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SUPPLEMENTAL INVESTIGATIONS (TASKS 16A-16E) FOR
PROPOSED REZONING OF CERTAIN MIDBLOCKS IN THE
YORKVILLE SECTION OF MANHATTAN

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549

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Task 16A: Department of Buildings and Bureau of Sewers Investigation	1
Task 16B: Site Visits	-
Task 16C: Soil Boring Data	5
Task 16D: General History Research	7
Task 16E: Buried Tanks Investigation	-

Task 16A DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS AND DEP/BUREAU OF SEWERS INVESTIGATION

The purpose for this task was to obtain information on those lots within the proposed rezoning area that had no information on basement depths or other subsurface disturbances and were therefore assigned a medium potential for archaeological significance in the PDEIS. These include Block 1570, lots 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11, and Block 1571, lots 35, 41 and 47 (see Figure 1). The backyard areas of Block 1570, lots 7 through 11 (approximately 2,250 square feet) were assigned a high potential to contain archaeological resources. Disturbances of soil on these lots, usually determined through the existence of basement depths equal to or greater than 3 feet, would preclude that any potential historic or prehistoric archaeological materials would still exist undisturbed. The existence of sewer and water lines in the area prior to or at the time of construction of residential structures would preclude the existence of artifact bearing cisterns, wells and privies.

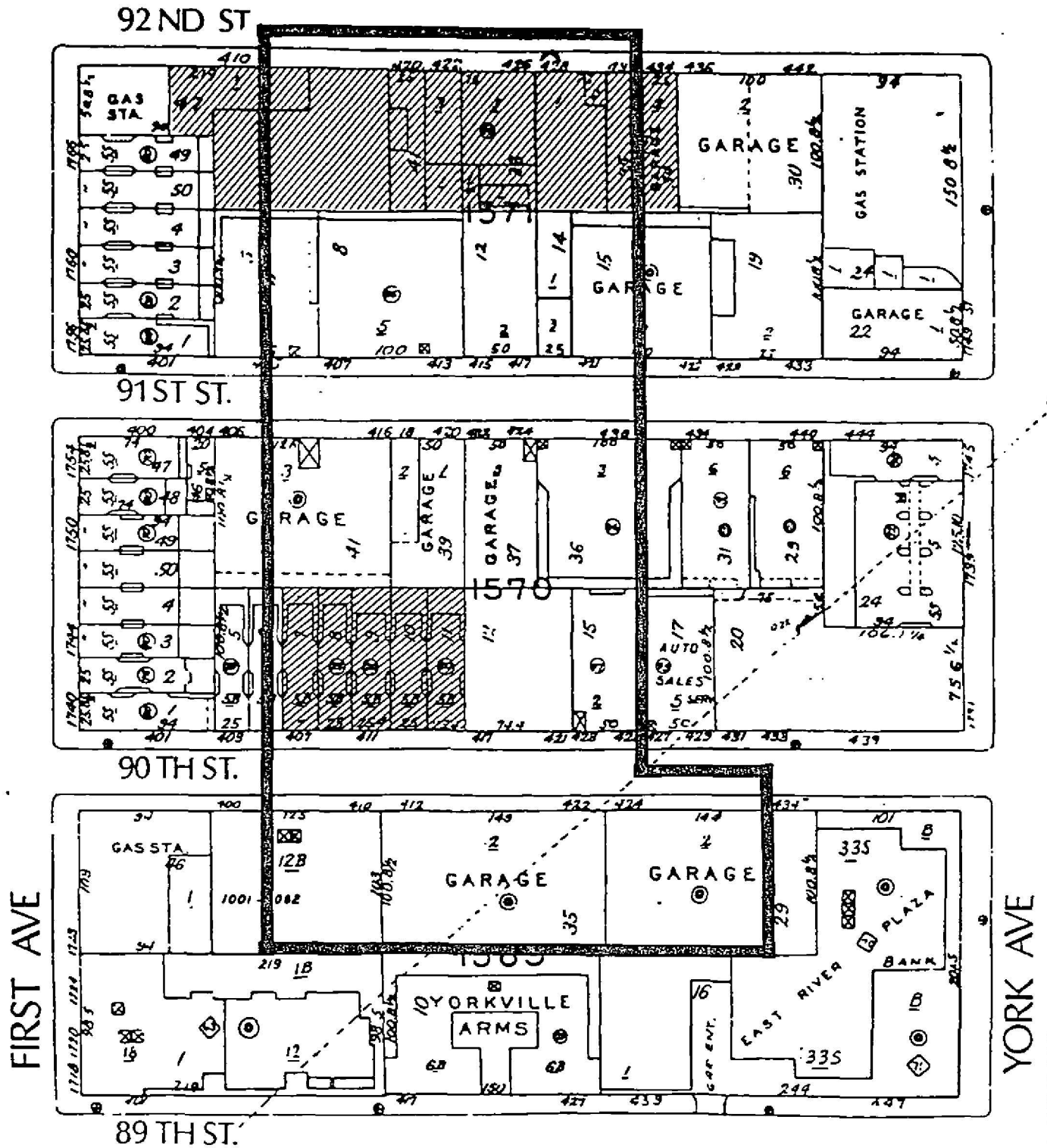
The following section presents the information obtained during investigations at the Department of Buildings, DEP Bureau of Sewers, as well as information obtained at the DEP Bureau of Water Supply.

