

Cover Sheet: What I changed

- Inserted better quality photos
 - Revised introduction
- Revised and elaborated more on photo/site observation
 - Fixed typo in grammar

Learning Places Fall 2017
Site Report # 3



Image: The old stone house in Washington Park. This is a historic site in Brooklyn, being a safe haven for those fighting in the Battle of Gowanus

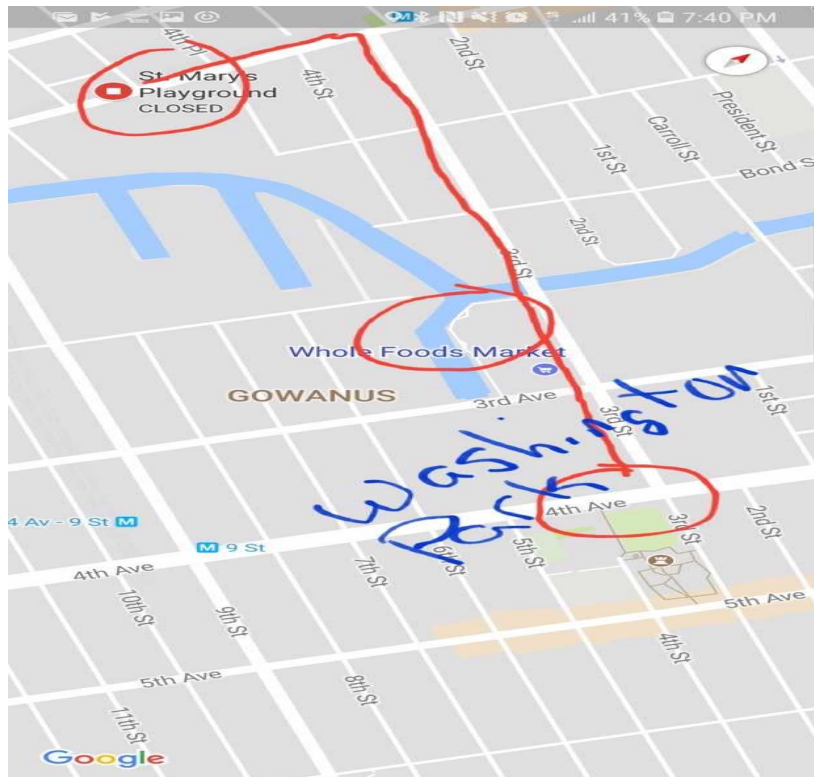
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10/24/2017

Introductions

Once again we visited the Gowanus area but, this time we were exploring aspects of Gowanus that directly related to each group project. My group was “Public Spaces” where we explored the different types of public spaces in Gowanus and their uses. Throughout the exploration it gave me the opportunity to see how people use these public spaces everyday, not realizing the detailed length it took to create. I honestly didn’t believe there was much to see that we haven’t already seen being such an industrial area. Also I wasn’t familiar with the area south of the Whole Foods and areas further around it to get a brand new perspective of Downtown

Brooklyn as a whole. But my main goal was to see people interacting with whatever public space we visited to get the sense of it.

Map



Photos and Sketches

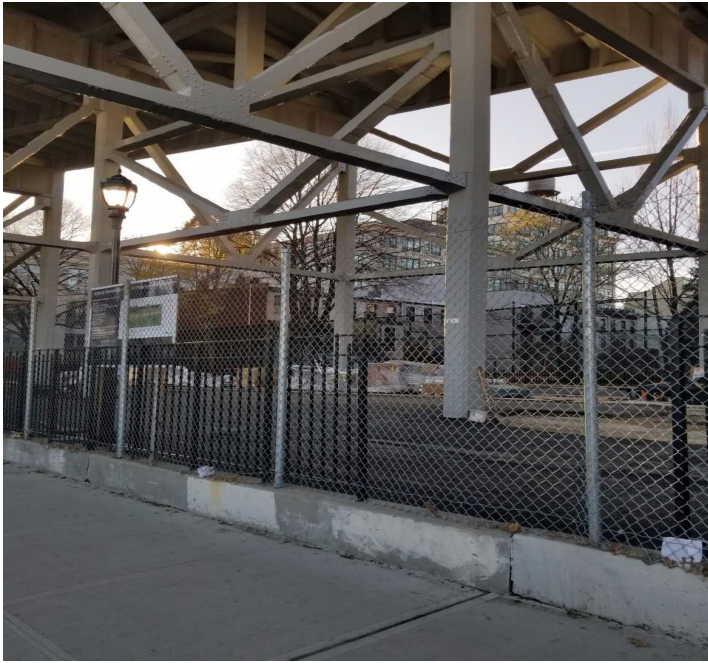


Image: This is a sign of St. Mary's Playground that's currently under construction. The area is quite deserted, under an active train line, and surrounded by construction. When you think playground you would predict a more homey area. Yet that's what I appreciate about that it's utilizing space to help build up the area. This park borders the neighborhood of Gowanus, Red Hook, and Carroll Gardens.



