff and John Skillman Eqr being Commissioners for the Township of Bushwick for Laying Out Publick highwayes the Sum of Two Pound Eight shilling for a Certain Strick of Land in New Bushwick Lane commonly called the Narrow Lane now aginning my Land (signed) Andries Stockholm (Bushwick Town Records original spelling and punctuation).

The sequence of land owners given in the records is shown in the chart included here as Appendix A. It suggests that the property transferred by the 1759 Folkertsen deed may have been located well to the south of the project site. The Folkertsen tract was bounded on the north by lands of Andries Stockholm, placing it within the tract owned in 1792 by Jacob Suydam. The Folkertsen tract may have been purchased by Suydam between 1759 and 1792 and added to his previous holdings.

A deed dated 1816 (Liber 320:56) transferred a 40 acre "messuage and tract" from Peter Stockholm to Hendrick Suydam. The tract is bounded "on the west by the road from Old Bushwick to New Bushwick, on the north by land formerly belonging to Altie Cosine and Nicholas Folkertse now in the possession of Francis Van Dervoort, on the east by land once owned by Charles Duryea now in the possession of John Troutman, and on the south by the land of the said Nicholas Folkertse now belonging to Hermanus Stockholm." Later land transfers and maps (discussed below) indicate that the southern portion of the project site in included within this tract, with the northern portion lying within the boundaries of the Vandervoort farm. The land conveyed in this deed apparently constitutes the northern portion of the land east of Bushwick Avenue owned by Hermanus Stockholm in 1792 (see Appendix A).

The reference in the 1816 deed to a "messuage" indicates that a house and associated outbuildings were located on the property transferred by the deed. However, as discussed subsequently, research does not indicate that this house was located on or near the project site.

The deed research did not indicate the ownership history of the Vandervoort tract prior to 1816. However, the 1792 road opening record cited above (see also Appendix A) suggests that the Vandervoort tract would have been included within the tracts then owned by Jonaton Williams and/or Jacobus Debevoise.

## 1. Farmhouse Locations

The location of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century farmhouses in the general vicinity of the project site are indicated by maps dating to the 1840's and 1850's and by reference to various secondary sources.

The 1844 U.S. Coastal Survey map (see Figure 6) indicates that the area still maintained its rural character at this time.

The 1852 Connor Map (Figures 7a and 7b) shows the names of property owners as well as the location and structures. It should be noted that some of the street names as shown on this map are confusing. According to Armbruster (1942), the Old Bushwick Road was straightened in 1852. At this time this road was renamed Evergreen Avenue, and it is so shown on the 1852 map. This road followed the route of the Old Bushwick Road to the point where it originally turned to the east. From this point the new road continued straight to the Cemetery of the Evergreens. This corresponds with the present route of Bushwick Avenue. The road shown on the map as the New Bushwick Road follows the route of the present Evergreen Avenue. This was a new road north of the point where the Old Bushwick Road had turned to the east and south of this point the new road followed the route of the Old Bushwick Road. Thus the names of the two roads as shown on the 1852 map are reversed from their present names. The road labelled as the New Bushwick Road is the present Evergreen Avenue and the road shown as Evergreen Avenue on the map is the present Bushwick Avenue. According to Armbruster (1942), after a short time the names were reversed to correspond with the present nomenclature. The modern names will be used in the following discussion. The street shown on the map west of Bushwick Avenue was then known as Division Avenue and is now Broadway. None of the cross streets had been extended east of Broadway in 1852.

The 1844 map (Figure 6) shows two houses adjoining the east side of the Bushwick Road between the crossroads and the point at which it turns to the east. The northernmost of the two apparently represents the house mentioned in the 1816 deed, which was present on the tract owned by Hermanus Stockholm in the 18th century. This tract became part of the Suydam farm as a result of the 1816 conveyance from Peter Stockholm to Hendrick Suydam. The 1852 map (Figures 7a and 7b) shows the boundary between the Vandervoort and Suydam tracts (which passed through the project site). The house and an associated outbuilding are shown on the east side of Bushwick Avenue and south of this property line. The location of this house as shown on these maps is consistent with that of a structure shown on an 1857 map (Nostrand 1857) examined at the Brooklyn Historical Society. The latter map, which also indicates the street grid, shows the structure on the south side of Myrtle Street (now Willoughby Avenue) at the southwest corner of its intersection with Myrtle Avenue. The structure as shown on this map is not oriented to the street grid, suggesting its earlier origin. It represent the same structure shown in a slightly different position with regard to the street intersection on maps dating to 1868 (Figure 12), and 1869 (Figure 13a). This house and outbuilding would have been located approximately 1300 feet west of the project site. If the 1781 Taylor and Skinner map (Figure 5), which does not show the structure, is accurate it would have been constructed between

this date and 1816.

