

Learning Places Spring 2016

# **SITE REPORT # 2**

## **Field visit 2, Vinegar Hill**



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### **INTRODUCTION**

Second visit was really interesting learned about this area little more, Vinegar Hill Historic District is characterized by rows of early and mid-nineteenth century houses, complemented by a mid-nineteenth century firehouse and an early twentieth century industrial building, whose design and scale contribute to the district's special sense of place. The historic district includes a number of houses built between 1801 and the 1830s. We visited this area of downtown brooklyn on a purpose to see how many times this area changed with time.

### **PRE-VISIT REFLECTION**

My first visit to downtown brooklyn, Vinegar Hill was eye opener, really

wanted to explore more about this area. The old architecture and mix with new architecture is always make me really curious. I am hoping to be able to find more buildings from the 19th century that also possess similar architectural details that indicate commercial purposes as I explore more of Vinegar Hill. I am looking forward to see how areas changed from 18 and 19 century till now.

SITE DOCUMENTATION (photos/sketches)



This Latino food place is in a quiet side of Dumbo, at the corner of bridge and front street really interesting place. I was delighted to have entered into the restaurant and getting hit with the delicious smell of Latino comfort food. After visiting there i figured that now lots of latino community is living in this neighbourhood.



Old firehouse between two buildings, on the corner of bridge and front street. Right hand side building was six stories and the left one was three and next to that building was one floor building which i found little veired.

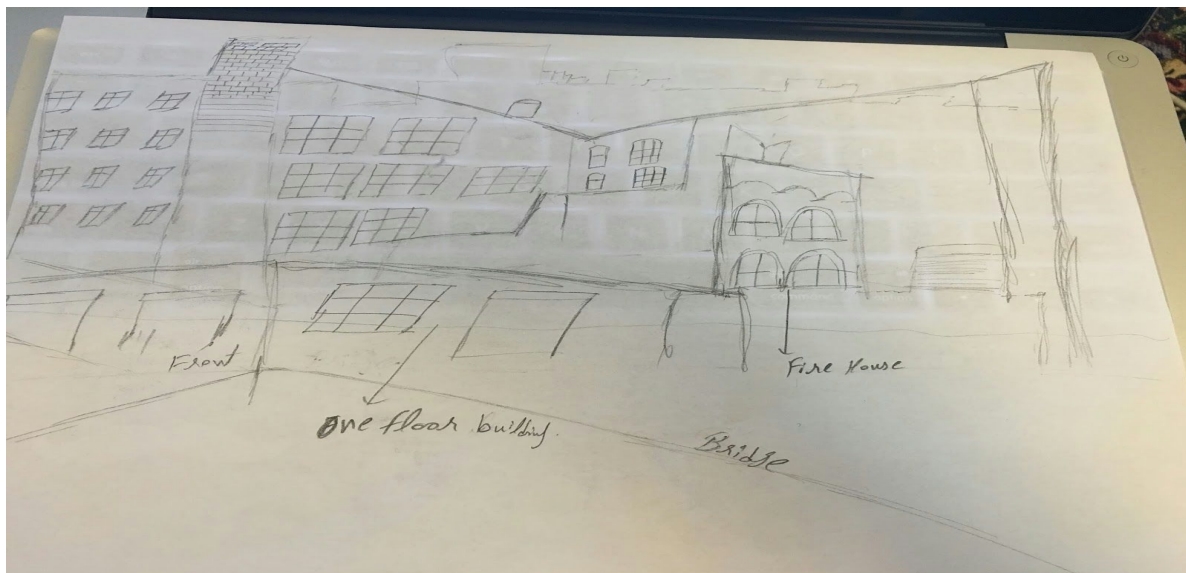


After doing research about this prison looking building i found that this is an industrial building, just like prof said, name was mentioned on building. Boorum & Pease manufactured and marketed office supplies, record-keeping supplies. The company had an office and factory for many years in Vinegar

Hill at Hudson Avenue and Front Street, and many Vinegar Hillers found employment here over the years.



