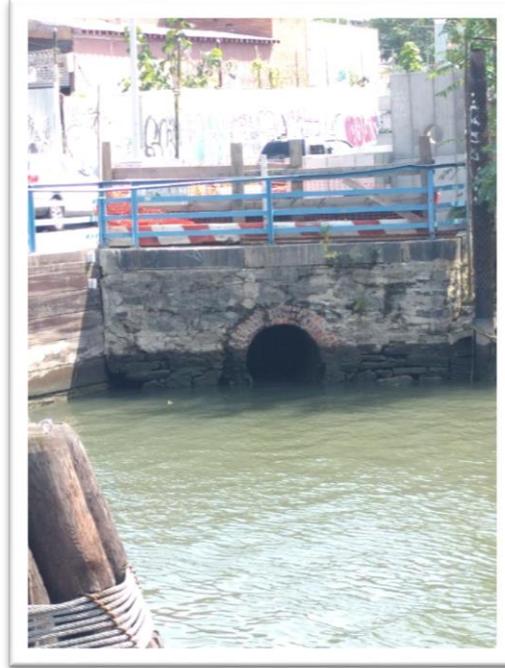


Learning Places Fall 2017

SITE REPORT #2

Conservancy Discussion



I This picture was taken in the Gowanus Canal Opposite the new apartment building. The drain is often used to remove run off water from the surrounding streets and into the canal.

Andrew Alleyne

10/05/17

INTRODUCTION AND PRE-VISIT REFLECTIONS

On our second visit the Gowanus Canal I expected to learn primarily about zoning and its effects. Throughout class we learned about zoning and how it can either benefit or remove certain ethnicities. The effects of zoning have already begun to take its due course in the canal. For instance, on **XYZ** street, the city allowed a developer to build a multi-million-dollar apartment complex in an area that was specifically zoned solely for that building. The process of doing so is called spot zoning. However, according to Ms.Naual, the Gowanus area is currently in process of rezoning to accommodate residential. Prior to visiting the site, we discussed the use of sponge parks and green houses as a method of lessening rain-wash off in to the Canal.

- C. This was the third place we visited. In this area, we were approaching one of the new buildings permitted to build using spot zoning.
- D. We observed the sponge parks and the way the sidewalks were catered to usher water into them.
- E. Our visit to the canal concluded at this spot. We learned where the Gowanus Conservancy building will be in the future. Throughout this time, we also discussed future plans for the surrounding area and zoning.

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.



2New apartment building built by use of spot zoning

This apartment building is located opposite the new Wholefoods supermarket. It contains sponge parks to reduce runoff into the canal.



3 This area might be zoned of soon.

Opposite the Whole foods supermarket resides an industrial building that is potentially subject to eminent domain by the Government.



4Development in the community

Despite the pollution of the canal a restaurant is booming along its shores inviting guest.

Caption; Description Caption; Description (sketch)

Caption; Description Caption; Description (sketch)

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 meeting with the Gowanus Conservancy, many topics were discussed. Most of these ranged from pollution, the process of clean up, prevention, zoning, interest parties and parties of interest. The topic that interested me the most was zoning. According to NYC Planning, zoning plans to order and develop areas into either industrial and residential. During our discussion, our guide mentioned the effects that zoning might have on a community like Gowanus. For instance, the area surrounding the canal is mostly considered industrial. However, due to the proposed rezoning, it may soon turn into a residential area. Many factors come into play if they were to be implemented. For example, low-income families may be forced out of their homes due to price changes, noise pollution and increase in automobile presence. I was concerned mostly about the process of the zone changes.

I was concerned mostly about the process of the zone changes. There are also many privately-owned art studios and industrial buildings along the Canal. To reclaim the private land, Government can use the power of eminent domain. By definition, "The power of eminent domain allows 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 allowed me to view things in a different light. The areas Genius loci to me are the implementation of sponge parks and the conservancy's dedication. Hand in hand they are proving that the Gowanus can be saved. It gives a sense of improvement.

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. NYC Planning
2. Gowanus Conservancy
3. Environmental Protection Agency
4. Green Infrastructure
5. Bioswale
6. Gray Infrastructure

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. Millions of dollars are being used to rehabilitate the Gowanus canal to make it healthier? After the superfund project is done, who will up keep the Canal?
2. Will there be laws put in place to protect the current community from the effects of selective zoning?
3. As a non-profit, Is the Gowanus Conservancy being influenced by multiple donors to aid in the design of canal?