The southernmost of the two houses shown on the east side of the Bushwick Road on the 1844 map represents the farmhouse of Andries Stockholm. Armbruster (1942:124) places the location of the this house east of Bushwick Avenue between Dekalb Avenue and Koskiosko Street approximately 1650 feet southwest of the project site. The 1852 map shows the house and outbuildings at this location. This map also shows another outbuilding on the Stockholm farm east of Evergreen Avenue. The location shown on the map would place it near the present Central Avenue but well south of the project site.

The 1844 map (Figure 6) shows a house on the west side of Bushwick Avenue, immediately southwest of the structure identified above as being located on the Peter Stockholm/Hendrick Suydam property. The 1852 map also shows a house in this approximate location. This was apparently the house of Jacobus Debevoise which Armbruster (1942:124) places at the junction of Bushwick Avenue, Myrtle Avenue and Ditmas Street. This location places it west of Bushwick Avenue within a tract shown as owned by Debevoise on a map dating to 1855 (Figure 8). The 1792 road opening description cited above suggests that that Jacobus Debevoise's land extended east of the road at that time north of the Hermanus Stockholm tract.

Although the tract including the project area was owned by Hendrick Suydam after 1816, the 18th century Jacob Suydam farm was located further to the south as indicated by the 1792 sequence of property owners (see Appendix A). The Jacob Suydam house, which may have been constructed as early as 1700, was located on the corner of Evergreen Avenue and Woodbine Street and was demolished ca. 1900 (Armbruster 1942). The location places it ca. 4200 feet southeast of the project site. This house is apparently shown on the 1844 map as the first structure east of the Old Bushwick Road south of its turn to the east.

The northern portion of the project site was within the boundaries of the Vandervoort farm (see below). The 1856 Brooklyn Eastern District directory lists the house of Abraham Vandervoort, farmer, at Flushing Avenue near Bushwick Avenue. According to Armbruster (1942:158), the Vandervoort house stood on the southwest corner of Flushing Avenue and Vandervoort Place. This would place it between the present Wilson and Knickerbocker Avenues, some 1800 feet north of the project site. The name Vandervoort appears on the 1852 map at approximately this location but no house is shown south of Flushing Avenue either on this map or on the 1844 map.

The 1844 map (Figure 6) shows a structure south of Flushing Avenue and east of Bushwick Road and set back from the roadways. The location shown would place it ca. 750 feet east of Bushwick Avenue and ca. 1100 feet south of Flushing Avenue. This would place it in the vicinity of the present Melrose Street, between Central and Evergreen Avenues, 2-3 blocks (ca. 800-1000 feet) northwest of the project site. An 1855 map, which does not show structures, indicates that this location would place the house near the southeast corner of the tract shown as owned by George White. The 1856 Eastern District Directory indicates that the house of George White, farmer, was located at Flushing Avenue near Bushwick Avenue. Neither the earlier Taylor and Skinner map (Figure 5) nor the subsequent 1852 Connor map (Figures 7a and 7b) show a structure at this location. However, it may be represented on the latter map by a building shown north of and aligned with Evergreen Avenue within the newly laid out street grid west of the property labeled "White" on this map.

#### D. Mid-Nineteenth Century Subdivision

A comparison of the 1844 and 1852 maps shows that during this period, there had already been an increase in settlement south of the Bushwick Crossroads. In 1855, the Town of Bushwick was consolidated into the City of Brooklyn (Dikeman 1870), and the development of the area accelerated. The area between Bushwick Avenue and the Queens County line and extending from Newtown Creek to the Cemetery of the Evergreens, an area roughly corresponding to the former Bushwick New Lots, became the 18th ward of Brooklyn (Armbruster 1942:37 - later in the 19th century the project site fell within the newly established 27th ward).

