INTRODUCTION

I was surprised to find that the Brooklyn Public Library is only steps away from the Brooklyn Museum. Upon visiting Brooklyn Library, we met at the Brooklyn Collection, which was on the second floor of the library. The Brooklyn Collection was composed of two rooms, one with newspapers clippings and the other with books and maps. The second room felt much more communal, as it books and visual documents occupied the cabinets along the walls. The first room on the other hand, did not follow that logic and had a bay of cabinets close to the middle. The arrangements spoke of the different movements and modes of research--where one feels more intimate as you are having a conversation with a document, and the other feels indirect and requires the consultation of a librarian.

PRE-VISIT REFLECTION

Since we are visiting the Brooklyn Archive, I hope to find an array of maps in regards to Vinegar Hill. I
anticipate on finding maps from Brooklyn’s conception, to today’s redevelopment. I’m also curious to see if we will find any schematic drawings for the Farragut Housing Complexes.

**SOURCES found**

1. Proquest Historical Newspapers, Faraggut Housing To Use New Plan, New York Times, R1, 01.19.1947
2. Desk Atlas Brooklyn, 1921
3. Elizabeth O’Brien, Church, City spar over plan to convert lot, Daily News, Pg. 7, 09.24.2002

**DOCUMENTATION of site & resources (maps/archival documents/photos)**

The article above shows the preliminary sketches by the architects of Farragut Housing: Fellheimer & Wagner and Carl. A Vollmer associates. The sketch shows the form of each housing building, as well as the emphasis between space between each complex. The corbusian idea of green space is emphasized, as trees are also shown. The widened streets of Sands Street are also shown, and the residential pathways between the housing is also apparent. While the housing complex mostly resembles the sketch, the current parking lot and church of the Open Door are not present.
Close up of the preliminary sketch for Farragut Housing. This sketch emphasizes the separation between what used to be High Street and Hudson Avenue. The bottom right part of this image shows the little structures on top of the housing buildings, which remain true to today. The landscaping, or amount of trees is quite different than the amount of horticulture today as well.

This image shows a map of the perimeters of Farragut Housing in 1921. While Sand street and Nassau Street still stay in tact, High street and Hudson avenue have shrunken in size, appearing to have almost disappeared. The map also shows the previous lots on the site, as well as the type of buildings that were on the site. The most mysterious change that I would like to look into, is the erasure of Old Bridge Road.
In my second site report, which was written to describe my observations at the Farragut Housing Complex, I had taken notice of the Church of the Open Door. While this article explores the renovation of the Open Door Church, it covers the conversion of the parking lot next to Nassau Place as well as the current state of the inhabitants within the housing complex.

The New York City Housing Authority was reported to plan out the Farragut Housing Complex without the knowledge of the residents who live there. There was no public notification of the parking lot, which was one of the first times the tenants did not have any input. This article clarifies the date of the addition of the parking lot, which was in 2002 (way after the conception of the complex). The parking lot used to be a lawn used for recreation and community activities.
1. **Neighborhood History**
   a. The neighborhood followed the typical city planning methodology of the Roman Grid. Farragut Housing was constructed during the redevelopment period in Downtown Brooklyn, as a physical manifestation of Urban Renewal. It sits on the border of Vinegar Hill and Fort Greene.

2. **Key Events / Historical Dates**
   a. 1941 - The master plan of the Farragut Housing Complex was drawn by its architects Fellheimer & Wagner and Carl A. Vollmer associates.
   b. 2002 - The replanning of the Farragut Housing Complex was facilitated by the New York City Housing Authority.

3. **Key Players**
   a. New York City Housing Authority, or NYCHA which mission is to establish housing for low-median income families. NYCHA has been established since the early 1930’s, and is currently the largest housing authority in the country.
   b. The Church of the Open Door, which currently represents seven denominations: Baptist, Presbyterian, Methodist, Congregational, Reformed United Presbyterian, Evangelical and Methodical. The Church of the Open Door was first opened in 1848 in the Navy Yard.
   c. The Residents of Farragut Housing whom are translucent in the design and renovation processes.

4. **Relationship Key Players**
   a. The New York City Housing Authority facilitated the need to build the complex, by combining mega blocks and erasing the precedent of urban fabric behind it.
   b. The Church of the Open Door later became an important key player for the Farragut Housing Complex. The members of the church weaved the relationship between the Church and the Housing Authority, by attending NYCHA meetings and becoming proactive supporters and donators of the cause.

