

Learning Places Fall 2016
Chin/Swift

LIBRARY / ARCHIVE REPORT

NEW YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY (Lincoln Center)



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INTRODUCTION

For this project we had to find archival material from New York Public Library, New York Historical Society or any other archival source pertaining to Lincoln Center or Times Square. My Focus is on Lincoln Center, and I decided to use New York Historical Society for physical archival material and New York Public Library for digital archival material.

PRE-VISIT REFLECTION

Prior to site visit, I was expecting to find poorly maintained material for my project. I was thinking the Librarian wouldn't be able to find anything of significance to help with this project. However, I was willing to learn, so I was open to any advice by the Librarian.

SOURCES

Lionel Pincus and Princess Firyal Map Division, The New York Public Library.

"Manhattan Land Book of the City of New York. Desk and Library Edition. 1955.

Schimmer, Kerner & Feder, Manhattan Land Book. 1955 (corrected in 1965)

DOCUMENTATION

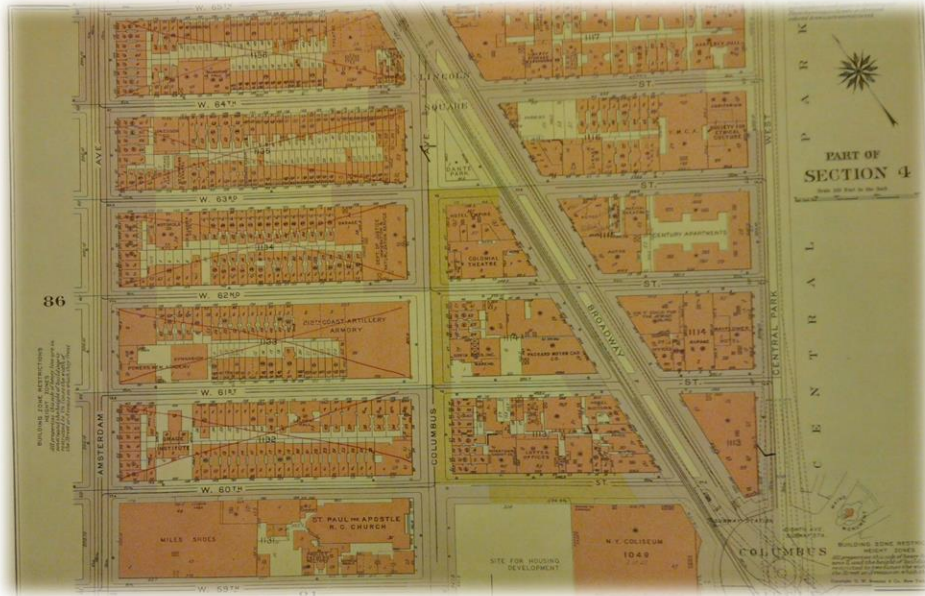


Plate 87, 1955: New York Historical Society version of San Juan Hill (Slums)
Three of the five blocks that are crossed off with red ink is where Lincoln Center was later constructed due to Urban renewal program.