Over the next 20 years the area's farms were subdivided and lots sold. According to Armbruster (1942:37) many Germans settled here in the five years following the Civil War. A number of them formed a building society known as the New York Building and Survey Association and some of the members acquired lots along Central Avenue.

On December 26, 1851 Hendrick Suydam conveyed to Isaac Debevoise Suydam and Thomas Thompkins of Newtown (Kings County Deeds, Liber 266:330) the same 40 acre tract formerly acquired by Hendrick Suydam from Peter Stockholm in 1816. The easternmost part of the tract was transferred by Thompkins and Isaac Suydam back to Hendrick Suydam on August 26, 1854 (Liber 373:182).

Between 1853 and 1855, William Coit apparently acquired a large portion of the Suydam tract. Two maps filed those years (Figures 9 and 10) show the division of the Suydam/Coit property into lots. We were unable, however, to locate the deeds by which property was acquired by Coit.

The southern portion of the project site is shown on filed map #104 (Figure 10) which shows the easternmost portion of the Coit acquisition. However, William Coit apparently did not purchase all of the lots shown on the maps. On May 15, 1855 Hendrick Suydam and his wife Margaret conveyed (Liber 424:280) to James H. Stebbins five lots shown on the Coit maps, including lots 261 and 262, located on the northwest corner of Central Avenue and Myrtle Street as shown on Figure 10. Myrtle Street was the former name given to the portion of the present Willoughby Avenue lying east of Broadway. The land conveyed (lots 261 and 262) is described in the deed and shown on the map (Figure 9) as extending west 97.98 feet from the northwest corner of Central Avenue and Myrtle Street to land heretofore conveyed to William Coit, hence north 28 feet to land of Abraham Vandervoort (note that this is inconsistent with the dimensions shown on the map), along Vandervoort's land 84 feet to the west side of Central Avenue, and west along Central Avenue 28.58 feet to the place of beginning. The boundaries of Coit/Suydam lots 261 and 262 do not correspond to those of the present lots, but include the major portion of the land constituting project site lots 41 and 42.

Map #127 (Figure 11), which shows the Coit/Suydam lots west of the project site includes a grading plan for Myrtle Street (later Willoughby Avenue). The plan indicates that ca. three feet of fill were to be deposited near the corner of Central Avenue. Observation of a small back yard area at the rear of the building standing at #1025 Willoughby Avenue, west of lots 41 and 42 (see Figure 21) indicates that its surface is several feet below the present street grade. This suggests that the grading plan was carried out, raising the surface of the street several feet above the adjacent land at this location.

The filed maps do not show structures. However, a later version of map #127, dated 1857 (Nostrand 1857), in the collection of the Brooklyn Historical Society does show structures on the north side of Myrtle Street on the lots west of Evergreen Avenue. However, no structures are shown east of Evergreen Avenue.

A Dripps map dated 1869 (Figure 13a and 13b) shows that by this time seven structures had been constructed between Evergreen and Central Avenues on the lots west of the project site fronting on Myrtle Street (Willoughby Avenue). However, no structures had been constructed on the remainder of the block, including the project site.

The Vandervoort farm remained undivided until 1870. In the latter year the farm was sold by court order. The deed, referenced below, indicates that the land was sold due to an action between Abraham Vandervoort and other plaintiffs, possibly other family members, and Abraham Vandervoort Jr. Kings County filed map #836 dated May 25,1870 shows the farm divided into lots (see Figures 11a and 11b). Madison Street as shown on the map was later renamed Troutman Street.

By deed dated July 5, 1870, (Liber 959:381), the court-appointed referee conveyed a number of lots shown on the Vandervoort subdivision map to Samuel M. Meeker, including lots 445 through 449 as shown on the map. Lot 445, together with the two Suydam lots 261 and 262, discussed above, constitutes the land which comprises the present lots 41 and 42. The lot shown as 448 on the Vandervoort property map corresponds to the present lot 40.

