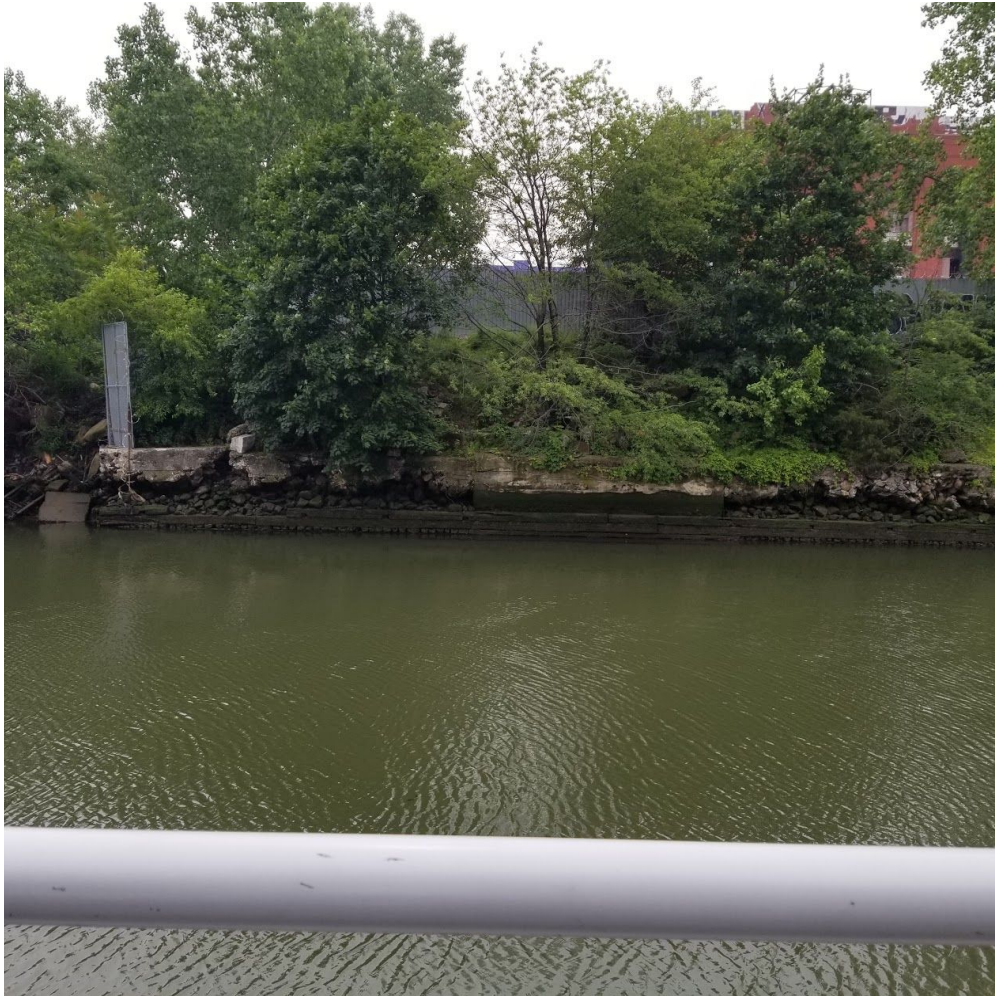


Learning Places Summer 2017

# SITE REPORT #1

## Gowanus/Housing Projects



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### INTRODUCTION

During the last week our class has done two site visits around Brooklyn NY. The first site visit was to the Gowanus canal and the surrounding neighborhood. We had a guide point out facts about the Gowanus and problems surrounding the canal. Our second site visit was to the Gowanus housing projects and

Wyckoff housing projects. We entered the project's grounds and explored the superblocks.

