

Learning Places Spring 2016

# Vinegar Hill Site Report #3

## Architecture Design and Detail



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### INTRODUCTION

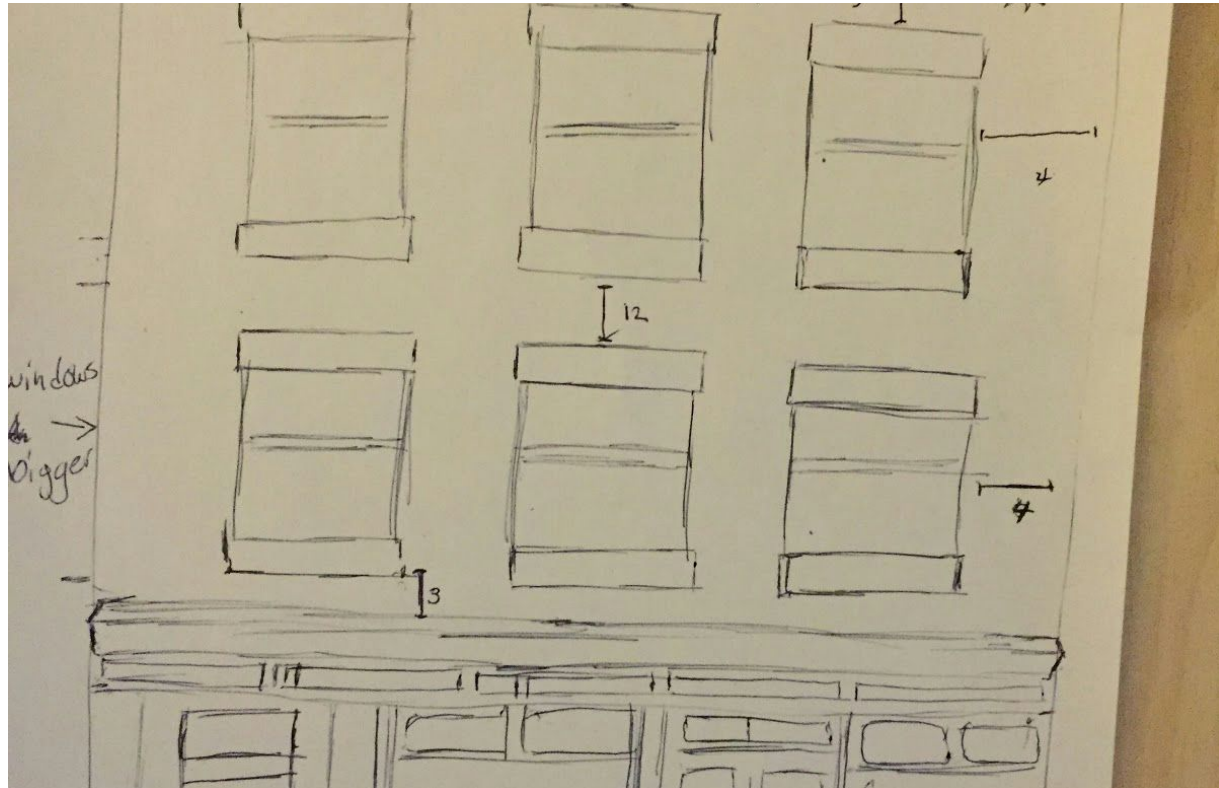
We have visited Vinegar Hill multiple times throughout the semester, but each time is like a new perspective. It has been some time since we last visited the neighborhood. As we do more research on the history of the area, some of our previous questions are being answered. We will be doing some sketching of building on different blocks. Our class will focus on strengthening our observation skills and take a more quantitative approach. It is important to sketch what we see and not what we think something looks like. By looking at the building structure we will try to better understand what time period it is representing.

### PRE-VISIT REFLECTION

I think by sketching these buildings it will allow me to see things I may have overlooked before. On the previous site visit I had taken pictures, but I wasn't able to clearly see part of the image. It is important

that I document more numbers and building details on site, so I can examine them at a later time.

## SITE DOCUMENTATION (photos/sketches)



This is 55 Hudson Ave , a three story pink colored building with a storefront on the ground floor.