Tax records for the years beginning 1867 were examined at the New York City Municipal Archives. For 1867 through 1870 J.H. Stebbins

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was shown as the owner of lots numbered 26 and 27 (see Appendix B). These correspond with lots 261 and 262 as shown on the earlier subdivision map (Figure 10). Lot 26 has the notation "no house on this lot". This notation is not repeated for lot 27. In the column reserved for house size in the records, the notation for lot 27 appears to read "gone", which implies that there was formerly a structure on the lot. However, it is more likely that this is in error, since the narrow width of this lot (see Figure 10 - lot 262) makes it unlikely that a house would have been constructed here.

There is no other evidence that a structure existed on the project site in the years prior to 1867. Town records for the Town of Bushwick include tax assessments for the year 1853. Lots included on the Coit filed map #127 are included in these records (no structures are indicated on any of these lots). However, the lots (including the project site) shown on map #104 were not included in these tax records. There are no surviving tax records for the years 1855, when Bushwick was incorporated into Brooklyn, through 1866, either at the Municipal Archives or the Brooklyn Historical Society. We reviewed the Brooklyn directories for the years 1858 through 1867 to determine whether James H. Stebbins could have had a house on the property. Stebbins is listed in the directories for those years as having a house as 12 Carroll Place in Brooklyn. His office was at 22 William Street in Manhattan. For most years his occupation is given as "broker", but he is listed as a "banker" in 1859 and 1867. In addition to the above occupations and addresses, the 1867 directory lists him as a "treasurer" at 45 Atlantic Avenue, Brooklyn (the 1863 directory also lists him as "treasurer, P.O. bldg., Montague near Court." It should be noted that Stebbins is not listed in the 1866 Brooklyn directory. However, he is listed at the Carroll Place and William Street addresses in the Trow's New York City Directory for that year. The directories provide no indication that Stebbins had a occupied the Central Avenue property for either residential or business purposes.

The tax records for the years 1867 through 1870 are consistent with the deeds in showing A. Vandervoort in possession of lot 28 on block 530 (the present block 3184, lot 40). The tax records for block 530 for the years 1873-1876 could not be located on the Municipal Archives' microfilm reels. However, the records for 1877-1881 continue to show the project site lots as being unoccupied. The 1880 Bromley Atlas (Figures 14a and 14b) also shows no structures on the project site lots.

## E. Eighteen-Eighties - Project Site Construction and Occupation

On November 8, 1880 James H. Stebbins and his wife Frances conveyed to Peter Grim of the City of Brooklyn Coit/Suydam lots 261 and 262 (Liber 1405:493), which had previously been conveyed to Stebbins by Hendrick Suydam (see above). This deed corrects the dimensions of the western boundary of the property to make it consistent with the map (38.95 rather than than 28 feet). In the following year, on May 7, 1881, Peter Grim acquired Vandervoort lot 449 from Samuel M. Meeker and his wife, Jane Elizabeth (Liber 1407:402). This is the lot which had been previously acquired by Meeker as part of the liquidation of the Vandervoort farm. The dimensions of the property as given in the deed are the same as shown for lot 449 on the 1870 property map (Figure 11b). Thus, by May 1881, Peter Grim was in possession of all of the land (e.g. Suydam lots 261 and 262 and Vandervoort lot 449) which constitutes the present lots 41 and 42.

The tax records (see Appendix B) indicate that in 1882 Peter Grim constructed two three-story buildings on lots 26 and 27A, corresponding to the present lots 42 (#148 Central Avenue) and 41 (#146 Central Avenue). The Brooklyn directories for 1880/81 and 1881/2 list Peter Grimm as a butcher at 141 Central Avenue. Thus, before purchasing lots 41 and 42 on block 3184, Grim was located on the east side of Central Avenue, between Willoughby Avenue and Suydam Street, approximately 1/2 block south of the project site.

The 1882/83 and subsequent directories list Peter Grimm, butcher, at 148 Central Avenue. (The directory for 1886/1887 lists Peter Grimm, butcher, at 146 Central Avenue, but this is probably an error since he is listed at 148 Central Avenue in the directories for all the other years examined). Grimm apparently moved his home and business to this address after erecting the two structures (see below). It is likely that after construction, he began renting the building at 146 Central Avenue. The 1888 Sanborn map indicates that there was a store, apparently Grimm's butcher shop, on the first floor of 148 Central Avenue, while 146 Central Avenue was a purely residential structure.

