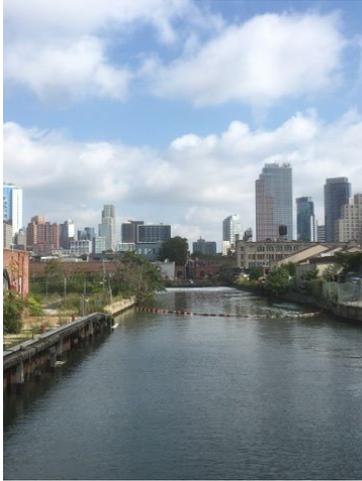


Learning Places Fall 2017

SITE REPORT #1

Gowanus, Brooklyn



The End of Gowanus Canal: This picture shows the end of Gowanus Canal. It also shows the modern high-rise buildings behind the canal. They become a wall that separates the urban area and suburban area.

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INTRODUCTION

Describe the scope of the activity, geographic, and logistical details about the site visit. Include information about your expectations of the place and whether your expectations lived up to reality.

Gowanus is a developing suburban area with many construction areas. After my research of many information about Gowanus, I think Gowanus is an artistic space with clean water and green vegetation. It will be filled with historical features due to its graffiti art. Gowanus' houses look similar because most of them have the same pattern, texture, and color, which line up to the street.

SITE OBSERVATIONS : Take notes in your notebook and use those to report your observations

(include photographic documentation and visual notes—at least 3 photographs 2 sketches required -- provide a caption for each image. Also provide a brief explanation why you chose the image and how it is related to the text)

What do you notice about the scale and shape of buildings?

Most of the buildings have two or three stories. There are also some buildings have seven or more stories. The shape of buildings are simple rectangle.



Gowanus Housing: This building is an eight-floor residential building.

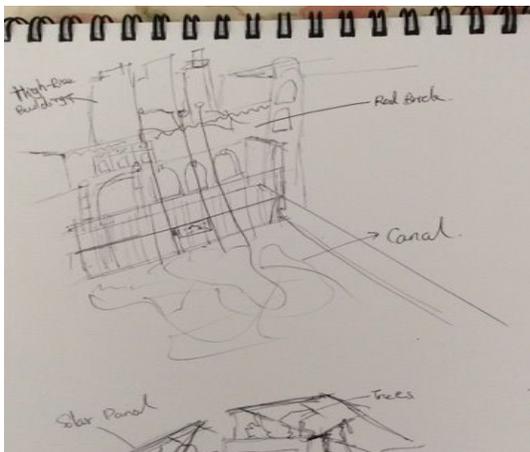
What patterns, textures, colors, and ornamental features of the buildings stand out?

The buildings are geometry and symmetry. Their facades are brown bricks with rectangle glass windows.

Few new buildings have different facades. For example, the green building is painted by dark green and black. It has rectangle window with steel grids.



Green Building: Green Building is painted by dark green and black. Exterior walls are painted by dark green. Window frames, door frames, and roof are color by black.



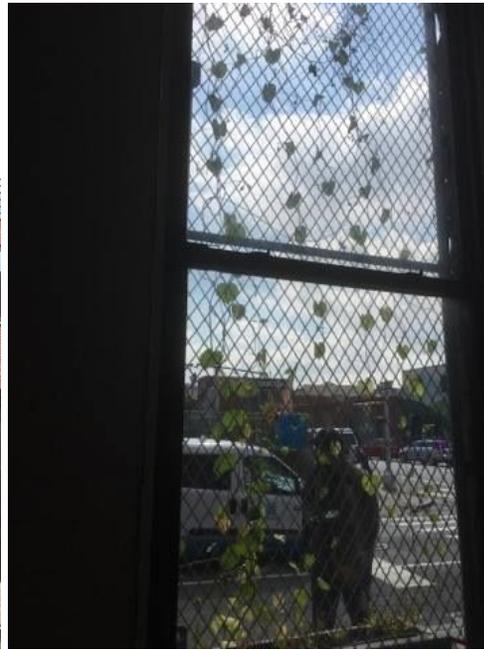
The End Of Gowanus Canal: The building uses red brick.

Notice and note location of trees and other types of vegetation

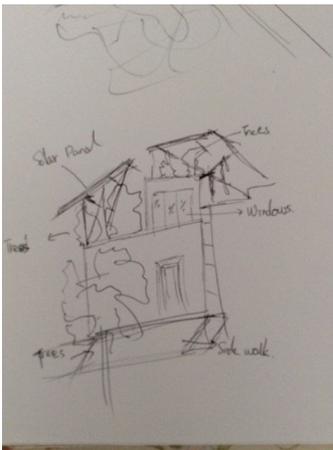
Trees are planted in front of the building. There are some climbing plants and wall shrubs covering exterior walls and decorating the windows. Some people are planting trees in their roof. There are small parks, like Gowanus Canal Pilot Sponge Park.



Trees: Trees planted in front of the building.



Wall Shrubs: Wall shrubs decorates the window.



Roof Garden

What are the functions of different buildings and spaces in this place? Does the place include residential, commercial, or industrial sites? Are there stores, restaurants, cafes? Are there public spaces like public squares or parks? Areas where people can get together? Seating?