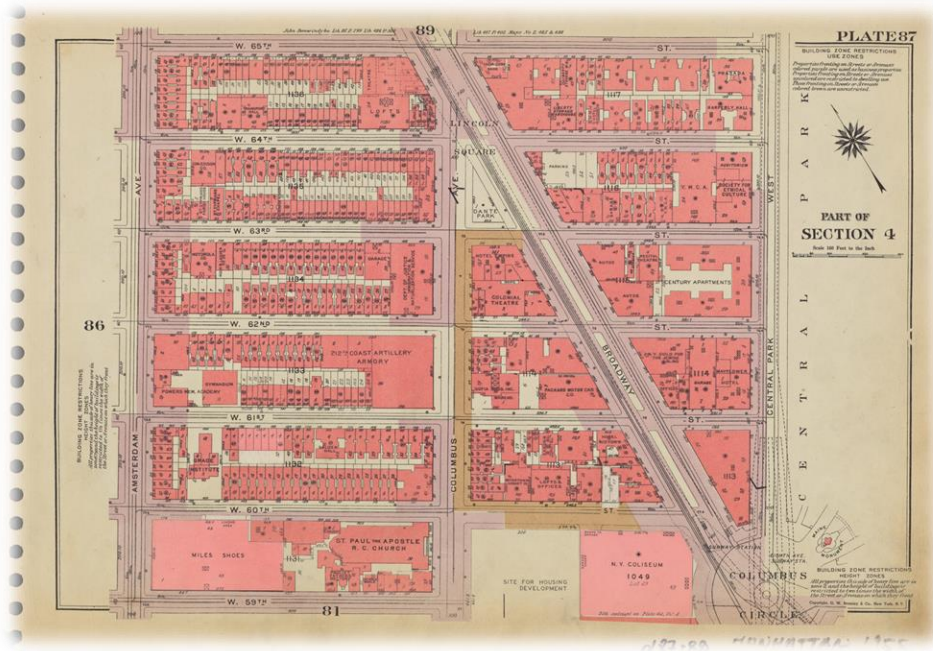


Plate 87, 1955: New York Public Library version of San Juan Hill (Slums)
On this version the five blocks that are not crossed off with red ink where Lincoln Center was later constructed due to Urban renewal program.



Plate 87, 1964: New York Historical Society version of now Lincoln Square
Here we can clearly see Lincoln Center utilizing three city blocks, and the remaining two block has been dramatically cleared out.

DISCOVERIES

1. Neighborhood History
 - a. Previously named San Juan Hill, was given by the Americans.
 - b. The name originated from the battle of the Spanish-American War.
2. Key Events / Historical Dates
 - a. July, 1st, 1898 War between the Spanish and Americans.
 - b. April, 21st, 1955 Lincoln square was zoned for urban renewal
 - c. May 14th, 1959 Construction started
3. Key Players
 - a. Dwight D. Eisenhower
 - b. Robert Moses
 - c. John D. Rockefeller III
4. Relationship Key Players
 - a. President of the United States
 - b. Urban Planner
 - c. Lincoln Center President and he raised 184.5 million in private funds for the project
5. Public Perception of Key Events
 - a. West Side Story filmed on the street prior to the demolition in 1961.
6. Important Changes to Neighborhood
 - a. The new construction gave the area a new image to the world.
 - b. Lincoln Center created an attractive destination for New Yorkers, performers, and tourist.
 - c. A lot of natives were forced to leave because of this project increasing the value of the area.
7. Other Observations
 - a. I like the coherence of the overall design on a whole even though the buildings were designed by different architects.
 - b. This was an example to use new urban design to wipe out a time in history by constructing a beautiful building and renaming the area.

TOPICS & KEYWORDS

Architects, Urban Renewal, Slum

QUANTITATIVE DATA FOR AREA OF STUDY

Subject	Data
Land Ownership	City owned / leased property
Number of Blocks	Lincoln Center is three (3) city blocks (West 62 nd Street – West 65 th Street)
# of Buildings on a Typical Block	One – two buildings per block
Materials	Granite, Marble, Concrete, Glass, Engineered wood
# of Stories of Buildings	Five and six story buildings (maps.nyc.gov)
Residential Buildings	None
Empty Lots	Partially (Damrosh Park)
Commercial Uses	Theatre (performing arts), Opera, Restaurant, Office building
Industrial Uses	None
Other Data	Business improvement district, cultural & recreational property
Other Data	Side walk café zoning regulations
Other Data	State senate district 27, City council district 6, Assembly district 67

QUESTIONS TO RESEARCH FURTHER

QUESTIONS:

1. Was San Juan Hill really a terrible slum like the government wants us to believe?
2. Robert Moses and Urban Renewal
3. The Architects / Designers of the complex

RESEARCH METHOD / ADDITIONAL SOURCES NEEDED TO ANSWER EACH QUESTION ABOVE:

1. Question 1
 - a. What was life like in San Juan Hill?
 - b. Was it truly a slum?
 - c. Did the government twist the truth of the living conditions of the residents living there to obtain money for the new construction of Lincoln Center?
2. Question 2
 - a. Why did Robert Moses have so much power?
 - b. What was the procedure to label an area for Urban Renewal if any?
 - c. What similar projects did he use Urban Renewal to get the existing residents to leave.
3. Question 3
 - a. Who are the Architects / Designers responsible for the original design?
 - b. Who are the Architects / Designers responsible for the renovations design?
 - c. What rules and regulations were set if any?

SUMMARY / POST VISIT REFLECTION

In closing, I'm honored to have gotten that experience because many people won't. Some people don't even know about archival information / material. Seeing the different type of items created by the respected creators or donated by collectors was intriguing to me mainly because people really care for all those aging items. When I heard the dates of some of the items versus how they looked, I was surprised because they were well preserved. What's even more impressive is the large, fire proof storage with no sprinklers, but an oxygen suppression system. They are also serious on security with only extremely old / valuable items locked away in the vault. Finally, I learned a lot from this experience, and I can see this skill being using for me in the future that's if I'm have issues finding information online or in published books.