

Learning Places Fall 2017

SITE REPORT #3

Personalized Group Walk



Image of construction site by Whole Foods. A symbolic representation of how Gowanus is changing and being renewed.

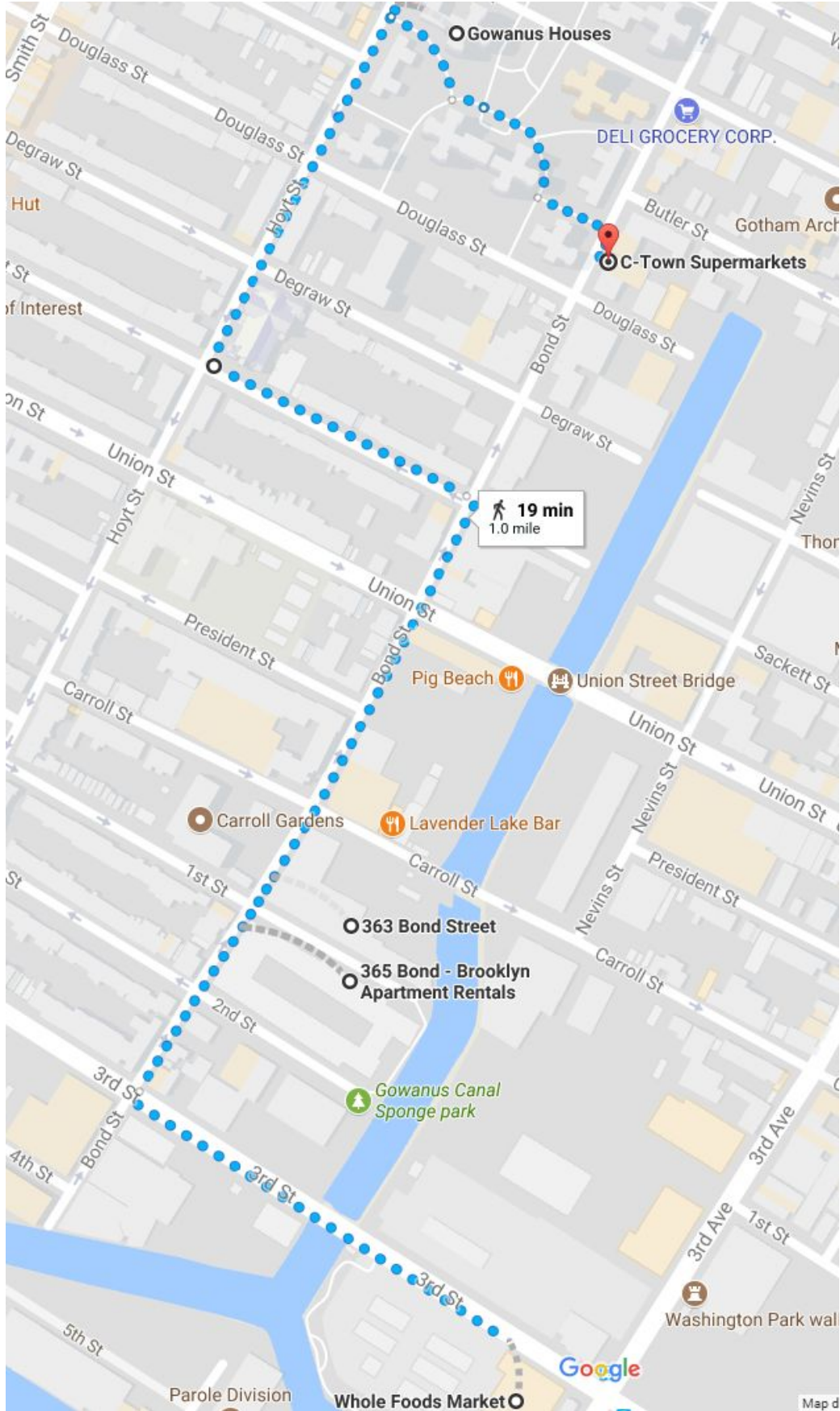
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INTRODUCTION AND PRE-VISIT REFLECTIONS

Prior to going into the site, I had expected to go into marketing for the Gowanus Area. While the group I did plan to go with was dissolved, I joined a group that ended up covering a similar question: How is the Gowanus changing? I had expected many different opinions, but some were quite surprising.