Vinegar Hill's landmarked enclaves can be found on the north side of front street between Gold and Bridge Streets. This was really impressive to see that every house has a different iron stoop railing.



Top sketch is the building on the corner of Front street and Bridge street, in this you can see basically four building at the same time.

## QUALITATIVE SITE OBSERVATIONS

1. Neighborhood / Street Character
  - a. Vinegar Hill, Brooklyn, on Section 8 of 1855 map.
  - b. Mixed with new and old building, industrial and residential also mixed together.
2. Vitality of Neighborhood
  - a. General Description
    - i. Area close to Dumbo and next to Navy yard.
  - b. Pedestrian Activity
    - i. Lot of industrial activity but not that much residential activities.
  - c. Vehicular Traffic
    - i. Not extremely busy.
3. Age of Buildings (provide evidence for prediction)
  - a. The corner building has architectural design elements that are commonly found on commercially used buildings from the 19th century.
  - b. The 1855 map shows that many lots were used for industrial purposes with its warehouses and industrial yards, most of the present warehouses and industrial yards seem to be more modern.
  - c. There are some newer buildings that were probably built in the 21st century. These 4 newer buildings are large apartment buildings. I saw most of these apartments buildings around Bridge Street, one building on the corner of gold and bridge i think its called 99 gold street, that is new residential building.
4. Relationship Between Buildings
  - a. Most of the old building are attached to one another beside the new buildings.
  - b. Some of them had little spaces between them.
5. Building Details
  - a. Lintels are above each window, which serve to provide support in order to prevent the bricks from collapsing around the windows. What is unusual for these buildings is the brickwork.
  - b. Almost all buildings on hudson ave are different colors which is really amazing.
6. Relationship to the Waterfront
  - a. Some residential building and industrial as well are close to water but i think they are little high area still scary to me.

## QUANTITATIVE DATA for Area of Study

Subject	Data
Street Names	Front Street, Bridge Street, Water Street, ,Plymouth Street, Gold Street, and York Street,
Street Width	Approx 26 feet two way streets, And Around 14' of one way streets.
Street Pavement	Mostly cobblestones and some big blue tiles as well.
Building Heights	Minimum 1 floor and maximum 7 floors, But new coming up buildings are skyscrapers.
Building Widths (Window Bays)	2-4 bays on old building, and 4-6 on new ones.
Building Types/Uses	Industrial, residential and commercial
Empty Lots / Gardens	Few lots which people are using as parking lots now.
Shops / Restaurants	Almost 5 or 6 coffee shops and Restaurants
Industrial Shops	More than i thought, mostly industrial area.
Religious place	Dorje Ling Buddhist Center.

## QUESTIONS to Research Further

### QUESTIONS:

1. When exactly these old building were built?
2. Before CO Edison power plant what was there in that area?
3. Who were the architects and builders for these bulding in vinegar hill?

#### RESEARCH METHOD/SOURCE FOR EACH QUESTION ABOVE:

1. Question 1
  - a. Historical Data
  - b. Old maps
  - c. Archives
2. Question 2
  - a. Brooklyn Library historical data.
  - b. College Library
  - c. Articles from 18 to 19 century.
3. Question 3
  - a. Archives on Architects
  - b. Historical Data
  - c. New york public Library

### **SUMMARY / POST VISIT REFLECTION**

I feel like second visit was more informative as compared to first one, I had the opportunity to see a more industrial, bustling side of Vinegar Hill. The second time was much more informative for many reasons, the first being that we had someone who seemed very knowledgeable to give us information about its history; this time we had actual maps as well with us so this time we were more prepared. It was interesting to see the purpose of this area has not changed too drastically over the many years. All these homes and buildings whose history could be told through close observation of its brick paneling and color. Now for future i really want to know who were the architects and builder for these building, it's really amazing that these buildings are old but still standing.