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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: August 6, 2024

RE: Memo #4- Summary of CleanEarth Visit, July 29, 2024

Activities on July 29, 2024

On July 29, 2024, Mr. Ed Button, Field Director for Chronicle Heritage, was on site at the CleanEarth Facility in Jersey City, NJ to inspect the materials dredged from the Gowanus Canal for potential artifacts of objects of local interest. The material was removed by Cashman from Turning Basin 6 Cleanup Effort in the Gowanus Canal. The material was transported to CleanEarth on two barges:

- H1 CESP "Weazer"; delivered on July 22, 2024
- H3 CESP "Spanky"; delivered on July 24, 2024

The purpose of this memorandum is to summarize our recommendations for the items recovered and reviewed by Mr. Button.

METHODOLOGY

The dredged material had previously been through a 4-inch shaker (screener) machine and set aside in a pile on a paved/gravel surface for inspection by an archaeologist on July 29, 2024. The inspection process utilized a CAT excavator to draw material from the pile and spread it out over the surface for closer inspection (Photograph 1).

RESULTS

The inspected material largely comprised automobile tires, automobile parts (MacPherson struts, bumpers), and splintered canal timbers. The inspected material was largely dry, with dirt and clay adhesion.

Two objects representing potential artifacts or objects of local interest were identified and set aside by the archaeologist for examination (Photograph 2). The first was an inline four-cylinder engine with reducer and an output shaft; the other was a metal vessel/container hatch. The two objects were washed off with a hose to facilitate a closer inspection.

The engine represented a potential boat engine. The incomplete engine exhibits two pairs of cylinders with cooling fins, remnants of a cast-metal pan, and no discernable markings (Photograph 3). The motor is 22-inches long including reducer and output shaft, and 3-5/8-inch diameter cylinders. Research suggests the engine is similar to both a Deutz-type inline diesel commercial/industrial engine (introduced in 1949 and currently manufactured (Deutz Diesel Engines - Stauffer Diesel), or common 4-cylinder diesel inboard boat motors. Due to the engine's damaged and incomplete condition, proper identification with any acceptable degree of confidence is problematic.

The hatch, initially thought to potentially represent a part of a boating vessel, was hosed with water and inspected (Photograph 4). The hatch measures 20.5 by 28 inches and is 3/8-inch thick. One of two left hinges is missing, and the hatch is damaged on the right side where a handle is missing. A rubber/synthetic seal is partially attached on the back side (Photograph 5). The hatch is neither large enough nor thick enough to represent a boat passage hatch. The damaged hatch is likely an equipment access door, of unknown maritime or terrestrial application.

Photograph 1. An excavator was utilized to spread material out for inspection. Note high frequency of automotive tires and canal timbers (Chronicle Heritage, July 29, 2024).

Photograph 2. Items set aside for further cleanup and evaluation (Chronicle Heritage, July 29, 2024).

Photograph 3. Four-Cylinder diesel engine, incomplete (Chronicle Heritage, July 29, 2024).

Photograph 4. Possible equipment hatch, top (Chronicle Heritage, July 29, 2024).

Photograph 5. Possible equipment hatch, bottom, with partial seal still attached (Chronicle Heritage, July 29, 2024).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Chronicle Heritage does not recommend retention for the two objects investigated in this memo. The diesel engine is common in industrial use and as an inboard boat motor. This type of engine is prevalent after 1949 and used into the present day. In its current damaged condition, it cannot be definitively placed in time or usage, and, therefore, has little research potential. Similarly, the equipment hatch is too fragmented to determine application or usage.