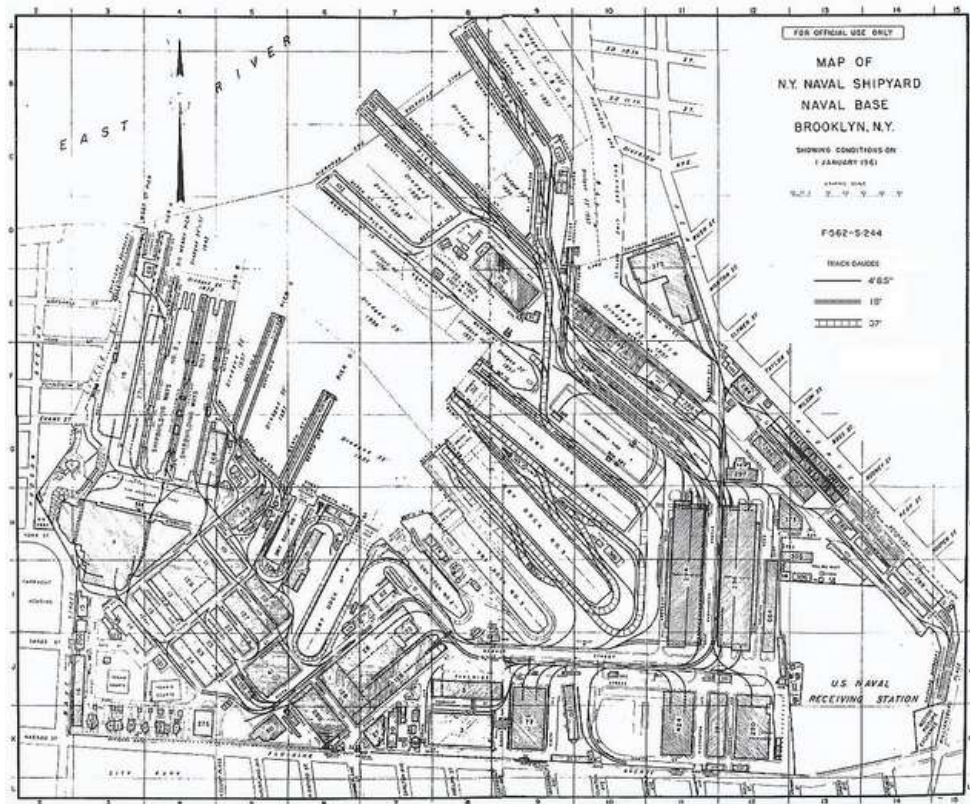


Learning Places Spring 2016

SITE REPORT

VINEGAR HILL



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INTRODUCTION

Vinegar Hill is a small neighborhood housed in the borough of Brooklyn New York over on the East River Waterfront between Dumbo and the Brooklyn Navy Yard. It covers somewhere between a nine to ten block radius. Within it comprise of three historic districts they are the mid-nineteenth century houses, a nineteenth century firehouse as well as an early twentieth century industrial buildings whose architecture contributed to an “Urban Renewal”.

PRE-VISIT REFLECTION

This is honestly my very first time hearing about Vinegar Hill. I am a Brooklyn-ite who travels downtown Brooklyn by train occasionally. However, in all my years have I never seen or heard anyone make mention of such a neighborhood. I anticipate Vinegar Hill to be a low populated neighborhood, with signs of age, wear and tear as well as empty lot space. I am interested in finding out more of its background history so that I can grasp a better understanding of the neighborhood as a whole. Therefore, I do not at all expect Vinegar Hill to look like anything less than what was mentioned about its history, in the class prior to my visit.

SITE DOCUMENTATION (photos/sketches)



Located on Evans Street and Harrison Alley is a modernized apartment building, which was most definitely built in during the 20th century. This building is located diagonal to the Brooklyn Navy Yard.



The picture above shows Farragut Houses which is located on Nassau Street between Navy Street and Gold Street. Farragut Houses are located on the outside perimeters of the Brooklyn Navy Yard. Farragut Houses is a tremendous complex which also is located directly across the street from Madison Square Boys & Girls Club Navy Yard Clubhouse and Community Roots Charter School. The grounds in which they are housed was once a resting area for sailors that worked within close proximity to the Waterfront. The Waterfront was a place where they could escape and enjoy themselves with food, beer and much more. Photo (brownstoner.com)



The building in the picture above is located on the of Bridge Street & Water Street. Luxury Loft Apartments, built about seven years ago. Its structure is massive and in my opinion possibly resembles a factory. I thought this building was absolutely beautiful and looking at it made me feel like I was right back where I belong, simply because it seemed more current.



Located on the corner of Bridge & Water Street across the street from 220 Water Luxury Apartment stands a building currently undergoing renovation; which also happens to resemble a factory of some sort.