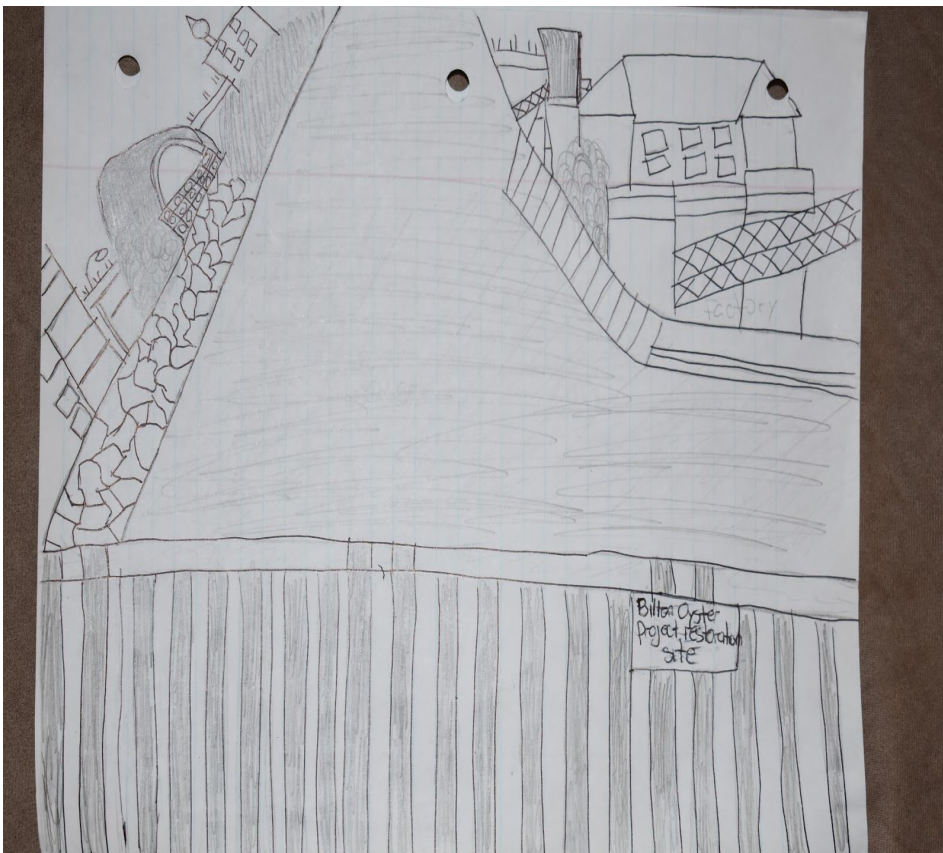
## Bioswale



The photo above is showing a bioswale. This collects excess water running the streets and absorbs it so it won't go into the Gowanus canal. This is important because when excess water run the streets it collects all sorts of chemicals and pollution then it goes into the canal, creating even more contamination to the canal. But with the help of bioswale this problem can be reduced,it also gives opportunity to grow native plants among others for beautiful green space in the city.



The photo to the left is of the Gowanus canal and a newly constructed building. This image is important because it is showing how developers are not concerned about the safety of their tenants. They are building on a flood zone area and are not doing anything to help clean the canal. Instead they are deceiving the tenants by encouraging them to do various activities in the water when the water is harmful to humans and animals.



The sketch to the left is of the Gowanus canal, factories surrounding the canal and a reconstruction site. This image is important because it is showing how the canal is a Superfund site and is going through several projects to help reconstruct and promote cleaning of the canal.



The image on top is a sketch of another part of the canal where you can see the transformation the canal is going through. To the left of the sketch you can notice businesses operating while on the right of the canal you see new construction taking place for residential use. This image is important because it is showing change in the Gowanus canal which is good thing.



The image above is showing the Gowanus canal. This image is important because it shows brackish water that is dirty and polluted.

