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LANDMARKS PRESERVATION
COMMISSION

89-068Q

Proposal for a Presence or Absence Cultural Resource Survey of the Seagirt Boulevard Development Project.

The Scope

The following proposal is being submitted as a fixed price bid for a Presence or Absence Cultural Resource Survey to establish the archaeological and historical sensitivity evaluation of the Seagirt Boulevard Development Project Site, Queens, New York. This proposal has been prepared so as to conform to the standards of the Landmarks Preservation Commission, CEQR guidelines.

Summary of Previous Findings

A previously completed sensitivity evaluation has been performed to evaluate the potential prehistoric and historic sensitivity of the Sea Girt Development Project based on the available documentary sources. In addition to the review of pertinent general historical and archaeological studies, this evaluation has concentrated on four categories of information: 1) Thorough survey of all official state agency and museum records, 2) A diachronic survey and comparison of historic map coverage of the area to evaluate the relative continuity or change in landform and settlement patterns through time, 3) Surface reconnaissance of the project site as a basis for characterizing its observed conditions, and 4) Interviews with local informants and avocational archaeologists familiar with unpublished sources of pertinent information relative to the project area.

While the review of official archives and state agency files showed that no known archaeological resources or National Register eligible prehistoric or historic sites have been documented for the immediate project area, the general vicinity was clearly utilized and occupied in the pre-contact period. Two confirmed prehistoric archaeological sites have been documented within the general vicinity. Historic references and past charac-

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terizations of the environment have highlighted the potential subsistence and economic resources which formerly existed in the estuary tidal marsh of the "meadow land", with the vicinity suggesting the possibility of seasonal or functionally specific prehistoric encampments within the area.

The review of the historic map coverage shows that while the general area has gone through extensive land alteration through road-building, landfilling, and historic dredging activity, the immediate project area has suffered relatively minimal impacts through time with a pattern of continuity in both the form and composition of the creek and oxbow waterway that bounds the project parcel on the south. It is neither a modern artifact of man-made land alteration nor has its general course changed appreciably from the 1800's to the present.

In addition, review of past studies, draft environmental impact statements, and reported planning documents, showed that no systematic sub-surface or surface reconnaissance studies have been undertaken in the immediate vicinity of the project parcel, which would have been of relevance in projecting the potential sensitivity of the project parcel.

Recommendations

These multiple lines of evidence suggest that despite the fact that no archaeological resources have been confirmed by past studies, the lack of any systematic surveys or presence and absence test programs in the vicinity, does not provide positive or negative evidence for establishing the presence of potential archaeological sensitivity. As a result, based on available sources and levels of definition, no strong basis exists for arguing against the archaeological potential of the area. The only basis for establishing the presence or absence of potential resources, can only be derived by an appropriate level of presence and absence testing.

While the general scope and need for an appropriate level of effort for sub-surface testing must be finalized by the review agency, based upon a discussion with the Landmarks Preservation Commission, we recommend that a gridded network of shovel tests at no less than 30 to 50 foot intervals be undertaken so as to assure that any potential cultural remains will be identified before being impacted by the proposed project.

Sampling Strategy

Based upon the background information provided, the following sampling strategy is being proposed to determine the presence or absence of possible prehistoric and although unexpected, historic resources within the project area. This proposed strategy in turn is based upon the following assumptions.

1. Because of high water table, the area contains a limited potential for prehistoric remains, with a depth range of between 1 to 2.5 feet.
2. That the area contains the potential for prehistoric resources, most likely in the form of near surface midden deposits, which may also be encountered below the present high water mark.
3. That some portions of the project area have been heavily disturbed by road building activity, specifically landfill along the edge of Seagirt Blvd.

Shovel Probes

To evaluate the potential presence of both historic and prehistoric deposits, we recommend the use of a grid of controlled shovel probes covering the shoreline areas of the project area in the eastern, central, and western portions of the parcels (approximately 36 in number). Each probe will be comparable to a 50cm X 50cm cube in volume and excavated within the context of a grid matrix at 50 foot intervals. Each test will be identified and located on project maps to an accuracy within .5 ft. of lateral precision.

Field Procedures

As a minimal first level effort, the use of shovel probes is limited to establishing the presence, nature, and spatial extent of cultural materials within the impact zone.

In response to the time limitations and the relative inaccuracy of traditional optical survey systems over long distances, the Grossman and Associates staff will utilize its in-house computerized IR Transit System to provide high speed and high precision grid and elevation data control.