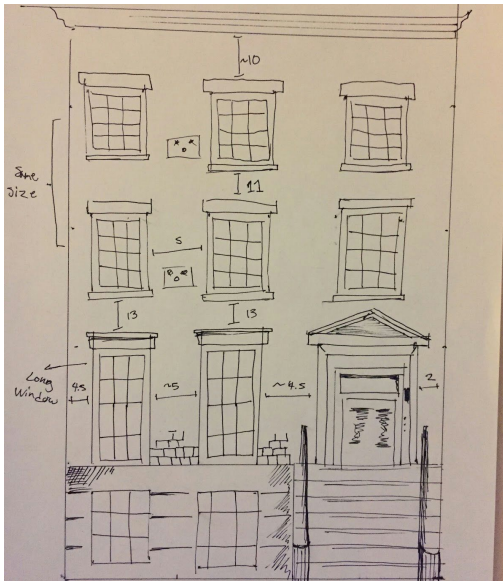


When I was sketching this building I was taking note of the brick count between windows and the side of the building. This was a quick sketch, so it is not to scale and objects seem to be bigger or smaller than they actually are. Some interesting feature of this building is the cornice decor at the top of the building. It is made of wood and has reoccurring patterns. The windows of the storefront have curved edges instead of being boxed off. The window lintels are thick and plain in appearance. The second floor window is larger than the top floor windows.



Four story building located at 69 water and Gold street

This building is located on the corner of water and Gold, which most likely was a busy storefront in the past. The windows lintels are smaller, but have a more decorative design than the first building observation. The building has a layout of two by two and is four stories tall. The second floor has larger windows than the ones above, similar to 55 Hudson. The cornice has a simple, yet distinct pattern going across the top of the building. The entrance doors are double sided and much larger. There is also a side door to the building located on water street, for access to the higher floors.



A four story building located at 239 Front street

The main difference between this building and the other two, is the staircase leading to the second floor. More importance was placed on the second floor than the ground floor. We can see the decorative triangle shaped piece above the door and the same lintel and cornice style as 69 gold street. The interesting part of this building is the separation of construction material used between the ground floor and the second floor. There are boxes located in between the windows on the third and fourth floors.

Write description of sketches or photos here, explaining why it is important and what it shows

## QUALITATIVE SITE OBSERVATIONS

1. Neighborhood / Street Character
  - a. Roads are three lanes wide
  - b. Mix of residential buildings and industrial factories.
2. Vitality of Neighborhood
  - a. General Description
    - i. Quiet with an older generation occupying homes
  - b. Pedestrian Activity
    - i. Low pedestrian activity on Hudson street
    - ii. Front street had more foot traffic
  - c. Vehicular Traffic
    - i. More vehicular traffic than people.
3. Relationship Between Buildings
  - a. On Gold street the corner building matches the total height of the other building, but each floor height is different .
  - b. On Front street buildings are constructed in similar style with a staircase and large second story windows.
4. Building Details
  - a. Cornice constructed of wood
  - b. Mostly composed of brick.
  - c. Front street and Gold street have decorative window styles and lintels
5. Relationship to the Waterfront
  - a. 55 Hudson is closest to the waterfront.
  - b. 69 Gold street and 239 Front street are about four blocks away from the East River.

## QUANTITATIVE DATA for Area of Study

Subject	Data
Street Names	Gold, Water, Front, Hudson street
Street Width	20 feet according to google maps measurement tool
Sidewalk	About 15 feet from street edge to building front
Building Heights	Hudson Street: mostly three stories tall Front street, Gold street: four stories
Building Widths (Window Bays)	Mostly three window Bays wide, with the exception of 69 gold street
Building Types/Uses	Brick buildings, combination of business and residential
Empty Lots / Gardens	No empty Lots
Shops / Restaurants	Damascus Bakeries on Gold Street
Industrial Shops	Joy Foot international inc on Front street

## QUESTIONS to Research Further

### QUESTIONS:

1. What design style is used for the cornice on 55 Hudson?
2. Why was the entrance of the storefront placed in an angle on 69 gold street?
3. Why is there a separation in building materials on the ground floor of 239 Front street?

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

1. Question 1
  - a. DUMBO HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION REPORT, New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission December 18, 2007
  - b. New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission August 2005
  - c. Brooklyn restoration projects
2. Question 2
  - a. Rebranding the Brooklyn Navy Yard: Marketplace
  - b. Brooklyn!: An Illustrated History
  - c. Guide to New York City Landmarks, Matthew A. Postal, Andrew Dolkart, New York
3. Question 3
  - a. Brooklyn Land Conveyance Collection (1699-1896)
  - b. An Architectural Guidebook to Brooklyn, Francis Morrone
  - c. Brooklyn Directories (1796, 1822-1913, 1933)

## SUMMARY / POST VISIT REFLECTION

It was helpful to revisit Vinegar Hill after doing research on the natural water lines and the farmland development. I was able to make connections between my research and building development in the area. It is important to look deeper into building design and building materials to get a better understanding of the area as a whole. These details can give clues to time periods for further investigation.