

Learning Places Fall 2017

Library / Archive REPORT

Brooklyn Public Library

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INTRODUCTION



Our objective in visiting the Brooklyn Public Library is to learn more about our topics. We are all looking for research into the Gowanus Canal and its surrounding area but most of us already know what topic we wish to study more in detail. I think it is safe to say that most of us were not entirely sure what we were looking for and so when we told the Librarian our topics and she handed us all these articles and books, we knew we were going to find something interesting regardless of our topics. The atlases were the only thing we knew to expect and it was exactly like as pictured, maps of the area showing all the manufacturing buildings near the canal.

SITE OBSERVATIONS



What is the Genius Loci, or spirit, of this place?

The Genius Loci of this place is knowledge, calm, peacefulness.

What kind of archive or library is this? What kinds of materials / sources does this place collect?

In addition to being a regular/normal library, this library tries to collect all kinds of historical materials from all over that relates to Brooklyn and its past. For example, they have an extensive collection on the Brooklyn Daily Eagle, a newspaper started in 1850's, and a lot of atlases and maps dating back to early 1900's.

Who might use this collection and for what purpose?

Anyone who is looking for a piece of history on Brooklyn may come in and use this collection. They may use the maps to see how the insurance companies used to keep track of the buildings, or they may use it to read the Brooklyn Daily Eagle and learn how the life in Brooklyn used to be.

Are there any special rules for using or accessing material?

All the materials that were in the library were to be only accessed in the one room we were in. You were to put your bag or backpack in a locker that they provided and also store away your jacket/coat/sweater. Perhaps this is done to prevent anyone from stealing any documents. All the materials they have online were accessible to everyone, if I am not mistaken.

SOURCE ANALYSIS

Goodman

Developer Greens a Block in Brooklyn

The New York Times Nov. 18, 1984

Trees Enhance Its Investments on Sackett Street

By GEORGE W. GOODMAN

TWENTY-TWO new trees were planted last week on once-troubled Sackett Street in the lower Park Slope section of Brooklyn by a real estate company seeking to improve a block in which it already has invested more than \$1 million.

"It will serve the dual purpose of enhancing our image and put something back into a neighborhood in which we are doing business," said Elliot Leffel, project administrator of the Gardenia Organization, a real-estate management and development concern that owns three properties on Sackett Street. Mr. Leffel is also a full-time reading teacher at nearby Intermediate School 88, at 544 Seventh Avenue.

With his partner, Adam Mocio, the vice principal at I.S. 88, Mr. Leffel was on hand Monday afternoon to supervise workmen from the Kings County Nurseries as they planted an assortment of maple, linden and ginkgo saplings along both sides of Sackett Street between Fourth and Fifth Avenues. Others taking part in the planting ceremony were Paul Savad, a lawyer and president of the Gardenia Organization, and Barry Paikoff, a member of the Sackett Street Block Association.



The New York Times / Chester Higgins Jr.

Paul Savad of Gardenia Organization, left, observing tree planting.

CITATION for ARCHIVAL SOURCE #1: Goodman, G. W. (1984, November 18). Developer Greens a Block in Brooklyn. *The New York Times*.

1. What is this source and what is its purpose?

The source is a newspaper article. It's purpose is to provide us information about how people were thinking about making Brooklyn "greener".