Image: The Old Stone house is a public space within a public space. This historic site is situated inside Washington Park. The Old Stone website provides more information on host exhibits and tours for NYC schools and also allowing local events such farmers' markets, performances, concerts, and workshops. But in the end it's just a nice place to hang out for all ages with the cobble floor giving it this town square vibe.

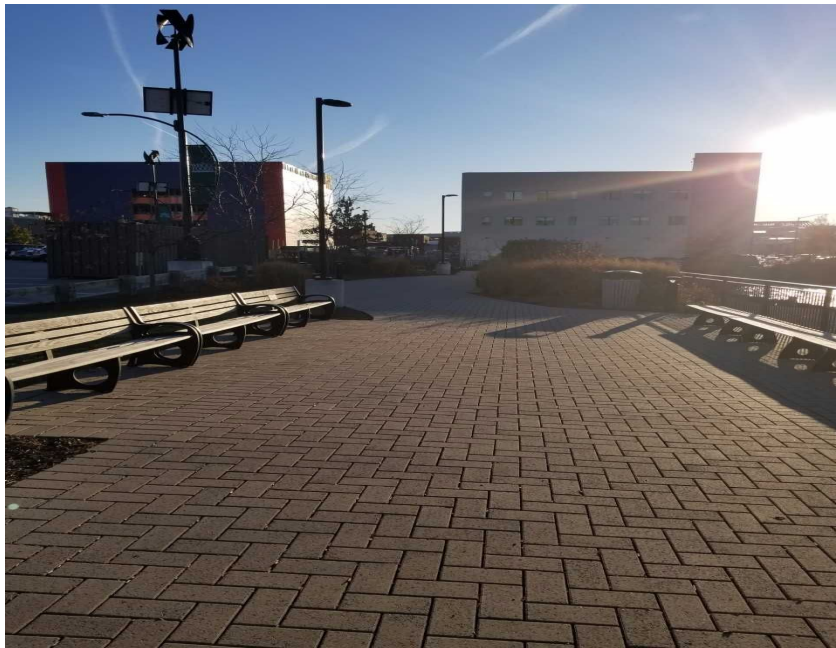


Image: Whole Foods public space is an example of public space within a private area. The public space is designed as a pier with tables and chairs to sit and enjoy the view and nice weather. This area isn't just for the

customers but anyone in the area can come and enjoy this tranquil setting. Last time we visited we saw a drawing class sketching the canal.

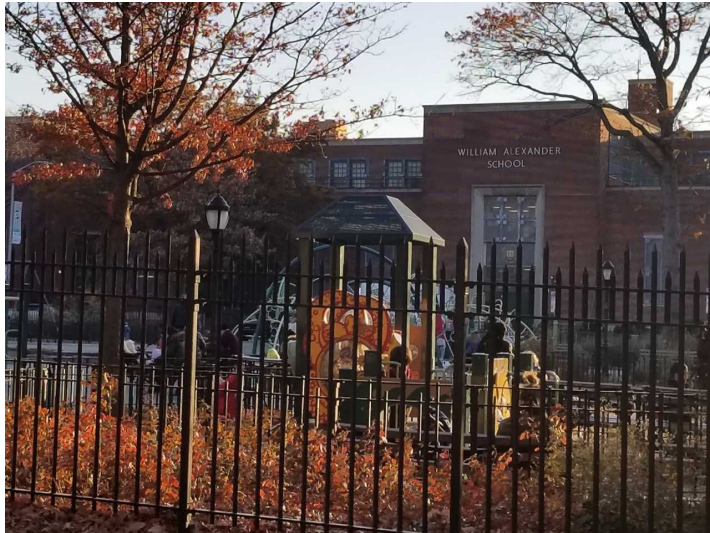


Image: Basically inside Washington

Park is a elementary school, which is wonder for kids to have a place to hang out after school. I noticed the park is divided into three sections the playground, the old stone house, and the field. Also each section as it's own demographic the playground having younger kids with the nannies or parents, the old stone housing being occupied with older folks, and the field consisting of preteens and teenagers. I appreciate how the park really provides a area where any age can have to part they can enjoy.