In addition to the use of controlled manual excavation techniques and recording procedures, data recording will be undertaken in such a way so as to permit the identification

and proper recording of all culturally relevant items. Specific field procedures will include:

- a). Screening with 1/4 inch will be used to guarantee uniform recovery of all pertinent cultural and ecofactual materials from each test location. As a standard procedure in damp environs, the identification and recovery of shovel probe samples will be augmented with water screening if ...water is locally available. This procedure will employ our in house portable pumps and generators as a self sufficient system.
- b). The use and maintenance of field and feature catalogues, which will be integrated on a daily basis with the computerized field excavation records and artifact recovery records. These will be maintained at the field laboratory facility.
- c). Photographic documentation of field activities.
- d). The use of appropriate storage and bagging materials for initial field and subsequent storage phases of the project. All cultural materials will be stored with Tyvek labels so as to secure the integrity of the collection.

Laboratory Procedures

All laboratory activity will be conducted in compliance with guidelines established by the Landmarks Preservation Commission. The laboratory procedures will include:

1. The preparation of artifacts and samples for analysis, including wet or dry cleaning;
2. The recording of all artifactual and contextual data in order to allow for in-depth research and analysis.

The initial inventory and processing is intended to provide a preliminary level of quantified control over the nature, variation and number of excavated materials. At this first-cut level, procedures are restricted to cleaning, coding, quantification and initial data entry.

1. Formal Identification and Data Entry of Artifacts

During the laboratory phase of processing a computerized database of the artifact inventory will be developed to include the following categories of information:

Context number

Period

Count

Weight

Material

Class

Technique

Type

Elements

Comments

2. Artifact Packaging and Storage

The context number initially assigned in the field to each discrete excavation unit, level, or deposit will follow the artifacts through the laboratory process as the basic unit of recording and identification as well.

Diagnostic artifacts, bulkier artifacts, as well as non-diagnostic materials, will be stored in sequential context number order. Individual items will be packaged, (depending on their condition), in ziplock polyethylene bags, boxes or vials, in acid-free tissue paper, or placed in acid-free boxes. All the finds from one context number will be placed in a larger archival box. These boxes will be organized in context number sequence and prepared for shipment to the long-term storage facilities.

3. Photo-documentation of Artifacts

All diagnostic artifacts will be photo-documented at the laboratory for subsequent analysis and documentation. Our Manhattan facility is equipped with an up-to-date darkroom and all the necessary laboratory and photographic equipment for the proper documentation of archaeological materials.