After the 1881 sale of lot 449 to Peter Grim, Samuel Meeker still retained Vandervoort lot 448 (the present lot 40). On October 30, 1884, Meeker and his wife Jane Elizabeth conveyed this lot to Leopold Michel and William Bayer of Brooklyn (Liber 1584:348). The lot dimensions given in this deed are the same as shown on the Vandervoort subdivision map (Figure 11b). The tax records (see Appendix B) indicate that a three-story building was constructed on this lot in 1885. It doubtful whether Michel ever lived in this building. The directories for 1885 and 1886 list him at 112 Ewen Street and give his occupation as "jewler". In 1887 and 1888 his address is given as 128 Meserole avenue and in the latter year his occupation is listed as "real estate". These data suggest that Michel purchased the Central Avenue property and built a house on the property for speculative purposes. On December 20, 1886, Leopold Michel sold lot 40 to Rachel Baszynski (Liber 1707:322). It appears that Baszynski also never resided on this lot (#144 Central Avenue). Her name does not appear in the Brooklyn directories for 1889 or 1890, during which time she continued to own the property.

The 1886 Robinson and Pidgeon atlas (Figure 15) the 1888 Sanborn map (Figure 16) and the 1893 Bromley atlas (Figure 17) show frame structures on all three of the lots. A later atlas (E. Belcher Hyde 1904), describes these frame buildings as having brick or stone foundations. These maps and the tax records indicate that the buildings extended 50 feet from Central Avenue with open backyards to the rear. The maps show a two story outbuilding at the rear of lot 42, and the tax records for 1888-1892 describe Peter Grimm's property on lots 26 and 27a (the present lots 41 and 42), as including two three-story buildings and a stable. The 1888 Sanborn map also shows a small one-story outbuilding at the rear of lot 41.

#### 1. <u>Utilities</u>

An 1875 Board of Health Map (Adams 1875) in the collection of the Brooklyn Historical Society shows 12 inch sewers on both Myrtle Street (Willoughby Avenue) and Central Avenue. However, this map may actually represent a plan rather than sewers already installed. Records of the Brooklyn Sewer Department indicate that a sewer was installed in Willoughby Avenue between Central and Evergreen Avenues in 1876. However, these records indicate that the sewer in Central Avenue between Starr and Willoughby Avenues was not installed until January 4, 1886.

The Brooklyn Sewer Department Register of Permits indicates that a connection was made from the sewer in Willoughby Street to the house on lot 42 (148 Central Avenue) on October 8, 1881. The owner's name, which is unclear in the ledger book, appears to be listed as Peter "Gannon" or "Gernnon", apparently a misspelling of Peter Grimm, the owner of the lot. The building was apparently constructed between the dates of the 1881 and 1882 tax assessments, and the data suggest that a sewer connection was made to this building at the time of construction.

The date of the sewer connections to 144 and 146 Central Avenue could not be determined, since the Sewer Department's permit records are incomplete and the relevant pages for these properties are unfortunately missing from the ledger books. It is likely, however, that since Peter Grimm owned the buildings at both 146 and 148 Central Avenue, the former building would have been connected to the Myrtle Street sewer through the latter structure.

The 1886 Robinson and Pidgeon map (Figure 15) indicates that by that year water lines had been installed on both Central Avenue and Myrtle Street.

## F. Eighteen-Nineties and Twentieth Century

The tax records indicate that Peter Grim continued to own the buildings on lots 41 and 42 until 1893. May 29, 1893 Grimm sold both lots to Jacob P. Zimmer (Liber 2182:284). The tax records indicate that Zimmer continued to own these properties through the 1890's. The 1893 directory, which continues to list Grimm at 148 Central Avenue, also lists Jacob P. Zimmer, butcher, at 57 Ewen St. The directory for the following year, 1894, has two listings for Peter Grimm: Peter Grimm, butcher, at 148 Central Avenue, and Peter Grimm, meats, at 9 Floyd St. Grimm may have opened a new butcher shop at this time, possibly maintaining his residence at 148 Central Avenue. This same directory has a listing for Jacob P. Zimmer, market, at his previous address at 57 Ewen Street and a separate listing for Jacob P. Zimmer, butcher at 812 Marcy Avenue. By 1900, however, Zimmer had moved his business to the 148 Central Avenue address. The Brooklyn directory for 1899/1900 indicates that Jacob Zimmer ran a butcher shop at 148 Central Avenue, but that his home was at 133 Montrose Avenue.

