



Memorandum

To: William Lee, Gowanus Environmental Remediation Trust

From: Kathryn Whalen, Ph.D., RPA- Principal Investigator, and Ed Button, M.A., RPA- Field Director

Date: June 25, 2024

RE: Memo #1- Results of Level 1 Cultural Resource Review of RTA1 Supplemental Dredging

Materials from Flushing Tunnel, RTA1 from May and June 2024

This memorandum presents the findings of Chronicle Heritage's Level 1 review of the materials collected from supplemental suction dredging of the Flushing Tunnel on the south side of Butler Street in RTA1. The collection of this material was conducted in late May and early June of 2024. It was inspected by Ed Button, Field Director, on June 12, 2024. Materials were not transported to Clean Earth for this visit, but they were viewed on a barge in the canal. The purpose of this memorandum is to summarize our recommendations for the items recovered and reviewed by Mr. Button.

INTRODUCTION

Cashman Dredging and Marine Contracting Co. (Cashman) dredged the materials that had accumulated in the Flushing Tunnel on the south side of Butler Street, which is part of RTA 1, under the oversight of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). This process was treated as an activity that required Level 1 archaeological monitoring as outlined in the Cultural Resource Monitoring Plan (Revised May 2024), with the exception that the materials were not taken to Clean Earth for separation from sediment, as debris was generated separately from sediment during the suction dredging process. Cashman operators had set aside the materials on a mini-hopper barge in the canal, and items were inspected by Chronicle Heritage's representative Ed Button on June 12, 2024. Most of the objects were canal wall timber fragments and unidentified pieces of milled wood and 2x4s. There were three canal bumpers made from 10-inch diameter trees (one still had bark attached), of which one had a tapered base and another had two 1-inch diameter holes



Figure 1. Materials inspected on June 12, 2024.



Figure 2. Representative of canal bumper timber.

RESULTS

Mr. Button observed three possible “Objects of Interest” potentially dating before 1965 and had them set aside until a final determination can be made. Although these items are not designated as artifacts as it is likely not possible to attribute them to a specific canal side entity, they were recorded in detail and a review process was undertaken by Chronicle Heritage.

Object of Interest #1 – Hand Scoop

Description: Similar to a grain or hand scoop used at a hardware, feed or food-distribution store, or construction site. Zinc or pot-metal material. 12-inch total length, including a 3.5-inch-long handle (29 x 13 x 9 cm). Production date unknown but could be anywhere from late 19th century to present.



Figure 3. Hand scoop.

Object of Interest #2 – Embossed Brick Fragment

Embossed “SSBC” (a portion may be missing). Likely machine-made, 8-inch brick (8-in [if were complete] x 4 x 2.5 inches [15 x 9.5 x 7 cm]). “SSBC” were part of the letters used by the Sutton & Sudderly Brick Co. of Coeymans, NY, which was in operation from 1885-1957. The full initials the company stamped on the bricks were SSBCo.



Figure 4. Embossed brick.

Object of Interest #3 – Stone Architectural Element

General wedge profile with convex top surface and flat base; 2-inch chamfer where base/top meet. 8 inches wide, 7 inches long, 4 inches tall, with 2-inch chamfer (20 x 18 x 10 cm, with 5 cm chamfer).



Figure 5. Architectural element.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Chronicle Heritage concludes that none of the items of interest are artifacts as per the definition in the CRMP. They are considered objects of local interest and may be offered to interested parties, as described in the CRMP.