

Learning Places Summer 2019

# SITE REPORT #1

## name of site report

**NAMING PROTOCOL.** When saving and posting your site reports on OpenLab, please follow the following format: SiteReport#.LastnameFirstname. Here's an example: SiteReport2.SwiftChristopher.



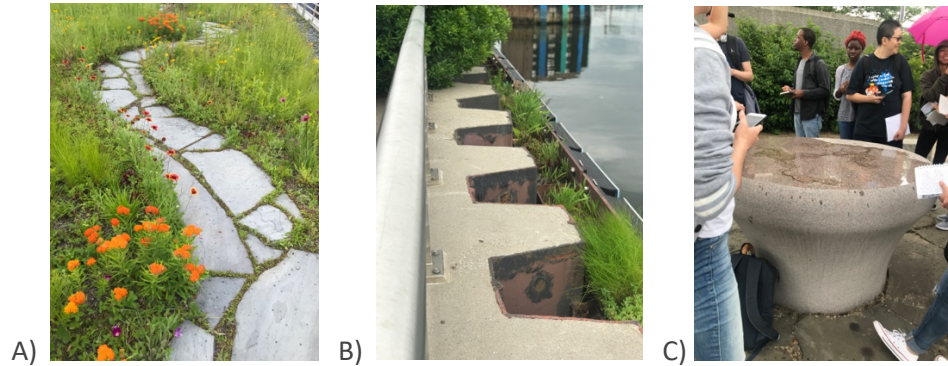
This is our first view of the waterway, border between Brooklyn and Queens that we could appreciate during The Newtown Creek Nature Walk Tour.

STUDENT NAME: Ixchel Gomez

### SITE OBSERVATIONS

Insert 3 photographs and provide a *creative* title for each image. The title should be a word or short phrase that suggests *a theme or conceptual association* related to the photo.

- A) A Green Dream Roof Top.
- B) Life embrace land scape.
- C) A historical water tables.



**General instructions:**

- a. Do not try to anticipate an answer the instructors “are looking for”. We want you to write truthfully about your own observations.
- b. Be sure to draw meaningful connections between what you observed and the purpose of the performative intervention. In other words, how does the performative intervention respond to, or integrate directly with, the specific material conditions of the site.
- c. Finally, your research question should respond directly and specifically to your site observations.

1. Historically, what are some of the important developments that have created the current landscape of the Newtown Creek area. Refer not only to the reading and Prof. Spillane’s lecture, but also what you learned on the Newtown Creek Alliance tour (hint... estuaries, for instance)?

The Newtown Creek is a waterway, border between Brooklyn and Queens. I believe that one of the most important aspects that have been developed historically has been the meeting and set of the Hudson Creek with other small branches known as: Dutch Kills, Maspeth Creek, Whale Creek, etc. A mixture of fresh and salty water that has allowed the creation, procreation and has given life to different living beings such as oysters, blue crabs, and plants of different types in spite of the difficult condition of contamination and pollution in which this stream is found. On the other hand, another development that has been incorporated into the landscape have been architectural contributions such as pavement stairs that create a connection between the water and the site itself, also welcomes visitors. On the other hand, is the building right in the center of the area, it is a microbiology laboratory, maps such as those found on the pavement table, for example: "Industrial history from: SABORN MAPS 1887-1951" also, source: DEP 2008 anticipated NCWPCP LAYOUT IN 2017.

2. Discuss the historical remnants that you observed in the current landscape.

Some of the most important historical remains found in Newtown Creek are the seven graphite stones when we entered the park after finishing the walk. In these same graphite stones are the names of some of the places and indigenous. On the other hand, in the front of the site is a glacial erratic, which was transported 17,000 years ago from Adirondack to Greenpoint, Brooklyn. It was discovered during the installation of a new waterline under McGuiness. A curious and important historical fact that I could see was that although this stream has been extremely affected by factories, oil, garbage and a number of things that combine it in toxic has not stopped the fact that in these waters reproduces life. For example, during the tour we could see near the steps as a guide that chronologically indicated the animals and plants that have existed over time plants such as fragrant sumac, pitch pine, weeping willow etc. And animals such as the American Eel, eastern mud snail, fiddler crab, striped bass, striped anemone, blue crab, Atlantic mud crab, sand shrimp, Atlantic silverside, ribbed mussel, moon jelly, hermit crab, slipper snail, common pipe fish, Asian shore crab etc.

