

Memorandum

To: William Lee, Gowanus Environmental Remediation Trust #2

From: Michael Audin, RPA & Scott Warnasch, RPA

Date: March 4, 2021

RE: Memo # 9 - Results of Level 1 Cultural Resource Review
Debris Staging at Clean Earth – Claremont
RTA-1A Dredging, Level 1 Monitoring
Gowanus Canal Remediation Project
Brooklyn, Kings County, NY

This memorandum presents the findings of Archaeology & Historic Resource Services, LLC's (AHRS) review of screened sediments at the Clean Earth Claremont Facility in Jersey City, New Jersey (Clean Earth) from Level 1 Monitoring. The screened sediments are from the RTA-1 dredging currently underway at the Gowanus Canal Superfund Site in Brooklyn, New York. The purpose of this memorandum is to present the results and recommendations for the items recovered from sediment screening at Clean Earth reviewed by an AHRS archaeologist on 3/4/21. The attached figure provided by the Trust indicates the approximate area that was dredged between 3/1/21 and 3/4/21 (Figure 1).

INTRODUCTION

Cashman Dredging and Marine Contracting Co. (Cashman) continues with the dredging of soft sediments from RTA-1 under the oversight of the EPA. The dredge material is being processed according to the Level 1 Archaeological Monitoring protocol outlined in the draft Cultural Resource Monitoring Plan (revised September 2020). This protocol calls for dredged soft sediments to be placed directly into scows, floated to Clean Earth, and screened over 4" bars on a vibrating platform. Items removed during the vibratory screening process are then sorted by the Clean Earth operator as per the Cultural Resource Monitoring Plan. Items of potential interest (possible artifacts or objects of local interests) are placed in a separate stockpile and photographed daily for AHRS archaeologists to review. These items are then placed in a holding area for AHRS to inspect weekly.

RESULTS

AHRS archaeologist Scott Warnasch conducted a scheduled site visit on 3/4/21 to review the recovered items in person with the assistance of a Clean Earth machine and operator to sort through stockpiled items. Photographs were taken of stockpiled items at Clean Earth.

The material was spread by machine on a flat hard surface to allow for an archaeologist to review

them (Photograph 1). Any item of potential interest was separated, rinsed and assessed. The viewing area had a moderate sludge layer on the surface (Photograph 1). The material appeared to have been previously rinsed. (Photographs 2 and 3). The material reviewed was unsorted and comprised mainly of rocks and small pieces of wood, tires, miscellaneous metal (Photographs 4 and 5), car parts and a few large timbers (Photograph 6). Two items were recovered and are recommended for retention and further assessment: A copper valve with the manufacturing stamp 'Larkin MFG Co. Patented Daytona OH. USA' (Photograph 7), and a metal and wood hand truck with 'American Steelite' stamped on the rubber wheel (Photographs 8 and 9). A cursory Google search on both companies suggests that the hand truck may be later-20th century, while the brass valve may be part of a fire suppression apparatus and is likely old enough to be of historical interest. More research on these items is recommended. Both items have been stored on site.



Photograph 1 – Overview of the unsorted material to be reviewed on 3/4/21, front view.



Photograph 2 – Overview of previously rinsed material (left and far right) and unrinsed (in between) material to be reviewed on 3/4/21, front view.



Photograph 3 – Example of the typical condition of the material in the stockpile to be reviewed, front view.



Photograph 4 – Example rocks and wood in the stockpile to be reviewed, front view.



Photograph 5 – Example large rocks and miscellaneous metal in the stockpile to be reviewed, front view.



Photograph 6 – Large timbers, front view.



Photograph 7 – Copper valve, front view.



Photograph 8 – Hand Truck, side view.



Photograph 9 – Hand Truck wheel, front view.

Items Segregated for Further Review

AHRS archaeologist retrieved two items to retain for further analysis: One copper valve and one metal and wood hand truck.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

AHRS concludes that two items, a copper valve and hand truck, recovered during the sediment screening at Clean Earth retain possible historic/archaeological significance. Per the draft Cultural Resource Monitoring Plan, AHRS further recommends that all the non-historically/archaeologically significant debris at Clean Earth has been reviewed by the AHRS archaeologist as of 3/4/21 may be disposed of.



Figure 1 - Approximate area dredged between March 1, 2021 and March 4, 2021.
Figure provided by the Trust.