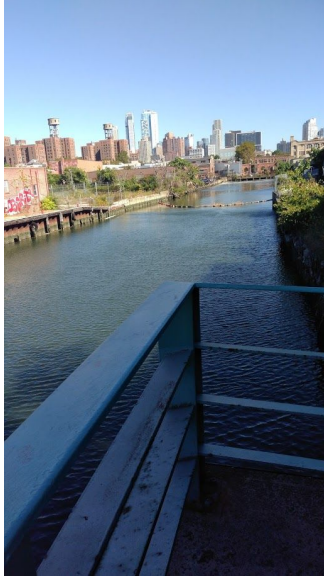


Learning Places Fall 2017

SITE REPORT #2

Gowanus Conservancy Visit



(view of the canal, seem cleaner than the last time we visited)

Kristopher Garay

10/05/2017

INTRODUCTION AND PRE-VISIT REFLECTIONS

Prior to the visit i anticipate learning more about the gowanus area in terms of environmental change and current actions being taken by the conservancy and other organizations to better the neighborhood and reduce the pollution and rezoning, or combat it.

SITE DOCUMENTATION:

MAP OF AREA OF INVESTIGATION --



- (1) PHOTOS AND SKETCHES: Provide a minimum of 4 photos and 2 sketches of places, elements, processes, people or anything else that you found significant and meaningful during the walk. Focus on scenes that relate to ecology, the environment and public spaces. Feel free to include IN ADDITION other “findings” that you found intriguing. For each photo provide captions and explanations – why is the image shown significant for your exploration.



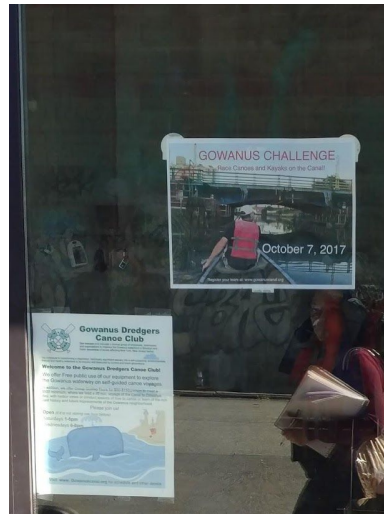
(Exposed pipe, wonder what it's for)



(Alex Figliolia plumbing and fire suppression company)



(Odd mural painting)



(Gowanus Canal Canoe Club advertisements)

ANALYSIS: Select one of the topics discussed on the walk and 1-3 most important of your images (from those presented in the documentation section) and develop a 300-500-word discussion of that topic. Be specific and consider multiple points of view of that topic. Consider how it might affect the neighborhood, people, environment, art, development or anything else that you detect as significant either positively or negatively or both. How are your images relevant to the discussion? How will this topic affect the Genius Loci, or spirit, of this place? Does it have any ramifications for the rest of Brooklyn?

Throughout our walk with the Gowanus Conservancy there were a few topics discussed. They ranged from pollution, to the process of cleanup, to prevention, zoning, etc. The topic that interested me the most was zoning. According to NYC Planning, zoning plans to develop areas into either industrial and residential areas. During our discussion, our guide Christina mentioned the effects of zoning to the Gowanus neighborhood. For example, the area around the canal is mostly industrial. However, due to the proposed rezoning, it may soon turn into a residential area. 365 Bond St. is a great example of spot zoning and shows how the neighborhood doesn't affect a developer's greed for money. With all these planned implementations there will be no homes for low-income families due to price changes, there will likely be an increase in automobile presence which will cause air pollution to grow, and the cleanup of the Gowanus will be made more difficult because there will be more sewage overflow due to the increase of toilet units.

The process of the zone changes is what concerns me the most. There are many privately owned art studios and industrial buildings along the Canal that could be reclaimed by the Government through use of eminent domain. Eminent Domain means, "Allowing of the government to take private land for public benefits only if the government can produce fair compensation to the property owners."

Our second visit to Gowanus with the conservancy shed a whole new perspective on things. The areas Genius loci was never there what with all the industrial buildings, and with all these developments i feel like it will develop as welcoming and friendly. But does not change the fact of how it affects the people.

KEYWORDS/ VOCABULARY :

1. Green Infrastructure
2. Grey Infrastructure
3. Coltar
4. Sponge Park
5. Bioswale

QUESTIONS for FURTHER RESEARCH:

1. To what extent are developers willing to change when they decide to work with small organizations like the Gowanus Conservancy?
2. What will it take for the city to greatly implement green infrastructure?
3. Who will be the ones to take care of the Gowanus after cleanup is finished? And how often will they be mandated to make sure pollution does not return?