

Learning Places Spring 2017

SITE REPORT

Vinegar Hill, Brooklyn, New York



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INTRODUCTION

The Vinegar Hill boundaries are the Navy Yard to the east, the East River on the north, Nassau Street to the south and on the west, Bridge Street, the border with Dumbo. It's primarily manufacturing - there is a few warehouses and factories, same much as a residential group.

PRE-VISIT REFLECTION

I expected to see old warehouses and manufacturers. I could not even image that some of those public building became a residential house.

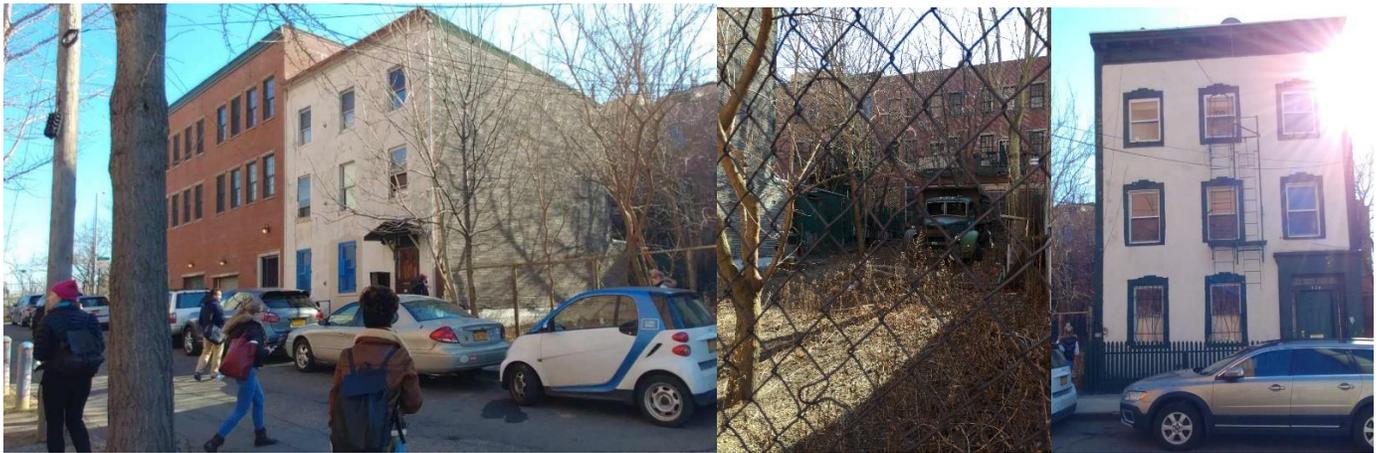
SITE DOCUMENTATION



For the most part Vinegar Hill quiet residential neighborhood. The massive Con Edison

building on the waterfront and the cobblestone streets are kind of remind us of the present industry.

By starting our studying of surrounding neighborhood from Hudson Avenue and Plymouth Street, passing by three story buildings with great pieces of history, like old tracks in the back yard of the building.



Then we found some changes on the Little Street and Evans Street, two white buildings, but with the huge difference between styles and materials. One of them was 3 stories modern apartment building with rooftop and garage. Another one grand white one family house across the Street. It was visible only through iron gates. This historic home was Brooklyn Public Library. Its white façade was glowing even on the afternoon.



The red water pump and Belgium blocks on the Hudson and water street perfectly fit in the neighborhood as a Relic of the past. Right on the corner, we found an old club board building, built by the woodworker. From there you can see a couple of art stores and restaurant guiding you to the water front.



Buildings between Plymouth and Front Streets, make up one of Brooklyn's oldest residential neighborhoods. Front Street features a handsome row of three-story Greek revival brick houses with two columns by the doors.