On February 25 1891, Rachel Baszynski sold the lot 40 building and land to Bertha Koester (Liber 2029:390) and on September 4 of the same year Bertha Koester sold the property to Frederick Davis. The tax records indicate that Davis continued to own this property through at least the end of the decade. However, the directories indicate that Frederick Davis never resided nor ran a business on this property. While there are a number of persons with this name listed in the Brooklyn directories for 1893 -1896, none were listed at 148 or 146 Central Avenue.

The 1900 census confirms that at this time the three story buildings on all three of the lots served as multiple-occupancy "tenements". Five households of from one - four persons were resident at 148 Central Avenue. Presumably these persons lived on the upper two floors of the building, with Jacob Zimmer's butcher shop on the first floor. One of the family heads was Joseph T. Zimmer, possibly a relative of the building's owner. The building at 144 Central Avenue housed four two and three family households. Although the 1904 Belcher Hyde Atlas shows a first floor store only at 148 Central Avenue, the 1907 Sanborn map (Figure 18) indicates that 146 Central Avenue also had a store on the first floor. 144 Central Avenue continues to be indicated only as a dwelling on this map. The 1900 census shows eight households at the latter address, reflecting the use of all three floors for residential purposes. Four of these were single person households with the others including 2-8 persons.

In 1900 nearly all of the residents in these three buildings were either German immigrants or the children of German immigrants. Two of the residents were French and one Irish. Thus the earlier German ethnic affiliation of this neighborhood, as noted by Armbruster (1942) continued through the turn-of-the-century period. Occupations listed in the census records include tailor, brass worker, house worker, provision dealer, mason, drug clerk, laborer, plumber's helper, cooper, and shoe maker.

The 1910 census indicates that the three buildings continued to function as multiple occupancy tenements, but that there had been a shift in the ethnic composition of the population. Four families resided at 148 Central Avenue, with households of 5-9 persons. Residents at this address include George D. Fisch, an Austrian-Jewish immigrant. The census records indicate that Fisch owned the building at this time, and he is listed as operating a hardware store. However, Fisch is not listed in the Brooklyn directories for 1910 or 1912. Eight families resided at 146 Central Avenue, with households of 2-6 persons. The building at 144 Central Avenue also housed eight families, with households of 2-8 persons.

In 1910, most of the residents of the three buildings were either Italian immigrants or children of Italian immigrants. With the exception of the family of George Fisch, the only persons who did not have an Italian ethnic background were the members of a single Russian-Jewish family at 146 Central Avenue. Occupations listed in the 1910 census for the buildings' occupants include porter, finisher, barber, laborer, carpenter, shoe maker, brick layer, peddler, bartender, house keeper and stone mason.

Sanborn maps dating from 1907 (Figure 18), 1933 (Figure 19), and 1951 (Figure 20) show almost no change in the structural and lot configurations from the original layout as shown on the 1888 map. The original frame buildings on all three lots and the stable on lot 42, which were erected in the 1880's (see above), remained standing through 1951 with the open backyard areas remaining at the rear of the buildings. The stable was described as a "shed" after 1907.

A one-story shed was attached to the east side of the stable on lot 42 between 1888 and 1907 and removed between 1907 and 1933. The one-story outbuilding at the rear of lot 41 was enlarged slightly to the east between 1888 and 1907, but the entire outbuilding was removed between 1907 and 1933.

The Sanborn maps indicate that a store was located on the first floor of 148 Central Avenue throughout its period of occupancy. As noted previously this was a butcher shop from the early 1880's into the first decade of the 20th century, and may have served as a hardware store ca. 1910. The maps indicate that by 1907 there were two stores on the first floor of 146 Central Avenue. Between 1907 and 1933, a portion of the first floor of 144 Central Avenue was apparently also converted for commercial purposes. All buildings on the three lots were demolished after 1951 and the lots are shown as vacant on the 1991 Sanborn map (Figure 21).