The Final Report

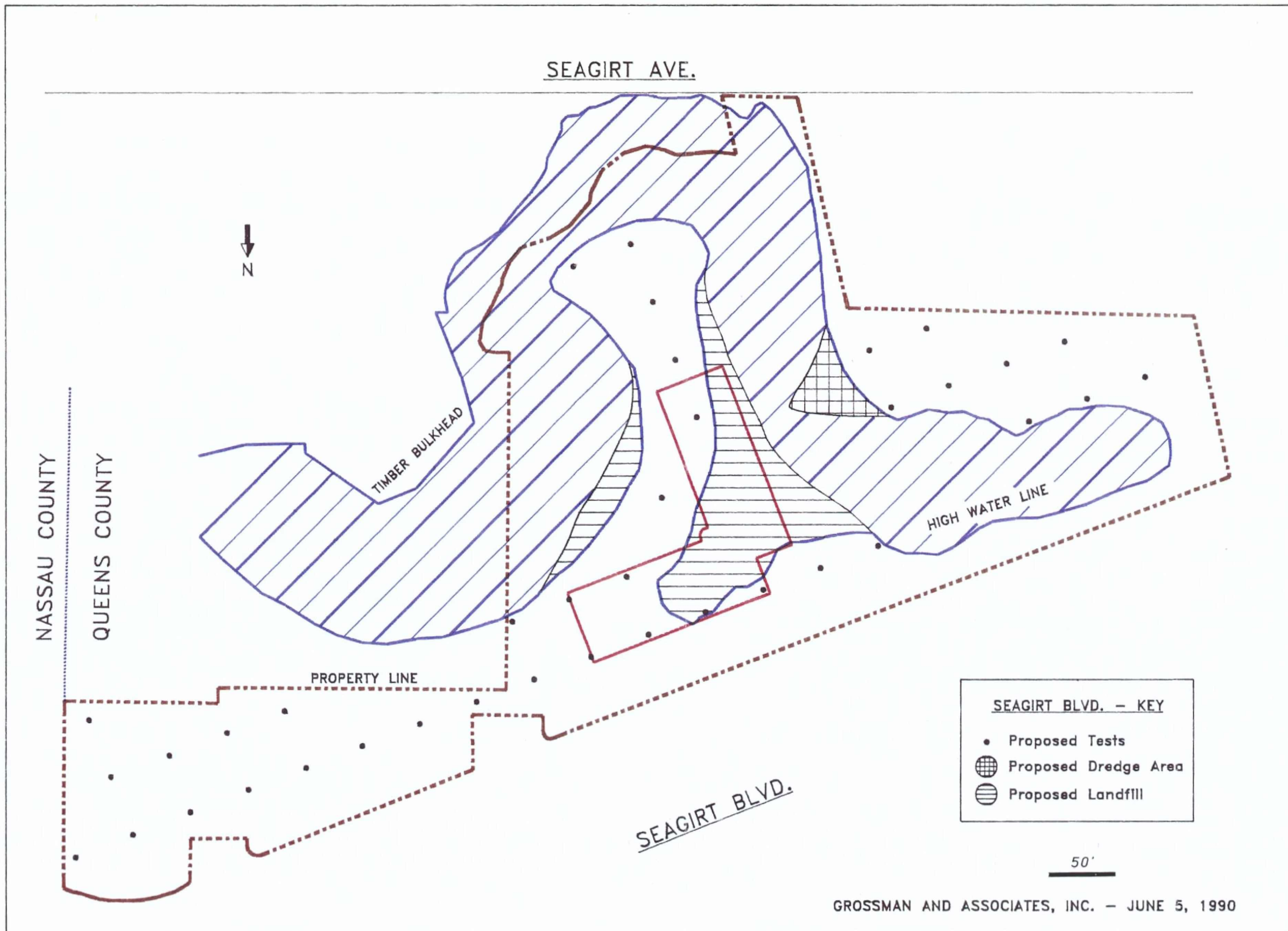
Minimally, the final report will be prepared to include the following information:

- A discussion of the natural environment (soils, vegetation, etc.)
- A thorough description of the survey goals, assumptions, and logistical issues.
- A statement of and justifications for survey strategies and field activities and methods.

- Reasons for any deficiencies in the field coverage.
- A description of all site and isolated finds.
- Artifact analysis results.
- A complete photographic and graphic record of all plans, profiles, and artifact associations.
- Items will be washed, marked, and computer inventoried, as a part of the final report.

Graphic representation of results will include but not be limited to:

- A project base map, outlining the project boundaries on the appropriate portion of the relevant U.S.G.S. quad sheet(s), with the name of the quad sheet clearly indicated on the map.
- A map displaying the location of all shovel tests.
- Photo documentation of field study areas, procedures, and key diagnostic artifacts.



Grossman & Associates, Inc. - Corporate Profile

Cultural Resource Management - Historic Preservation

- Compliance Studies and Management Planning in Accordance with Federal, State, and Local criteria
- Historic Preservation - National and State Register Nomination Preparation
- Historic and Prehistoric Environmental Reconstruction
- Historic and Prehistoric Artifactual Analysis and Conservation
- Conflict avoidance through rapid site definition and evaluation in field and laboratory procedures
- Superfund HAZMAT Certified for Field RI/FS and RD/RA level archaeological mitigation

Logistical Capabilities

- 3-D computer transit measurement and mapping
- Site-specific remote sensing; conductivity and resistivity systems
- High speed data processing and control
- Fully equipped archaeological laboratory - collections care/analysis/managment
- 3-D perspective computer terrain reconstruction and modeling
- Quick project mobilization with portable communication and power system

Staff and Facilities

Grossman & Associates is a full-service consulting firm specializing in the archaeological issues within environment and/or cultural resource studies. The firm provides support to large and small-scale planning and development projects with a full range of services spanning initial sensitivity evaluation to full scale testing and excavation. Where ongoing projects are delayed or stopped because of the unexpected discovery of archaeological remains, the firm can provide rapid crisis intervention to evaluate and document the potential resources with a minimum of down time for the developer. These logistical capabilities are supported by a fulltime corporate infrastructure to provide

high-quality services to both the public and private sectors with applied technology for enhanced levels of definition within a restricted time frame.

The firm has been involved in a number of large-scale survey and excavation projects throughout the continental United States with expertise in issues of North American pre-historic and historic archaeology as well as experience in Latin America, México and the Caribbean.