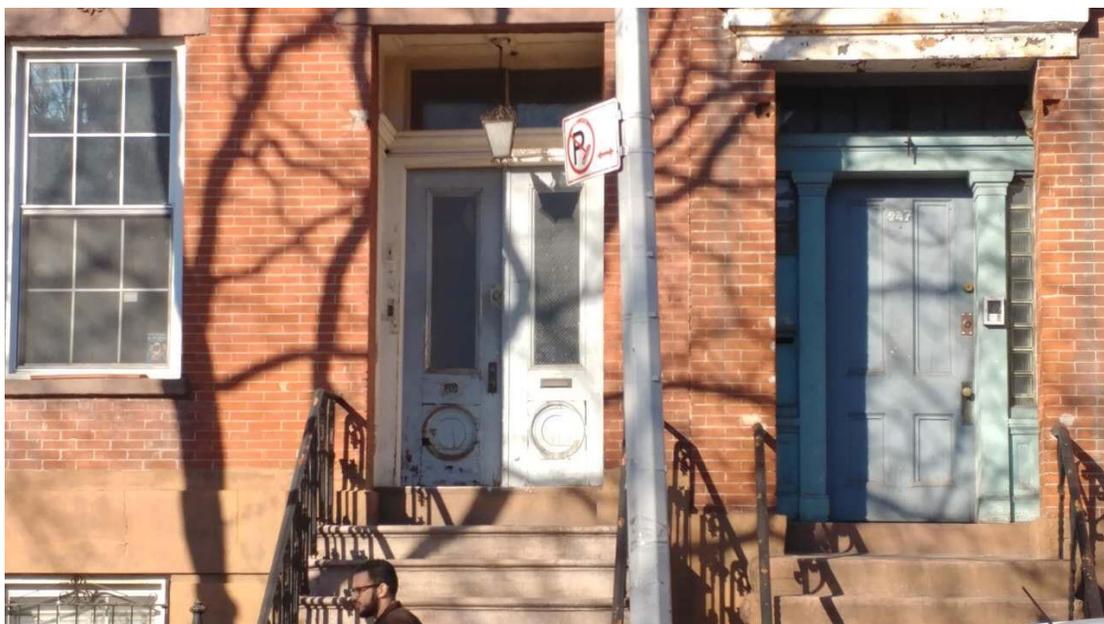




Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3

Former firehouse adapted as housing. (Figure 1)

Renovated stone railroad a front of residential building adapted from the warehouse.
(Figure 2)

The Farragut Houses is an isolated by the public housing project. (Figure 3)

OBSERVATIONS

1. A lot of old tracks in the back yard of some properties.
2. Factories and warehouses became a residential or office space.
3. Front Street (One block away from Jay Street) makes a huge difference between Dumbo and Vinegar Hill.

4. Dead gardens next to Farragut Houses.
5. Broken car windows next to Farragut Houses.
6. Nice railroad track saved from the past in some areas of Dumbo.
7. The parking lot for tracks on the corner of Front Street, right next to residential buildings.

QUANTITATIVE DATA

Subject	Data
Red relic water pump	1
Farragut Houses (cross-shaped identical buildings)	10
Cars with broken windows (Farragut Houses)	3

QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESIS

QUESTIONS:

1. Where is a Vinegar Hill name coming from?
2. Why Farragut Houses buildings spread out in the parks?
3. Why Farragut Houses so different from all neighborhood?
4. What the requirements for changing the use of a building? (From public to residential)

HYPOTHESIS:

1. The name came from the manufacture or plantation which is used to be on that land.
2. Buildings spread out to make a private space for each small community.
3. Highway isolated the community of public housing.
4. Passing all kinds of inspections.

SUMMARY / POST VISIT REFLECTION

I was surprised how this Brooklyn waterfront changed from isolated old architecture for workers community become such a luxury place to live in.

REFERENCES TO EXPLORE HYPOTHESIS

1. Planning department. Information on building expansion or changing the use of a building.
2. The decision for site planning of Farragut Houses.
3. Projects similar with Farragut Houses.
4. An example of Successful changes in this kind of community.