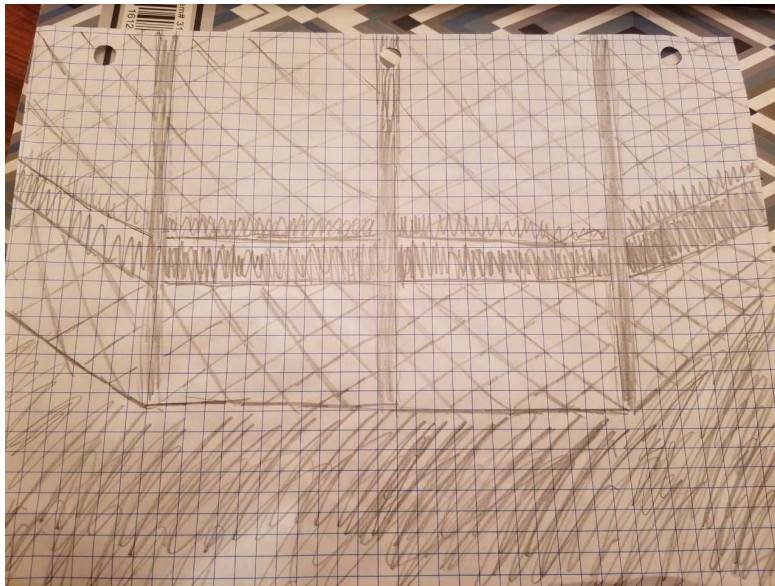


Image: The baseball park within

Washington Park.

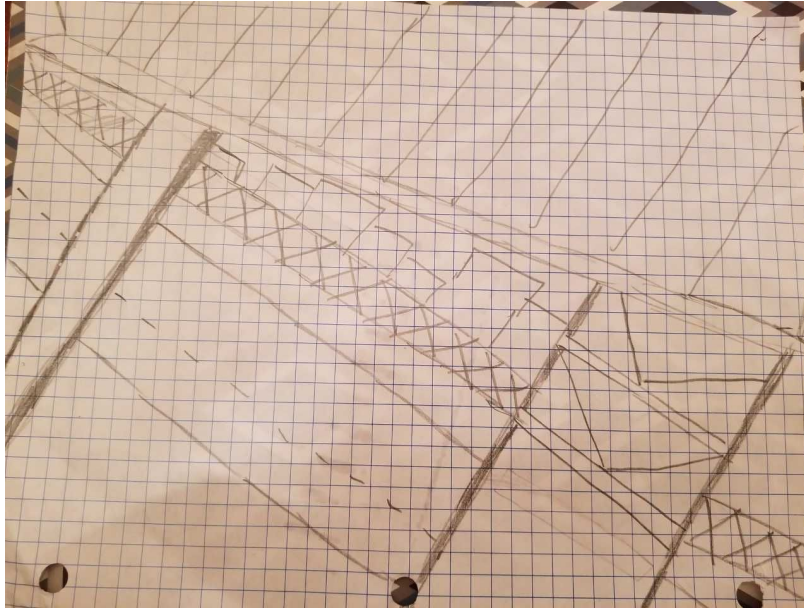


Image: A sketch of how deserted the area around St. Mary Park and the train tracks above it.

Analysis

I believe public spaces are beneficial to a neighborhood because it gives it a sense of community. For example parks you see kids playing together stimulating their creativity, parents taking a break from entertaining the kids, and older folks talking with one another as if family. It's just a safe environment for locals to get some fresh air. Also, as we walked further away from the canal I got more homier vibe, because in all of our visit in Gowanus their wasn't that much foot traffic. Yet, once we got closer to the parks or the pier by Whole Foods their more activity. Which just proves how open spaces just brings people together, and that brings a positive affect the neighborhood.

Another thing is that I felt Gowanus had this gloomy aspect towards it but these public spaces brighten it up. And not only for Gowanus but all over Brooklyn where you can have a run down area, but maybe adding a garden, park, or benches can change the whole spirit of the area. Before I thought Gowanus Genius Loci was an older man with smudges on his face wearing a raincoat and rain hat just sitting in a tiny rowboat fishing in the Gowanus while smoking a cigar. Now I see it more of "where the wild things are" vibe, Gowanus is an underrated part of Downtown Brooklyn, which is sad because it has so much to offer.

Keywords

1. Public Space
2. Washington Park
3. St. Mary's Playground
4. Old Stone House
5. Whole Foods Pier

Questions for further Research

1. What is the city doing more to add public spaces in brooklyn?
2. Does everyone see public space as essential or a waste of space?
3. Can public space harm a neighborhood?