

Learning Places Summer 2019

SITE REPORT #2

Newtown Creek



The rust frozen bridge

STUDENT NAME: Jonathan Leon

SITE OBSERVATIONS



Cactus an adaptation for water conservation



man-made area for plans



cooperage oil barrel

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. Spellane’s lecture, but also what you learned on the Newtown Creek Alliance tour (hint... estuaries, for instance)?
 - Newtown creek is an estuary that separate Brooklyn and Queens. The creek is a mixture of salty water and fresh water and is home for different living creatures. And it was an industrial route bring goods, but within that time the it got the largest oil spill, also the creek did not have a flow that went through so everything was just stuck there and became so polluted. The current landscape of the Newtown creek would be the Industrial complex along the estuaries of Newtown creek had created todays landscape.
2. Discuss the historical remnants that you observed in the current landscape.
 - One historical remnant in the current landscape is the Dutch kills swing bridge (C.C Schneider’s bridge), also known as the trash train line. It used to swing but now is frozen by rust. Which probably was affected also by the metal scrap yard near by with all the metal rust waves it creates when it crushes the metal. Other historical

remnant I observed in the current landscape was the trash cans, they are enclosed metal barrel which depicts cooperage oil co. or the pickle company near the creek. As shown in image three.

3. In what ways is the natural environment contained or shaped by the architecture of the Newtown Creek Nature Walk designed by George Trakas? In what ways is the natural world repossessing spaces that have been over-polluted or industrialized?
 - George Trakas design of the Newtown creek nature walk highlights the relationship between marine life and the industrial area by embracing the location and by using native plants. The park itself is a sculpture. Small detail elements in the park had, are the handrail shaped as and H₂O molecules and the garbage can shape as a metal barrel. The natural world will retake possession of this area that was polluted by humans actions, and now they will have to clean after there mess by creating green roofs to help stormwater from going in to the sewers to have over flow, also around the shore the NCA made space for plant to grow in the side.

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?
 - An architectural semiotics would be the massive 405-ton staircase that lead us the visitors down into the polluted water of Newtown creek, also it had a warning sign saying no swimming nor fishing. The staircase is carved with scientific names of various animals that have lived in the area. And the handrail is modeled on the water molecule a big metaphor. This together makes a strong meaningful communication with the marine life. If these stairs could talk, it would say is the best place to be because human and nature could become one and enjoy being there. Just because the stairs make you feel like the water is coming to you as it is covering the last step to show the interaction with nature. It also has triangle shape pockets for plants to grow and have more interaction with nature life. Also, us as a group we experience that I personally felt like it was a very calm place and we got to experience wild like how the seagull preyed his food by catching a crab.

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 was to stage a performative intervention would be in the staircase. Just because is in the center of the current walk and has an open view towards industrial remains and view to mid-town. The message behind my performance would convey people (tourist & locals) how factories and other industrial workplaces could affect water nearby. Also, if we don't recycle and people flushing unnecessary things down the toilet will end up in these nearby body of water since the sewer system are combined sewer points along Newtown creek and other bays in NYC raw sewage and wastewater would dump.

FURTHER RESEARCH

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

- How is re-zoning will affect Newtown creek?

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

MLA Citation for source:

Stremple, paul. "Newtown Creek's Brooklyn Waterfront Faces First Zoning Changes in Nearly 60 Years." *Brooklyn Eagle*, 10 Apr. 2019, brooklyneagle.com/articles/2019/04/10/newtown-creeks-brooklyn-waterfront-faces-first-zoning-changes-in-nearly-60-years/.

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.

- I looked at other newspapers like the NYT and other article within the Brooklyn eagle under Newtown creek re zoning, the reason why I chose re zoning was because I wanted to research how it would really change new Newtown creek or will it make it worst by

adding more sewage into the sewers.

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

- Yes, the Brooklyn Eagle is a very credible newspapers in New York City. Besides the New York Times or the Metro New York, The Wall Street Journal or even the Daily News

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

- Other sources I will go is to check the DOB to see the zoning of the area or even the OASIS website or ZoLa to show me the zoning areas and it also show older maps how the zoing been changing in that area since it began.