

Learning Places Spring 2016

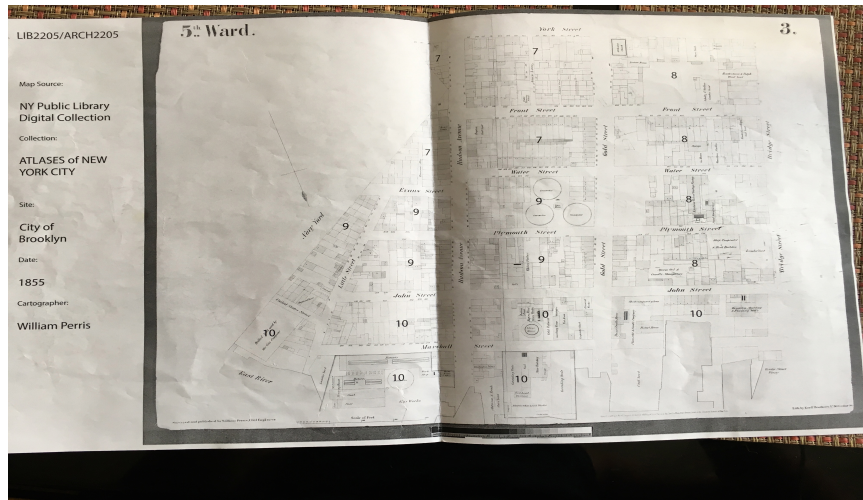
# Vinegar Hill/Dumbo Site Report 2

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## INTRODUCTION

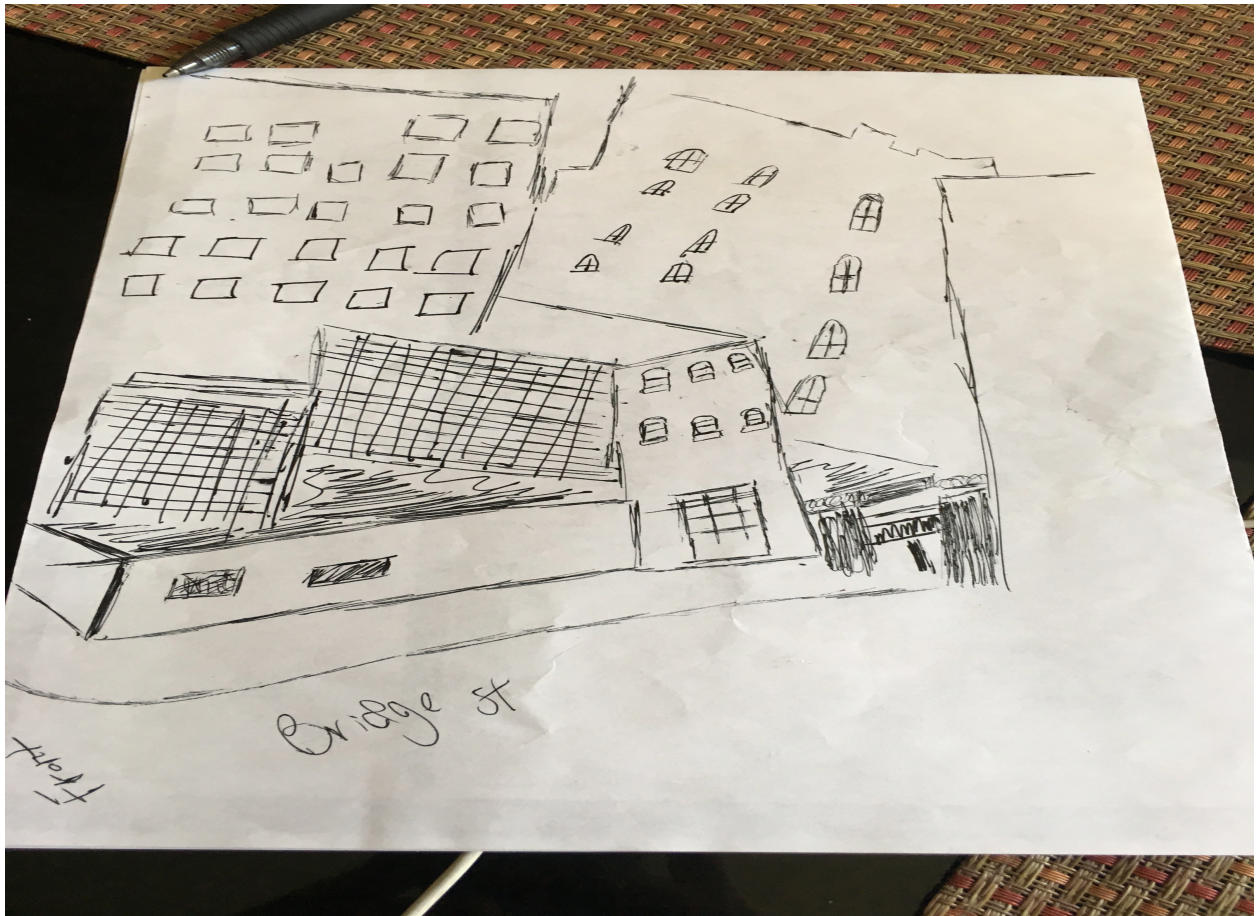
The second site report was a lot more focused, we were given a 1855 map made by William Perris and then broken into groups. We were given a block and told to focus on little specific parts of the given area. I given lot number eight on the map, in which I personally focused on the view from the corner of Bridge and Front street..