SITE DOCUMENTATION: Take notes and sketch in your notebook, take many photographs – search for angles and details that really tell a story and use those to report your documentation. Your site documentation will include the following:



(1) PHOTOS AND SKETCHES:



Image of add over by 365 Bond. Note how the image doesn't feature minorities, as if they don't belong.



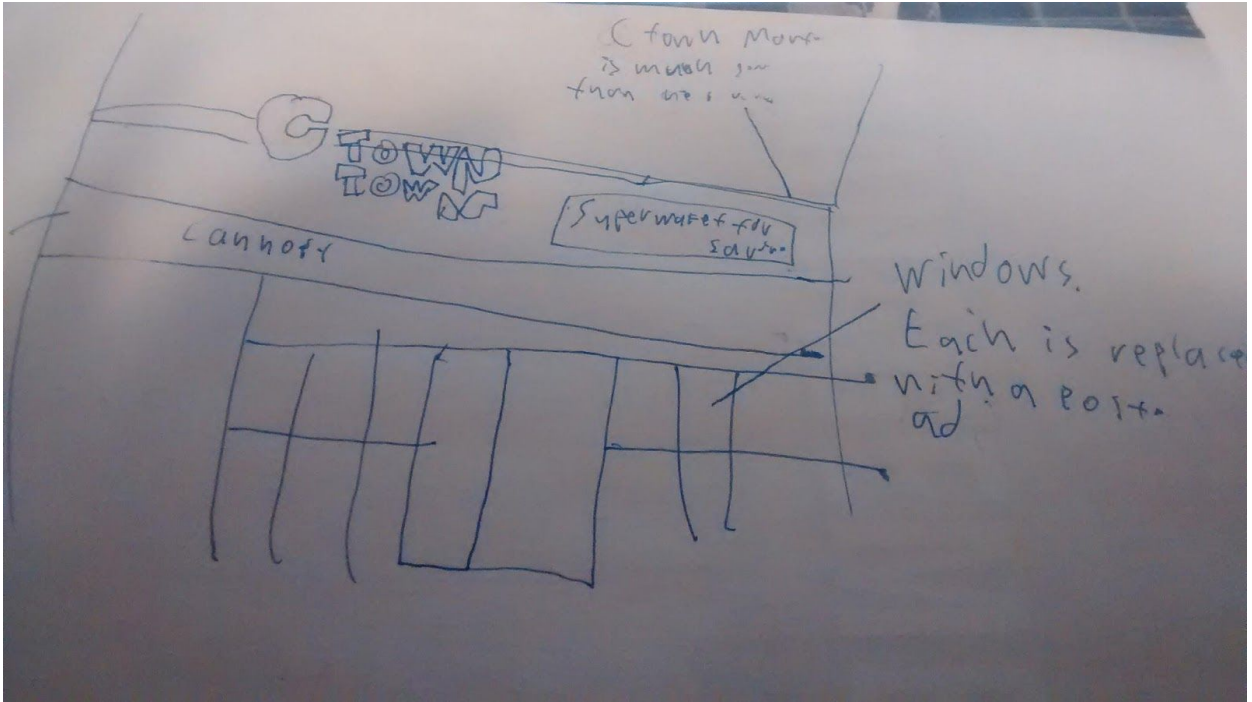
Image for reference of location where we met Diana. Sign was placed outside, and using as reference to location.