Gowanus has residential, commercial, and industrial spaces. Most of the buildings are used as

manufactures or factories, where they have a large rolling door. Most of them are nearby Gowanus Canal side, filling up the entire street blocks. Then, the blocks nearby are residential buildings and commercial buildings. There are many commercial buildings located at 4th Avenue, and the biggest one is Wholefood. There are some new residential buildings constructing, like 365 Bond Street, a 10-floor height building. There are stores, restaurants, and bars in this area. The most famous one is Lavender Lake Bar. There are public spaces like Gowanus Canal Pilot Sponge Park. When I visit Gowanus, there are not a lot of people gathering together. There is a seating area at the back of 365 Bond, which is nearby the Canal. However, there are no people sitting in this area.

Does this place seem planned or organic? How do the structures and buildings in this place interact with or disrupt the natural environment?

This Place seems to be planned. The places have different functions, like commerce, resident, and manufacture. Their location has a linear pattern. Moreover, the plants are also planned to put into the area. For example, at the end of Gowanus Canal, there are new plants nearby the Canal. Some new flowers are planted nearby the road. The structures and buildings in this place interact with the natural environment. The buildings are fully urbanized, but it has also feature some environment friendly interaction. For example, there are some gardens nearby the buildings in order to create a green environment and improve pollution. For example, there is a garden nearby the 365 Bond Street Apartment building. When it rains, the garden help to drain the water into underground. The buildings are not close to each other, so the trees and flowers can get more sunlight and nutriment.

What people occupy the space and how do they interact with the environment? Is this place crowded? Walkable? Easy to navigate?

There are houses, manufacturing factories, and restaurants. Factories occupy most of the area along the riverside, and the houses and restaurants occupy the street blocks area. Residents and workers both utilizing the public spaces, and the restaurants actively. The place is not crowded. During the two hours trip, I only saw three types of people, including workers, residents, and visitors. I saw some seniors sitting in front of the Gowanus House. It seems like they have been living here for long time. The place is walkable, especially the new road after the renovation. Most of them are narrow, which is a one way road with sidewalk and bicycles-use way.

What is your personal experience of the place? Think about sound/smell/touch, your body's movement, contact with the ground and physical comfort - how does the place make you feel?

I get off the train at Atlantic Avenue, which is 15 minutes walking from the end of Gowanus Canal. There is a food truck nearby the subway station, and the food smells good. I felt very welcomed since the smelling of food are inviting. This place seems to be in the middle of development, since I heard a lot of construction noise along my walk. The building blocks is considerably aged, which might be the reason of some renovations going on in this place. People around the site does not look as busy as city center, and relatively nice compare to city center. The site has a refined artistic atmosphere, graffiti arts are all over different building's walls. This place makes me feel like I am in the border of new and old building blocks, which makes me very curious about the completion of the renovations.

ANALYSIS/DISCOVERIES

Use this section to analyze the observations you've noted. What conclusions can you draw about this place and the people who live and work here? What inferences can you make about how the place has changed throughout history and how it might change in the future? How is this place similar to or different from the places surrounding it? What does this place tell us about Brooklyn? About New York City in general? What is the Genius Loci, or spirit, of this place?

The conclusion of this place will be, this place is still in developing phase as it is still working on its renovation in order to catch up with the developing pace of city center. I see a lot of potential in this place whereas the interaction of art and manufacturing industry happens. For now, the population flow of this place is most likely to be resident and workers, but I can foresee that there might be more businessmen and customers from other places to come, since this place is good location to develop a restaurant hub or business center. The Gowanus will become another hub of Brooklyn and become better and better. The water pollution became a biggest problem in this area, but the environment become well after people make effect on protecting this place. For example, environmentalist are raising oyster to filter water. Moreover, more gardens are building in this area. The place is similar to Dumbo, especially the pattern, texture, and color of the new buildings. They have similar rectangular pattern, use red brick and flat roof with arch window. There are three significant differences between Gowanus and the surrounding neighborhood, Carroll Gardens. Firstly, in the history, Gowanus is the first place that Dutch farmers settle down, while Carroll Gardens is known for Italian-American roots. Secondly, there are a lots of industrial building in Gowanus. However, there are many commercial buildings, like cafe, restaurants, and traditional Italian shops in Carroll Gardens. Last but not least, Gowanus is a suburban area with water pollution, while Carroll Gardens an urban area. Gowanus is in south Brooklyn, like the other area in Brooklyn, it has grid pattern and brown brick. Even in New York, there is using grid pattern. The spirit of Gowanus is Gowanus Canal. In the history, people love to settle

down nearby the river since they can cultivate crops. Nowadays, artist and investors are interesting in Gowanus Canal, so more residential buildings are constructed nearby the canal.

KEYWORDS/ VOCABULARY (these might include specialized vocabulary, city agencies, names of businesses or people *5 keywords minimum required per site visit)

1. Gowanus Canal
2. The Batcave(Power House)
3. Retractable Bridge(Carroll Street Bridge)
4. Graffiti
5. NYC Park

QUESTIONS for FURTHER RESEARCH (these should follow directly from your analysis section and be complex and specific enough to serve as the basis of a research project; do not include questions you can answer with a quick google search)

1. Where are the artists from and where do they go?
2. Will Gowanus be a famous tourist area?
3. How to solve the pollution in Gowanus Canal and bring more people to Gowanus.