3. In what ways is the natural environment contained or shaped by the architecture of the Newtown Creek Nature Walk designed by George Traka's? In what ways is the natural world repossessing spaces that have been over-polluted or industrialized?

Based on the work done by architect George Traka's, the most important thing is that he asks visitors to agree on the meaning of living in a space like this, that we must believe in the force that has shaped the city that surrounds us today, that we must trust and believe in the possible aspect that it will have in the future. The design of these artists of environmental sculptures speak, express and allow us to appreciate the different times of Newtown Creek, from the time that was inhabited by the people before the arrival of the Europeans, until their last events as they are cooperatives, factories of boats, industrial Greenpoint wood, microbiology laboratory etc. Based on the visit we did, I was able to understand and learn that in reality this site does not divide the industrial from the natural, but that nature is actively integrated in this space as a vibrant interception where they live with histories, cultures, different ecological eras, This experience showed us a dynamic narrative as we walked over Newtown Creek over time.

4. Discuss one instance of architectural semiotics. **Choose *only one building or built structure***. If the building or designed structure could talk, what would it say?

My favorite structure, without a doubt, are the 7 stone circles, in which George Traka's the architect, tries to motivate and let visitors know that it is "a meditative dance of reflection and respect for our origins". The artist has recorded names of native places in each circle, used by the first indigenous people of the area. He has also arranged seven granite circles around a honey locust tree that, when mature, will provide the comfort of shade and whispering leaves along the waters of Newtown Creek.

5. If you were to stage a performative intervention in a *specific* site (i.e., a single structural aspect of the walk or industrial remains) where would you stage it and what message would your performance convey?

If I had to perform a performative intervention at a specific site, the scene would be on the granite slab steps. This series of nine steps of granite slabs of thick feet that seem to ascend out of the stream to dry land and were designed to reflect the common origin of all life in the water and the sea. And this would definitely be the perfect place to transmit that message of reflection and reflection that helps us not only to value the lives of living beings but also makes us reflect on ourselves.

## FURTHER RESEARCH

Research Question (*should follow directly from your above observations, and be complex, specific, and researchable*):

- How this would look like in the future?

Find an article from a journal, website, or newspaper that you believe will help you answer your question

MLA Citation for source:

Kensinger, Nathan. "Bringing Community, and Nature, Back to the Banks of Newtown Creek." *Curbed NY*, Curbed NY, 16 Apr. 2015, [ny.curbed.com/2015/4/16/9969970/bringing-community-and-nature-back-to-the-banks-of-newtown-creek](https://ny.curbed.com/2015/4/16/9969970/bringing-community-and-nature-back-to-the-banks-of-newtown-creek).

Schmid, Katie. "NYC Superfund: Toxic Solution or Toxic Label." *Newtown Creek Alliance*, Lively Panel Discussion at the Museum of the City of New York, 8 Feb. 2019, [www.newtowncreekalliance.org/nyc-superfund-toxic-solution-or-toxic-label/](http://www.newtowncreekalliance.org/nyc-superfund-toxic-solution-or-toxic-label/).

How many sources did you look at before selecting this one? Why did you select this source? How does it address all or part of your research question? Be specific.

3 websites

first <https://ny.curbed.com/2015/4/16/9969970/bringing-community-and-nature-back-to-the-banks-of-newtown-creek>

The I look for key words that I could help me to find another source with much more information so a used:

Future

Community

Back

Solution

Newtown Creek

The I got

<http://www.newtowncreekalliance.org/students-envision-a-green-future-for-newtown-creek/>

and thanks to this info I found my last website page

<http://www.newtowncreekalliance.org/nyc-superfund-toxic-solution-or-toxic-label/>

Is this source credible? How can you tell (what criteria did you base your evaluation on)?

Yes, it is credible because in all this website it gives your personal information like emails, phone numbers, etc. for the director, writer and company contact. Also, in this page it shows us their different social media and how they been working on this issue every day, social media like Instagram, snapchat, Facebook, YouTube etc.

What other sources or further information would you need to answer your question? Where would you look for them?

I would like to know more about people's personal opinion, meaning interviews or surveys. Read books, newspapers ,magazine etc.