

Learning Places Spring 2017

SITE REPORT

Vinegar Hill



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INTRODUCTION

On February 6th, we went to the Vinegar hills area and walked some parts of DUMBO as well for our first site visit. However, this was my first time going on a sight visit because I am a mechanical engineering student and the rest of my classes do not have these kind of visits, but it was an interesting and fruitful experience.

PRE-VISIT REFLECTION

In the beginning of the semester, the professors had stated that our first site visit was going to be at Vinegar Hills and we were also going to see parts of DUMBO. I had never been to this part of Brooklyn and I heard that DUMBO was a really expensive and popular place to live, therefore I had imagined DUMBO being more active and having more things to do. But for vinegar hills, I honestly did not know what to expect because I didn't know where vinegar hills was.

SITE DOCUMENTATION (photos/sketches)



The photo on the left shows the view towards the Con-Ed powerplant from the point of view from the intersection of Hudson ST and Evan ST, and the photo on the right is the "on-site-drawing" of what I saw as I stood on this intersection.



As we walked in the historic vinegar hills area, I saw this lot filled with abandoned tractors, machines, and a lot of construction material and it seemed as all this was from the WWII era because the design of the machines were authentically retro, and the rust shows the toll this area has had on these items in that forgotten lot.



The photos above are of the “White Vinegar Hills House” which was the most surprising part of the site visit because of the architecture of the house and the amount of green land surrounding the house. But to me, the most surprising part of this “Vinegar Hill White House” was the fact that someone still lives in this house.



The Three photos above are examples of how modern day architecture has merged with the historic architecture of the area's rich history.

OBSERVATIONS

1. There was a lot of evidence that the historic conservation came too late because a lot of the old buildings, stores, lots, and the roads were destroyed for new (and Ugly) buildings.
2. Murals depicted the history the area has gone through, such as the newspaper with the front page mentioning the closing of the Brooklyn navy yard.

- The professors were not boring and made the site visit and tour very intriguing.

QUANTITATIVE DATA

Subject	Data
Broken Car Windows	As we walked through the area, I saw 4 car windows smashed
Train track rails	During our tour of the area, I noticed that there was one long track and it went through three buildings, which I found out were factory buildings.

QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESIS

QUESTIONS:

- Why was the Con-Ed powerplant closed?
- Why did the Brooklyn Navy Yard shut down?
- Does a lot of graffiti/vandalism happen in the vinegar hills historic area?

HYPOTHESIS:

- The powerplant had to shut down in 2011 because they were emitting a lot of hazardous emissions and they had to destroy their boilers, fuel lines, and eventually their stack (which is on the cover of this site report)
- The department of defense wanted to save money by closing the Brooklyn navy yard
- I do not know because there were no statistics on this topic.

SUMMARY / POST VISIT REFLECTION

Although I was generally disappointed by the reality of the DUMBO area and therefore I still do not know why the area is so popular and expensive. However, my understanding of the vinegar hills area has been significantly enhanced and I was very impressed by the amount of preserved history that was in the area.

REFERENCES TO EXPLORE HYPOTHESIS

1. www.dec.ny.gov/dardata/boss/afs/permits/261010004200044.pdf
2. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brooklyn_Navy_Yard
3. N/A