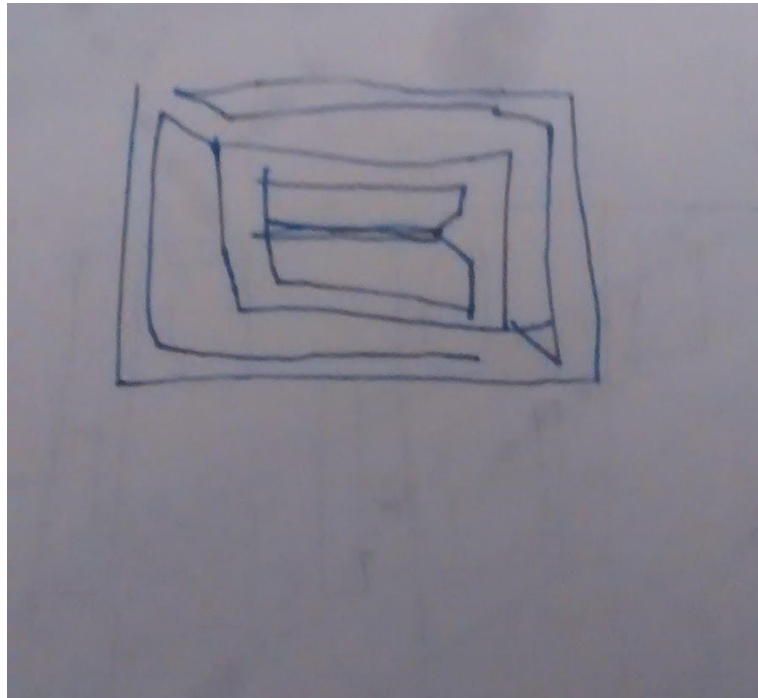
Image of lifted Union Street bridge. Note how bad the traffic is.



Image of the crime scene by Gowanus housing.



Sketch of C-Town Supermarket



Sketch of logo for Leasing Gallery

ANALYSIS: One of our first interviews was that of Matt, a person who just came into the Gowanus Area from London, England. He claims to have moved into the Gowanus area because the location has all that he wants, like TV and a two story dorm, while being inexpensive at \$7,000. He was aware of the Gowanus reputation of being filthy and the clean up effort, but as he plans to move out into his own home later, we can assume that he is okay with it as he plans to eventually move out.

Diana, who was a sales representative of the luxury housing 365 Bond and its associated leasing gallery, had allowed us to interview her about her housing. According to her, the location at \$7,000 is considered well priced, despite the fact that I think most would say otherwise. The company that she works for states that they do their best to integrate themselves into the community. They have an open breakfast, where both residence of the housing and regular members can come in. They also have a gallery featuring work from local Gowanus artists. While I do feel that these are sincere, I have to question how much people actually take advantage of this project.

Another thing that happened was that we encountered a mailman. Claiming to work for 8 years in the gowanus area, although he was too busy at work to continue talking with us for long. He claims that he has become more busy than before. This suggests a higher density of people than before, as more people require more mail.

On our lookout for another person to interview, we encountered a bridge that had been raised, causing a line of cars to build up. If the gentrification of Gowanus continues, this might be another thing to look out for. If either the bridge or the roads become more busy due to more people, than the traffic will certainly become worse if the bridges are still used. If we should keep them and/or continue to use cars on them will certainly have to be answered eventually.

While my group had attempted to gather information from a tenant from the Gowanus Housing Project. However, a murder had occurred, so we decided it was best to back off. Looking into the dna's information on it (<https://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/20171013/gowanus/gowanus-houses-fatal-shooting-ramon-ortiz>) shows that has possible connections to gang violence. Gang violence is actually a semi-common occurrence according to the writing.

We also met with what I would consider to be a matriarch of the community, Marry Glever. Having lived in Gowanus since the 80's, she was extremely familiar with a large number of members of the community, as several people stopped by to say "hi" to her during our talk. She claims that she came to the neighborhood to experience its diversity. She had come here so she can expose her kids to this place, seeing how racially diverse the people were. According to her, however, her children did not truly appreciate it because they felt the location was too dangerous, filled with things like gun violence. However, she did not notice any change in demographic over the years. She also remarks that she doesn't feel like she is being "pushed out" by her landowner. She pays based on income, and as she is already retired so she doesn't pay anything. While they could try and charge her for services, she makes certain to avoid that when possible.

KEYWORDS/ VOCABULARY (these must be words you learned on this walk such as specialized vocabulary, city agencies, names of businesses or significant people – they must be specific to the topic of the walk) *5 keywords required per site visit

1. Oww-Oww - A gang believed to be involved in the murder my group witnessed on the walk.
2. 365 Bond - Luxury Residential buildings in Gowanus, which we interviewed a leasing gallery.
3. Marry Glever - A known artist who we interviewed, claimed to have won an art award.
4. Lightstone - Owner of 365 Bond.
5. C-town Supermarket - Where we interviewed Marry Glever.

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. Has the gentrification of Gowanus have any effect on crimes?
2. Do average Gowanus dwellers really notice gentrification in their neighborhood?
3. Have the new developers been trying to get along with the current population, or are they trying to push the older residence out?