Block and Lot Investigation

BLOCK 1570

Lot 7, 407 E. 90th Street, and Lot 8, 409 E. 90th Street, contain two five-story residential tenements. Based on the first NB (New Building) numbers (552-98), these two structures were constructed together in 1898. Information on lot 7 indicated that the building does contain a basement, although the depth could not be determined. No substantive information was found on Lot 8. However, due to the identical exterior design and NB #'s, it is probable that structures of Lots 7 and 8 contain the same plan, and therefore the structure on Lot 8 would also contain a basement.

Lots 9 through 11, containing three residential tenements, are also identical in design, although differ from those on Lots 7 and 8. The only infor-



LEGEND



-  REZONING AREA
-  STUDY LOTS

FIGURE 1
REZONING AREA
AND STUDY LOTS

mation available on Lot 9, 411 E. 90th Street, was its NB # - 1732-99. Information on Lot 11, 415 E. 90th Street, revealed that there is a dwelling unit in the cellar. Other information and NB number was not available. Based on building plans for Lot 10, identical NB #'s for Lots 9 and 10, and ownership records for 1899 (See Task 16C), it is likely that each of the structures on Lots 9 through 11 contain a cellar and/or subcellar.

BLOCK 1571

Lot 35, 428-32 E. 92nd Street, contains a garage used by the Farrel Limousine Service. Building plans indicated that the building boiler is located below street level in a cellar that is more than 3 feet deep. In addition, the lot contains a 4,000 gallon gas tank which was installed in 1983.

Lot 41, 420 E. 92nd Street, contains a garage for the Lubritorium gas station and car wash. Plans indicate a cellar of 9'6". Lot 47, 400-418 E. 92nd Street, is part of the same car wash. Building plans indicate the existence of two 550-gallon gasoline storage tanks buried to a depth of 6'7.5". These tanks were installed in 1985.

Sewer Lines

Information on the date of installation of sewer lines into the proposed rezoning area was obtained from DEP Bureau of Sewers. Generally, sewer lines were installed into the project area between 1870 and the early 1900's, the period in which most development occurred within the three blocks. On 90th Street between York and First Avenues, the block containing the five residential structures (Block 1570, Lots 7-11), sewer lines were laid in 1891. Department of Building records indicate that the residential structures were constructed in 1898 and 1899.

On 89th Street, sewer lines were laid in 1871, on 91st Street, in 1887, on 92nd Street in 1903, and on York Avenue in 1875.

Water Lines

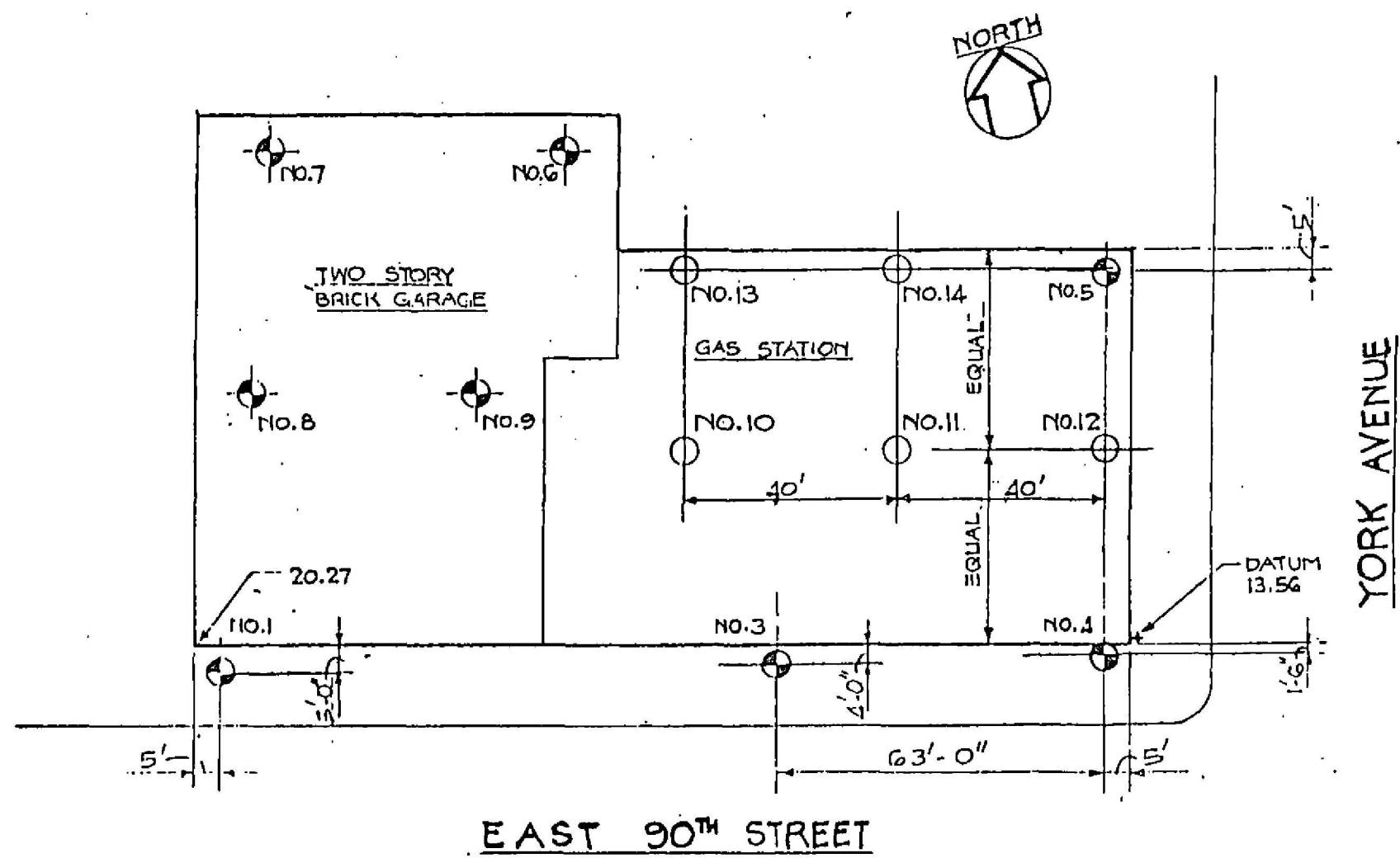
A map of water lines in the proposed rezoning area was recently obtained at the Bureau of Water Supply that indicates that water mains in the vicinity of the rezoning area were laid prior to 1870:

Task 16C: REVIEW OF SOIL TEST BORING DATA

A series of soil test borings from the corner of York Avenue and 90th Street (See Figure 2) was examined as part of the cultural resource evaluation of lots within Blocks 1571 and 1570. This was done to determine the potential for prehistoric sites within the Yorkville study area. Key elements to be identified from the borings were the presence of natural organic deposits and other natural soil surfaces, in addition to buried wetland soils. If such soils and surfaces were extant in this adjacent block, then the potential for prehistoric sites within Blocks 1571 and 1570 would be moderate to high.

Review of the soil borings demonstrated that there were no extant buried natural, organic deposits or natural soil surfaces, nor wetland soils within the adjacent block. The absence of these soils is apparently the result of late nineteenth and twentieth century land altering activities that would have destroyed such soils if they were present. Given these parameters, the evaluation of prehistoric site potential within the adjacent Blocks 1571 and 1570 cannot be determined from these borings. The evaluation of these two blocks must therefore rely on available historic maps and data on the extent of late nineteenth and twentieth century construction activities.

Although the soil boring analysis is not conclusive regarding site history, it is indicative of the extent of general sub-surface disturbances that occurred in the area.



NOTE:



FIGURE 2
LOCATION OF SOIL BORINGS

Task 16D: GENERAL HISTORY RESEARCH

Additional information on the date of construction of some structures was obtained from the Office of the Register.

In 1912, a court judgment assigned Lot 7 to Ferdinand Cech and Lot 8 to John Nemecek. Department of Buildings records indicate that the residential structures that currently exist on the two lots were constructed in 1898.

Lots 9 through 11 were in the possession of Julia Rhinelanders until 1899, when her trustees sold these lots to J. Herb and W. Seitz. Department of Buildings records indicate that the residential structures that currently exist on Lots 9-10, and probably Lot 11, were constructed in 1899.

In 1900 Lot 9 was sold to George Gerold, Lot 10 to Linus Molz, and Lot 11 to Emma Hassinger.

Summary

Tasks 16A, 16C and 16D were conducted to obtain additional information on rezoning area lots that lacked documentation on basement depth and time of hookups to water and sewer systems and therefore were assigned within the PDEIS a medium potential for archaeological resources. This effort involved research at the Department of Buildings and the Office of the Register, review of soil test borings from lots adjacent to the rezoning area, and review of Bureau of Water Supply and Bureau of Sewers maps for the area.

Research at the Department of Buildings provided some additional information on basement depths and date of construction of the residential structures. The soil test boring data from the corner of York Avenue and 90th Street did not provide any useful information given the type of disturbances that occurred on those lots. Review of sewer and water mains confirmed that both sewer and water mains were laid prior to the construction of the residential structures, thereby eliminating the potential for the existence of privies and cisterns.

The absence of privies and cisterns eliminates the potential for historic cultural materials, but not for prehistoric potential in the rezoning area. Examination of the latest block maps showed the backyard areas to be very small. In addition, the soil test borings of the adjacent block (corner of York Avenue and 90th Street) showed that modern activities contributed to extensive destruction of backyard areas. Given similar developmental histories, similar subsurface disturbances most likely occurred within the rezoning area lots. Finally, each structure on the study lots based on the compilation of basement data, probably contains a basement of at least three feet. All of these parameters indicate that the potential for prehistoric resources within the rezoning area is very low.

Given the results of Tasks 16A, 16C and 16D, there is no need to conduct site visits to determine basement depths. Also no additional archaeological or historical work would be recommended on these properties.