Grossman & Associates has been involved in a large number of projects funded by the private sector as well as Federal, State and Municipal agencies including the New York City Public Development Corp., N.Y.S. Department of Environmental Conservation and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. We are currently registered and certified in the states of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

The full-time staff includes specialists in environmental archaeology, archaeological forensics, prehistoric and historic artifact analysis, database management, statistical applications, cartography, archaeological illustration and photography, and collections management with expertise in North and South American and Old World archaeology.

The Grossman & Associates facilities are fully equipped to support up to a 50-person survey and excavation field program under conditions of rapid mobilization backed up by portable communication and power systems. All field and laboratory procedures are fully computerized to provide quick turn-around and rapid data control in a matter of weeks versus months. The Grossman & Associates team has established itself in the discipline through the use of a range of applied technology approaches to archaeology which include high resolution computerized EDM, or electronic measurement systems, integrated with the use of portable data collection systems capable of rendering 3-D stratigraphic reconstructions and artifact densities in the field. In-house capabilities also include a range of state-of-the-art site-specific remote sensing systems to aid in developing legally defensible, non-destructive target-specific survey and excavation strategies.

Facilities

The Company's range of services covers documentary study/evaluation of potential archaeological site areas as well as the full field and laboratory capabilities needed for the definition and/or excavation of archaeological resources. In particular, these involve the evaluation and study of deeply stratified archaeological sites beneath modern urban landscapes.

Housed in a 2,500 square foot complex in the vicinity of Union Square in Manhattan, the Grossman & Associates laboratory and office facilities are fully configured to address all aspects of administrative and logistical requirements of Municipal, State and Federally-mandated archaeological and historic site assessments and evaluations.

The laboratory facility has been functionally designed to provide "dirty-to-clean" processing areas including artifact storage, a wet lab, in-house custom photo studio and dark rooms, a dedicated computer control and processing section, as well as several large collections analysis and research areas.

Biography

Dr. Joel W. Grossman is a noted archaeologist with broad field experience and large-scale project management expertise. He is founder, President and Chief Executive Officer of Grossman & Associates, Inc. Through the staff and facilities of his Manhattan-based firm, Dr. Grossman has created a unique entity which employs a broad range of applied technical approaches to aid in the identification and definition of buried archaeological resources. This provides unparalleled response to the fiscal and time constraints facing major government and private sector development projects.

In this capacity, Dr. Grossman has served as a major consultant for the private sector as well as for Federal, State and Municipal regulatory and development agencies. Specifically, these agencies include the U.S. Department of Environmental Protection, the Department of Transportation, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, and the New York City Public Development Agency.

Dr. Grossman has conducted major prehistoric and historic archaeological excavation projects which recently included the exposure of original Dutch West India Company Warehouse remains under the Wall Street area of Lower Manhattan. He has also served as Project Director for a number of large-scale regional survey studies as well as major data recovery and excavation projects throughout the United States in the Southwest, Ohio, New York State, New Jersey and New York City.

Furthermore, in addition to these large-scale excavation projects, Dr. Grossman has served as Principal Investigator on three major Special Zoning District evaluations within Manhattan.

1. The historic sensitivity study and issues of sub-surface survivals for the South Ferry Project.
2. The evaluation of the Zeckendorf Towers Project adjacent to Union Square for the Zeckendorf Development Group.
3. The historic sensitivity evaluation for the Little Italy Special Zoning District, on both sides by Houston Street, and encompassed by Elizabeth and Mulberry Streets in lower Manhattan.

In addition to his North American field experience and project management, Dr. Grossman has participated in cooperative bilateral field research projects in Andean South America, the Amazon River Basin and the Caribbean and also conducted joint field projects with staff members of the National Institute of Culture in Lima, Peru.

Additional international experience includes serving as a UNESCO and O.A.S. special consultant for archaeological program development within the Peruvian National Institute of Culture. Program design included a seminar series dealing with method, theory and legal frameworks for developing national survey as well as planning programs for cultural resource management.

As a result of his cross-cultural background, Dr. Grossman has served as forum member and invited speaker before the Senate-based Office of Technology Assessment, the U.S. Parks Service, the U.S. Advisory Council and the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) Symposium in Washington, D.C., speaking on cultural resource management and the role of applied technology in archaeology.

Dr. Grossman received his Ph.D. in New World Archaeology and South American High Altitude pre-Inca Culture History from the University of California at Berkeley. He has taught at Rutgers University and the City University of New York.