## PRE-VISIT REFLECTION

Our first visit to Vinegar hill definitely sparked my interest in the neighborhood and it's functionality it use to have in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The neighborhood as I've seen still has a lot of vitality, in its warehouses. Towards the residential blocks it has much quieter tone. I look forward to narrow my research down to one of these quieter residential blocks.

## SITE DOCUMENTATION (photos/sketches)



This is my sketch of what I saw at the corner of Bridge street and Front street. When I was drawing the area I took notice to a lot of the smaller details of this area. I noticed as I was drawing there were some gaps in between certain homes, that were the same on our map from 1855, which shows that some of the boundaries have not changed in one-hundred and sixty one years.



This is a retired firehouse on Bridge street that has sparked a lot of my interest. This firehouse has made my want to do more research on the subject, and how fires' were combated in the mid to late 19<sup>th</sup> century. I also am very interested in this firehouse specifically and how it was a vital part of the Vinegar Hill neighborhood.

## QUALITATIVE SITE OBSERVATIONS

1. Neighborhood / Street Character
  - a.) Vinegar Hill section 8 of William Perris' map of the Vinegar hill neighborhood
  - b.) The neighborhood has a very big working feel to it, ware houses mixed in with old brownstone homes, and new apartment buildings.
2. Vitality of Neighborhood
  - i.) Section 8: is a nice combination of new gentrification of the neighborhood, and Vinegar Hill's vintage appearance of the homes in the middle of Bridge street.
  - ii.) The pedestrian activity during the day was actually more than usual in the part of the neighborhood I was in. I think most of the people were going towards the Farraguet houses

- iii.) The vehicular traffic that I saw was very slow, because there is not much commercial use on those streets. I was even able to sit and sketch on the curb due to how slow it had been.
3. Age of Buildings (provide evidence for prediction)
    - a. In the middle of Bridge street most buildings we save were homes build in the beginning of the 1900's, with brick finishes
    - b. I noticed that on my map that there were warehouses in 1855, were a brand new nine story apartment complex had been built. The other warehouse on my map, I had noticed was now being used as an office building
  4. Relationship Between Buildings
    - a. I had noticed that on Bridge street most homes are next to each other with no space in between them. But there was on ally between the old retired firehouse and one of the residential homes, that had been on my map from 1855 and never changed.
    - b. Most corner buildings look like they were store fronts, and have not changed whereas the 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> floors are residential
  5. Building Details
    - a. The newer buildings have modern look, that is completely different from the old residential looks that Vinegar Hill has been accustom too
    - b. Some of the buildings have fire escapes
  6. Relationship to the Waterfront
    - a.) think the waterfront relationship to section eight is nothing, It's view from the water front is completely blocked by the newer big apartment buildings
    - c.) bThe wate front I believe makes the buildings around it more of value. The water front gives the whole neighborhood a more aesthetic look
  - 8.) Other Observations
    - a. We noticed a lot of lot similiarites from the map in 1855 to present
    - b. There was some lots from 1855 missing, that are now condos
    - c. There were was an old firehouse that has since been decommissioned

## QUANTITATIVE DATA for Area of Study

Subject	Data
Street Names	Bridge street, and Front street
Street Width	Average street width is about 45 feet
Street Pavement	These streets are all asphalt due to gentrification in section eight
Building Heights	2 to 4 floors high on residential buildings, 4-6 floors high industrial
Building Widths (Window Bays)	The new apartment buildings are nine floors. The residential building width is about 25 feet, with about three windows.
Building Types/Uses	Residential brownstones and a big apartment complex
Empty Lots / Gardens	There is a couple of allies on Bridge street
Shops / Restaurants	There was a Spanish restaurant on the corner of Bridge street, which shows the changing demography
Industrial Shops	I noticed on old warehouse that had been modified to become an office building
Public spaces	I did not see and public buildings in section 8 except for one church

### QUESTIONS to Research Further

QUESTIONS:

1. What is the story of the Firehouse on Bridge street?
2. Find out the owner of the new office building that was warehouse?
3. Due to it old commercial history, why has this area become less of working class section of the area?

RESEARCH METHOD/SOURCE FOR EACH QUESTION ABOVE:

1. Question 1
  - a. Look into the FDNY directory and see if they still have this firehouse posted

- b.) Research old fire history of the neighborhood using books from the library, and see if that fire house had been used in any fires in the neighborhood.
- c.) Use the Brooklyn Eagle to see if the Vinegar hill firehouse was once not apart of the FDNY

2. Question 2

- a. Research the internet for a phone number to inquire about the building to see what it is
- b. Use the 1855 map to see if the warehouse was listed with its old company

3. Question 3

- a. Research New York state government websites on landmarks
- b. Look up the neighborhood's commercial history on wikipedia

## SUMMARY / POST VISIT REFLECTION

I was happy I was able to narrow down my research of the neighborhood to one section. I am really interested in the history of the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century fire department in Brooklyn in general. I think it's a very interesting vital part of understanding what it was like to live during that time. The sketching of the neighborhood helped me to noticed new small parts of section eight. I would like to look at other Sandborn maps of the area to find differences of the area for further research.