5. **Public Perception of Key Events**
   a. The Farragut Housing Complex was heavily advertised, as the Brooklyn Library archives several newspaper clippings regarding government involvement (loans, the naming of the complex, preliminary design of the complex and numerous clippings regarding the lifestyle within the complex: ie. violent events or educational programs) The design of the complex however, was fairly glossed over as the design may have not merited the attention of the public.
   b. Several clippings indicate that the residents of Farragut Housing were not made aware
of the redevelopment of one of it’s blocks, where the parking lot was designated.

6. Important Changes to Neighborhood
   a. The scale of city blocks were being tested, as the merging of several major blocks were created for the Housing Complex. The remnants of High Street and Hudson Avenue were still present within in the project, although Nassau Street, Navy Street, Gold and Sands street remain to be the prominent perimeter of the a portion of the property. Another portion is described through the perimeter of Navy Street, Sands street, Gold Street and York Streets, thus eliminating Prospect street and Hudson Avenue.
   b. The addition of the Church of the Open Door was constructed on the corner of Gold and Nassau street, which soon became an adjacent to the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway or BQE.
   c. The addition of the Parking Lot was added in tandem with the renovation of the Church of the Open door. Parking became much more accessible for drivers, although I ponder the percentage of residents in the complex that own cars.

7. Other Observations
   a. Conversation of adding institutional programs around the Farragut Housing Complex is a fairly contemporary idea. The church is a new addition, as well as the elementary schools around it.
   b. Particular to the Brooklyn library has a symmetrical plan, similar to NYPL whereby ambulatory is fairly simple as both libraries are easy to navigate.
   c. The Brooklyn library is publically accessible, as it has a center for children and numerous collections available for anyone to look at, without appointment and minimal consultation (unless you ask for a librarian for references)

TOPICS & KEYWORDS

“Redevelopment of Downtown Brooklyn 1940’s”, “Urban Renewal”, “New York City Housing Authority”, “Urban Renewal”, “Farragut Housing”, “The Church of the Open Door”
### QUANTITATIVE DATA for Area of Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Land Ownership</td>
<td>New York City Housing Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Blocks</td>
<td>3 mega blocks, specific to the union of 12 major city blocks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of Buildings on a Typical Block</td>
<td>3-4 buildings on typical block</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials</td>
<td>Brick/masonry buildings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of Stories of Buildings</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential Bldgs</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empty Lots</td>
<td>Quite a few, scattered around Downtown Brooklyn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Uses</td>
<td>Non existent in the Farragut Housing Complex, although growth of commercial zoning is anticipated in it’s periphery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial Uses</td>
<td>Non existent in the Farragut Housing Complex, although it is developing around the time period and is mostly present closer the waterfront.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### QUESTIONS to Research Further

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What was the preliminary design scheme for the Farragut Housing Complex?
2. Why was Farragut Housing placed on the border of Vinegar Hill?
3. Has transportation played a heavy factor in Farragut Housing’s location?
RESEARCH METHOD/ ADDITIONAL SOURCES NEEDED TO ANSWER EACH QUESTION ABOVE:

1. Question 1
   a. Look for preliminary design sketches or drawings at either the Farragut Housing Complex or the NYCHA archives.
   b. Compare the sketches to the present state of Farragut Housing.
   c. Were the documents in any way conclusive? Is it in any way similar? What are the differences, and what were the influences of these changes?

2. Question 2
   a. Again, look for the preliminary design sketches or drawings at either the Farragut Housing Complex or the NYCHA archives.
   b. Look at the redevelopment plan of Downtown Brooklyn in the 1940’s.
   c. Is any of the information conclusive? Was the site always Farragut Housing? How does that affect the manifestation of it’s design?

3. Question 3
   a. Look for transportation plans in the 1940’s.
   b. Compare the new found transportation plans to the Farragut Housing Plans. Are there any direct translations?

SUMMARY / POST VISIT REFLECTION

I really enjoyed visiting the Brooklyn Library, as it was my first visit here. While it’s collection is comprehensive in archiving news clippings regarding Farragut Housing, I was a bit disappointed to find that there weren’t many documents regarding preliminary designs for Farragut Housing. I was pleased however, to find that there was an array of information given regarding the topic itself.