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## A. Analysis of Archaeological Sensitivity

The potential archaeological sensitivity of the project site could derive from the presence of remains associated with three broad periods of human occupation. The first is the period of prehistoric and contact period aboriginal occupation of the land which now constitutes the northern portion of the Borough of Brooklyn. The second constitutes the early portion of the historic period of European-American occupation, lasting from the early 17th through the latter portion of the 19th century. During this period the area maintained a rural character with woodlands and scattered farmsteads. The third period began in the latter portion of the 19th century. During this period the large farms were subdivided and lots sold to individuals for their own use, to provide rental income, or for purposes of real estate investment.

## 1. Prehistoric Period

There are no reported prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the project site nor do the ethnohistoric sources mention Indian villages in the area. Assessment of the pre-development topography and physiography of the area also indicates that it is not particularly sensitive for the presence of prehistoric sites. Such sites are usually found at locations which are in reasonable proximity to water sources. Examination of historic period maps indicates that there were no such sources near the site and the absence of water courses in the interior of Brooklyn has been noted in the documentary sources. Areas of higher ground adjacent to the heads of tidal creeks and adjacent marshes which would have provided resources attractive to prehistoric peoples were located a minimum of ca. 3000 feet from the project site.

## 2. Early Historic Period

Archaeological remains associated with the farms which existed in the area prior to the latter portion of the 19th century would be found primarily in the vicinity of the farmhouses and associated outbuildings. Review of 18th and early-mid 19th century maps and other documentary sources do not indicate that any of the farm houses or outbuildings were located in the immediate vicinity of the project site. The closest were a house and at least one outbuilding located some 1300 feet west of the site, near Bushwick Avenue, on property originally part of the Hermanus Stockholm farm which was incorporated into the Suydam farm in 1816. Another building, shown on an 1844 map located some 800-1000 feet northwest of the site may have been located on the White farm, which adjoined Flushing Avenue and was separated from the site by a portion of the Vandervoort farm. Scattered artifacts associated with the occupation of these structures may have been scattered throughout the plow zone in this area, but it is unlikely that there would have been any substantial concentration of artifacts at the location of the project site.

## 3. Period of Development

The first structures built on the project site after subdivision of the land which can be securely documented were erected during the 1880's. Two three-story frame houses were erected on lots 41 and 42 in the latter portion of 1881 and/or the early portion of 1882. A stable was also present at the rear of lot 42 by 1886 and this may have been constructed at the same time as the threestory structures. At this time the building on lot 42 apparently served both as a residence and also contained a butcher shop on the first floor. The structure on lot 41 was apparently solely residential. A three-story frame residential structure was also constructed on lot 40 in 1885. The structures on lots 40 and 41 were apparently not owner-occupied.

By 1900 all three buildings served as multiple-occupancy residences. Those on lots 40 and 41 may have served as multiple occupancy dwellings from the time of their construction. Since the structure on lot 42 was initially owner-occupied (as well as containing his place of business), it may not have initially housed more than the one family.

Any substantial archaeological deposits on urban sites of this period are most frequently found within "features" such as cisterns, privies and wells. Such features were constructed in association with buildings built prior to the availability of water and sewer lines. It has been possible to firmly document the connection of the structure built on lot 42 to the public sewer system at the approximate time of construction in 1881/1882. It can be inferred that the public water supply was available at the same time and, in addition, that the building on lot 41, constructed at the same time and by the same owner, would have been connected to the utilities on Myrtle Street (Willoughby Avenue) through the adjacent structure. The structure on lot 40 was built in 1885. The availability of water and sewer lines on Central Avenue has been securely documented to 1886, and it can be assumed that these were available by the time the building on lot 40 was completed and available for occupancy. The data suggest that it is unlikely that features would have been constructed in association with the ca. 1880's buildings erected on the project site.

## 4. Preservation of Stratigraphy

The data indicate that the back yard areas of the ca. 1880's structures built on lots 40, 41 and 42 remained open until demolition of these buildings. Unless affected by the demolition process, the back yard ground surfaces could remain substantially

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intact beneath the present rubble surface.