Also located on the corner of Bridge & Water Street stands yet another set of Luxury Apartments. The GPS for this location is not up to date why because when I tried searching this location it showed me an empty lot; which was what it was before construction for the building started. I thought that was rather interesting.



The picture above shows how the houses were connected back during the late 18th & early 19th century.

Photo taken by: Karsten Moran for The New York Times.



The building in the photo above was most likely built during the 20th Century. This photo is important because it's part of Vinegar Hill's "urban renewal". "This three-bedroom two-bath townhouse with an adjacent one-bedroom unit is listed at a whopping 3.4 million dollars." Photo taken by: Karsten Moran for The New York Times.

QUALITATIVE SITE OBSERVATIONS

1. Neighborhood / Street Character
 - a. Historic
 - b. Charming
2. Vitality of Neighborhood
 - a. General Description
 - i. Mediocre and extremely quite; suburban like.
 - b. Pedestrian Activity
 - i. Very little. There were about 2-3 people every 10-15 minutes.
 - c. Vehicular Traffic
 - i. Mediocre
3. Age of Buildings (provide evidence for prediction)
 - a. The three-story brick houses on Front Street were built from 1830-1855. (NYTimes.com)
 - b. Farragut Houses is a massive complex named after David Glasgow Farragut. It was built during the mid-19th Century and is bordered by York, Nassau, Navy and Bridge Streets. (nyc.gov)
 - c. The Commandant Mansion is an Historic Landmark which was built during the early 18th Century, which is about 210 years ago. (Brooklyneagle.com)
4. Relationship Between Buildings
 - a. Some of the houses down Evans Street had paneling whereas the houses on Front Street were built out of bricks.
 - b. The apartments on Evans Street & Harrison Alley on the diagonal of Commandant's Mansion are of the most recent structures built in that area.
5. Building Detail
 - a. A mixture of Common, Flemish & Running Brick Bonds.
 - b. The Star Anchor Plates on the outside of buildings that stood 3 or more stories.
 - c. The most recently built structures have loft sized windows (20th century "urban renewal") and the most older structure windows are similar to windows we still find in our neighborhood today.
6. Relationship to the Waterfront
 - a. The Luxury Apartments on the corners of Bridge and Water has a spectacular, up close and personal view of the Waterfront.
 - b. The residents and businesses on Jay Street has a clear and direct pathway which leads start to the Waterfront.
7. Other Observations
 - a. Harrison Alley isn't an alley after all; I somehow believe that it could've possibly serve as

- a community driveway.
- b. Cobblestones are resurfacing; as concrete becomes non-existent.
- c. What was the original entrance to some of the houses are setup like store front's instead?

QUANTITATIVE DATA for Area of Study

Subject	Data
Street Names	York St., Front St., Water St., Plymouth St., John St., Jay St., Bridge St., Evans St., Hudson Ave., Navy St., Gold St., Little St., & Harrison Alley.
Street Width	9 to 10 Street Block Long.
Street Pavement	A mixture of black pavement and cobblestones.
Building Heights	Ranges anywhere from 2-5 stories tall.
Building Widths (Window Bays)	2, 3 & 4-Story Houses: 3 windows across 5-Story Luxury Apartments: Loft size windows 10-12 windows across & 5 windows down.
Building Types/Uses	Luxury Residential & Commercial.
Empty Lots / Gardens	Community Garden on York St. btw Hudson & Gold St. Empty Lots on Hudson Avenue (currently being used as a parking lot)
Shops / Restaurants	Bridge Coffee shop on Bridge St. Sinotique Antique Store on John St. Modern Anthology on Jay St.

Industrial Shops	Con Edison Power Plant on the Water Front
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QUESTIONS to Research Further

QUESTIONS:

1. What happened to Harrisons Alley?
2. Why is cobblestone resurfacing in certain areas of the neighborhood?
3. Why did some structures have star anchors plates and others didn't?

RESEARCH METHOD/SOURCE FOR EACH QUESTION ABOVE:

1. Question 1
 - a. Achieves
 - b. Historical Maps
 - c. Historical Data
2. Question 2
 - a. Achieves on road structure cobblestone vs. black-top pavement
3. Question 3
 - a. Architecture Archives
 - b. Historical Newspaper Archives

SUMMARY / POST VISIT REFLECTION

Vinegar Hill is very much still a secluded neighborhood; who most will never hear, visit or see. I am actually glad to have visited such a place. My thoughts of Vinegar Hill prior to my visit two words "wild west" however, that wasn't quite the case. Vinegar Hill is a Historical neighborhood with a tremendous amount of background history. It comprises of three historical districts Greek Revival row houses, a large number of Irish residential and 20th century "urban renewal". Vinegar Hill although quite Historic, is a rather deserted neighborhood. The commute from the school walking alone; was nerve racking. Visiting this neighborhood help open my eyes, in exploring all the of what that city I live in has to offer.