2. Who created it and who was it created for?

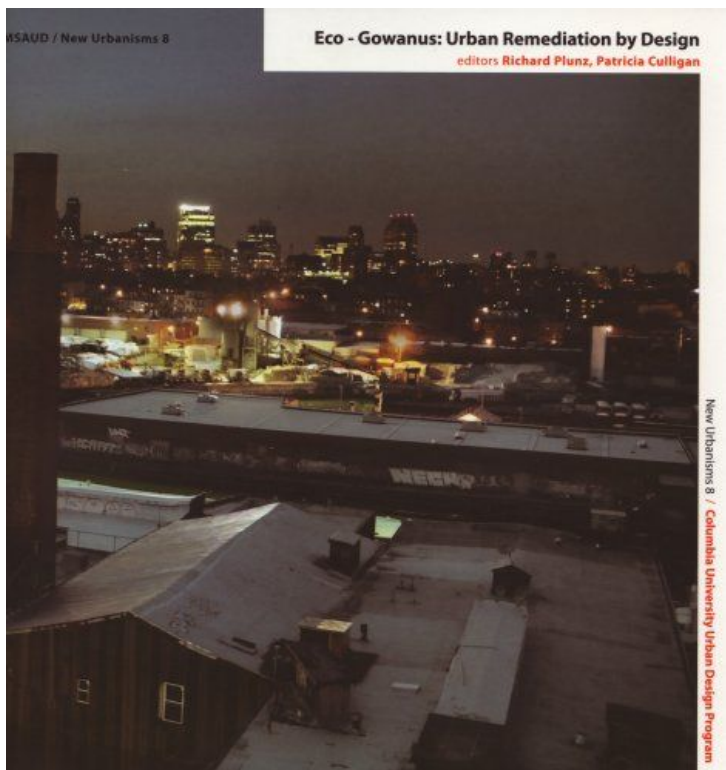
It was created by a white man and he made it to show everyone how this developer was trying to give back to the neighborhood and not just building things they wanted to make as much money as they wanted.

3. What does this source tell us about the place we are studying? What themes or subtopics does it relate to?

This source tells us a lot about the Gowanus area that we are studying. It tells us that the area was rezoned to residential and some people were not happy that these new developers were going to come into the area and benefit from what has already been there. It tells us that the developers were trying to give back to the community by planting trees, thereby making the area greener and nicer, which would be a benefit to everyone. This source also mentions how the developers were born in the area and so they had a strong desire to be involved in helping the community get better and is something that we have not discussed upon in detail during our class discussions that could be worth looking into more.

4. How might it be integrated into a research project? What question could it be used to help answer?

This could be integrated into someone who is researching zoning or demographic or the environment. Could be used to help answer how to get more trees planted around the canal and all the dead end streets.



CITATION for ARCHIVAL SOURCE #2 : Plunz, R., & Culligan, P. J. (Eds.). (2007). *Eco-Gowanus: Remediation by Design*. New York, NY: Columbia University GSAPP.

1. What is this source and what is its purpose?

This source is a book. The purpose of this book is to give details about how communities and neighborhoods can be redesigned to be more eco-friendly/environmentally friendly/stable. It focuses primarily on the Gowanus.

2. Who created it and who was it created for?

It was created by two Columbia University students. It was created as a two year study between some departments in Columbia University and some organizations in Brooklyn.

3. What does this source tell us about the place we are studying? What themes or subtopics does it relate to?

This source tells us about how the Gowanus area can be transformed into a beautiful and better place. It starts out with basic land use and then goes on to giving ideas on how one can incorporate green infrastructure into the area to remediate it. That can relate to anyone studying Green Infrastructure and/or zoning or land use or remediation.

4. How might it be integrated into a research project? What question could it be used to help answer?

This can be integrated into anyone who is studying green infrastructure or zoning or land use. It could be used to help answer questions such as how or what kind of green infrastructure can be used/incorporated into Gowanus to prevent any future environmental damage to the canal and the surrounding area.

GENERAL NOTES:

- Most of the canal area is prone to flooding and yet they would like to build residential buildings without first solving the flooding issue.
- During the booming of the manufacturing industry near the canal, many buildings were wood and so they could easily catch on fire as wood is not very fire resilient.
- We can use a Phyto- and Bio-remediation system to remediate any stormwater that would be getting into the canal.

- We can use a soil-remediation system to clean any contaminated soil or organic waste.

QUESTIONS for Further RESEARCH

1. How or what kind of green infrastructure can be used/incorporated into the Gowanus to prevent any future environmental damage to the canal and its surrounding area?
2. How can we get more trees planted around the canal and all the dead end streets?
3. How can we get developers to help with the environmental problems the Gowanus is facing?
(such as flooding)