It is also possible that the "plow zone" which probably constituted the ground surface prior to the 1880's building construction on the site was not removed as a result of this construction, and it could underlie subsequent back yard surfaces.

## B. Summary and Conclusions

Although it is possible that previous ground surfaces located within the "backyard" portions of the project site may have been preserved, the sensitivity of the site for the presence of significant archaeological deposits is low. The reconstruction of the physiography and topography of the area do not suggest that it would have been a particularly likely locus of prehistoric occupation. In addition, the project site was not in the vicinity of any of the documented farm houses or outbuildings which were present in the area prior to the mid-late nineteenth century subdivision of the land. Any intact plow zone which may be preserved would be expected, therefore, to contain at most scattered artifacts from either the prehistoric or early historic occupation of this portion of Brooklyn which may have been distributed over farm fields during the course of plowing.

Foundations associated with the 1880's structures built on the project site probably remain intact. However, the availability of the public water supply and sewers at the time of construction or shortly thereafter has been documented. Therefore, it is unlikely that archaeological features such as cisterns, privies or wells, which are the most frequent locations of artifact deposits on sites of this period, would have been constructed when these structures were built.

#### C. Recommendations

The absence of later construction in the "backyard" portions of the project site indicates the possibility that any archaeological deposits in these areas would remain relatively undisturbed. However, the above analysis suggests that there is a low probability that significant archaeological deposits would have ever been present on the site. Therefore, it is unlikely that commitment of resources to field testing would result in the acquisition of significant information pertaining to the history or prehistory of the area, and such testing is not recommended.



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Figure 3a Portion of Map Showing Indian Trails in the Borough of Brooklyn Source: Bolton (1922: Map VIIIB)



Figure 3b Portion of Map Showing Indian Trails in the Borough of Brooklyn Detail Showing Course of Old Bushwick Road Source: Bolton (1922: Map VIIIB)



Figure 4 Location of Original Tidal Streams and Marshes Source: Brooklyn Board of Health (1875-6)



Figure 5 Source: Taylor and Skinner (1781) Scale of Original: 1" = 1 Mile



Figure 6 Source: U.S. Coastal Survey (1844-45) Scale: 1:30000



Figure 7a Source: Connor (1852) Scale of Original: 1" = 1650'



Figure 7b Source: Connor (1852) - Detail Scale of Original: 1" = 1650'



Figure 8 Source: Colton (1855) Scale: 1" = 400'


Figure 9 Portion of Kings County Filed Map #127 (Bartlett 1853) Showing Lots Immediately East of Project Site and Myrtle Street Grading Plan

91.61 97,98 2.5

Figure 10

Portion of Kings County Filed Map #104 (Britton 1853) Showing Project Site Lots on Corner of Myrtle Street (Willoughby Ave.) and Central Avenue (Immediately east of tract shown on Figure 9)



Figure 11a Portion of Kings County Filed Map #836 (Bartlett 1870)

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Figure 11b Portion of Kings County Filed Map #836 (Bartlett 1870) Detail Showing Project Site Lots 448 and 449





Figure 13a Portion of 1869 Dripps Map



Figure 13b Portion of 1869 Dripps Map Detail Including Project Site at Northwest Corner Central Avenue and Myrtle Street



Figure 14a Portion of 1880 Bromley Atlas Including Block 1061 (Present Block 3184) Scale of Original: 1" = 300'



Figure 14b Portion of 1880 Bromley Atlas - Detail Showing Project Site (Lots 26 and 28 on Block 1061)



Figure 15 Source: Robinson and Pidgeon (1886:17) Intersection of Central and Willoughby Avenues at Lower Right Project Site Includes Lots 26, 27a, and 28 Scale of Original: 1" = 200'





Figure 17 Portion of 1893 Atlas (Bromley 1893) Intersection of Central and Willoughby Avenues at Lower Right Project Site Includes Lots 26, 27a, and 28









1991 Sanborn Map (Vol 9:10)

APPENDIX A PROPERTY OWNERS ALONG THE BUSHWICK ROAD IN 1792 AS INDICATED IN THE ROAD OPENING RECORD

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APPENDIX B PROJECT SITE TAX ASSESSMENT RECORDS 1867-1870 and 1881-1885

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