

Learning Places Summer 2019

# SITE REPORT #1

## Gowanus



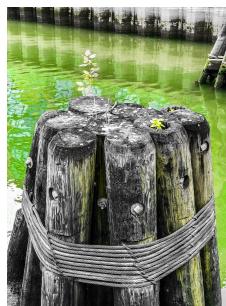
Spaces for Garden

STUDENT NAME: Darwin Diaz

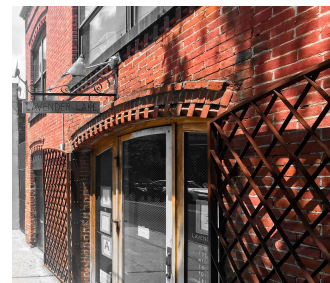
### SITE OBSERVATIONS



Landmarks Residentials



Toxic Waters



Historical Renovations

1. What are some general observations about the character of this neighborhood? What does it remind you of? How does it make you feel?

- When I first visited Gowanus, this area it looked like a daydream since we walked through the wealthy area. The houses had their own garden, the looks of the neighborhood was preserved. While I was walking towards the Carroll St Bridge, I started to be awakened into reality. We saw local business such as The Mill and the Lavenger which shows historical characteristics to the area. Near the canal there was new house, but the water was looking toxic green and the smell killed all the birds in the area. I felt uncomfortable by just walking near water that has a substance called “black mayonnaise”. I could feel that I reduced 30 mins of my life expectancy by just inhaling the air.

2. How is the natural world contained or shaped by human activity or architecture in Gowanus? In what ways does the natural world invade or disrupt human activity or architecture in Gowanus?

- In Gowanus, there was terrible action done by people in the past that damaged the canal in that area by using it as a sewer. The architecture was beneficial in some way to people even though throwing the grey water to the canal seemed as a terrible idea of the neighborhood planner. Plant trees in Gowanus is not enough, not till the waters become clear again.

3. What people did you observe in the neighborhood and what activities are they engaged in?

- A lot of residents would walk their dogs or by themselves. The area is friendly near the Presidents St. People would sit outside and chat with their neighbors. Near the Canal it was more of a motivational walk for people, to run as fast as you can from the smell. Also, there are running a business in the area such as a candle factory and Ice cream store.

4. Reflect on a **specific** space you viewed in this neighborhood:

a. who was the space designed for and what is its general purpose?

- The space as today is designed for wealthy people that can afford living on top of toxic waters.
- Real estate buyers to keep building higher and more profitable buildings.
- This is ideal for small families that would love to walk outside with a high possibility of stepping on mercury.

- b. what are the implied rules of this **specific** space? How are people meant to interact with one another and with the environment?
- There is a high chance that pet owners would stop and talk to each other.
  - Everyone seemed to accept the failure in this area which even though is a harmful environment, it is an area that people think is okay to live in since they are already committed to the place.
- c. describe a possible creative reuse of this **specific** space for a theatrical event:
- a) Which areas are best for actors and which areas are good for observers? Do these spaces overlap? Mention specific objects and structures in your answer.
- I saw that the Carroll St bridge was a great place for actors engage with the observers.
- b) Describe the potential audience. Who are they (workers? inhabitants? recreational users? tourists?) and why would they be passing through? Where are they going and where did they come from?
- Potential audience are people living in the area. These are runners, People walking their dog, teens to go get ice scream.
- c) Discuss how light and sound would support a theatrical event.
- I believe since that area is very quiet, it could be easier to catch people's attention. Since the area has open spaces, the light will give the audience clarity of what we are doing.
- d) What kinds of performance would work best (intimate or grand; processional or stationary; text and/or music; interactive or passive audience; etc.)?
- Interactive performance could be us wearing masks and ask the people passing by about how many birds they seen in the area.

**QUESTIONS for FURTHER RESEARCH. Write down questions that require further research to answer. 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. Question?

- What can the residents in Gowanus do to clean the canal?

2. Question?

- How the Super fund till clean the canal in Gowanus?

3. Question?

- What types of elements in the waters of Gowanus can harm the people that live near the canal?

## FURTHER RESEARCH

Choose and revise one of your research questions for further research.

Revised Research Question:

- How the residence developers in Gowanus can use other types of renewable system?

Find a book or newspaper article that could help you answer your question.

MLA Citation for source:

- Ackerman, K. "Urban Agriculture: Opportunities and Constraints-7." *Metropolitan Sustainability*, 2012, pp. 118–146.

Why did you select this source? How does it address all or part of your research question?

- I selected this source since is part of my interest to know how we can improve Gowanus by taking advantage of the problem. The research talks about renewable energy at large scale and how we can improve the environment around us.

Describe the process you used to find this source including any keywords and the search engine or tool you used to search.

- I searched Books that contains the words "Gowanus Canal Solution" then concentrated in "renewable systems"

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

- I would need to know more about the new proposal and zoning change in Gowanus to see what are the possibilities to improve the area.