## Housing Projects

### Wykoff Housing projects



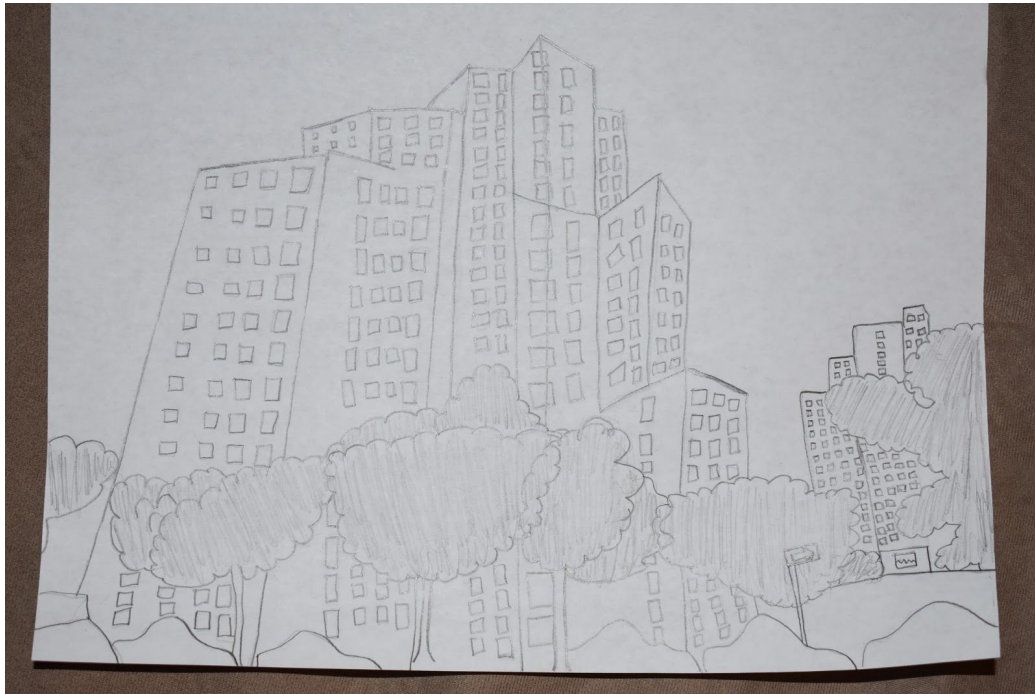
On the left there is a picture of the Wykoff housing projects. This photo is important because it shows how massive these buildings are and the amount of people living in it. It sure doesn't look like a neighborhood. This represents exactly what Jane Jacobs wanted to avoid.



The image on top is of one of the Gowanus housing Projects building. This building is much smaller than the others, therefore it represents more of what Jane Jacobs mentioned as being vital to a neighborhood. This image is important because if housing projects had continued to be built in this style, we might have been able to preserve the neighborhoods lost.



The image on top is the image of one block with completely different agendas. This image is a perfect example of gentrification. This image is important because it clearly shows how the Gowanus neighborhood is transforming to cater to upper middle class and above and in turn getting rid of the original residents that had lived there.



The sketch above is showing the Wykoff projects near the Gowanus canal. This image is important because it shows an infinite number of apartments yet no one is outside interacting, making this place look a bit depressing and cut off from the rest of New York.





The image above is an image of two playgrounds separated by a double fence. This image is important because it represents the separation between the housing projects and the rest of the neighborhood. Although they are literally right next to each other they don't interact with one another, allowing segregation to take place.

## GENERAL NOTES:

- The first type of pollution to the Gowanus canal was coal, which started in the 17th century.
- The canal has 100 million gallons of sewage per year.
- The canal has flushing tunnels to provide the water with oxygen.
- Native plants live near the canal

- The middle of the canal is the most contaminated.

## INSIGHTS/DISCOVERIES

While going on these two site visits I have discovered many new things. First, I didn't know there was a Gowanus canal. I was amazed how the canal overflows with sewage when it rains a certain amount, and had imagined that by this date and age the city of New York would've fix that problem but they haven't. We also have been learning about what makes up a neighborhood. It seems that neighborhoods are more successful when they have smaller buildings, where it makes it easier for people to interact and have a sense of belonging. I was surprised to know that that's the reason that housing projects are unsuccessful. I have also discovered how deep gentrification are affecting minorities and how unfair the government are being to them as a group. This saddens me deeply and question how will New York look like in 20 years.

## KEYWORDS/VOCABULARY & DEFINITIONS

Pervious- (of a substance) allowing water to pass through; permeable.

Impervious- Not allowing fluid to pass through.

Brownfield land- Denoting or relating to urban sites for potential building development that have had previous development on them.

Salt marsh- An area of coastal grassland that is regularly flooded by seawater.

Brackish water- (of water) slightly salty, as in river estuaries.

Superfund- A fund established to finance a long-term, expensive project.

Cornice- An ornamental molding around the wall of a room just below the ceiling.

Lintel- A horizontal support of timber, stone, concrete, or steel across the top of a door or window.

Gentrification- The process of renovating and improving a house or district so that it conforms to middle-class taste.

Modernism- Modern character or quality of thought, expression, or technique.

Urban planning- The planning and regulation of building, development, reconstruction, etc., in an urban area.

## QUESTIONS for Further RESEARCH

1. Will building high rise buildings be the same as the construction of housing projects in the sense of isolating people?
2. After the Gowanus gets cleaned, how will the city of New York maintain the canal from getting polluted once more?
3. Is the city of New York working on a plan to correct the flaws with the sewage disposal system?

## Reference

(n.d.). Oxford Dictionary online. Retrieved from  
[https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/us/urban\\_planning](https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/us/urban_planning)