



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 16, 2024

RE: Memo #8- Summary of Gowanus Canal Staging Area Visit, August 9 through August 16, 2024

Activities August 12 through August 16, 2024

The purpose of this memorandum is to document the Level 2 inspection of dredged materials by Chronicle Heritage. Between August 12 and August 16, 2024, Mr. Ed Button, Field Director for Chronicle Heritage, was on site at the Gowanus Canal Staging Area at 659 Smith Street, Brooklyn, NY to provide Level 2 inspection of dredged materials for potential artifacts or objects of local interest. The material was removed by Cashman from the Gowanus Canal Turning Basin 7, between Stanchions 4+50 and 5+35 at end of bulkhead (per Chris Sheedy, Cashman). The PCB-contaminated sediment was dredged with a target depth of -8.55 ft, with an over dredge allowance of 9 feet NAD83 (local datum; per Melanie Maclaughlin, Geosyntec Consultants). The dredged sediment was transported to the Gowanus Canal Staging Area on eight mini-barge loads. After the contaminated sediment was screened, the sediment was placed onto:

- H-1-WM "WHEEVER" barge
- Mini-barge 3

METHODOLOGY

The dredged material is confined to a mini-barge that is brought to a service barge with a mounted Sennebogen 870 excavator with a Blue TGS bucket (i.e., Environmental Dredging Bucket) (Photograph 1). The excavator removes contaminated materials from the mini-barge, carefully placing the contents into a shaker (approximately 10-ft long, 4-ft wide, 3 feet deep) mounted



Photograph 1. PCB-contaminated dredged sediment being screened at Gowanus Canal Staging Area on August 12, 2024, facing southwest (Chronicle Heritage, August 9, 2024).



Photograph 2. PCB-contaminated dredged sediment being placed into a shaker for removal of objects larger than 4x8-inches for Level 2 inspection by Chronicle Heritage. Facing Southwest (Chronicle Heritage, August 12, 2024).

on a third barge (H-1-WM "WHEEVER"). Modern materials including automobile tires, water and fuel hoses, hydraulic hoses, and plastic bottles, in addition to ubiquitous materials like sheets of plywood and splintered canal timbers/cribbing, are discarded (via Level 1 inspection by operator). Screened materials larger than the 4-inch-wide grate on the shaker slide into the scalepan (Photograph 2), are subsequently placed into an emptied contaminated sediment barge, spread out, and hosed for inspection. A Level 2 inspection is performed by Chronicle Heritage (Mr. Button).

SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

A work area extending approximately 20 ft from the excavator was cordoned off using sheeting on stanchions. All those entering the cordoned area are required to wear either Tyvek suits and booties if equipment is shut down (i.e., archaeologist inspecting set aside materials – no contact); or non-permeable Tychem during equipment operation or intended contact with contaminated equipment (i.e., cleanout of the scalepan, related operation), in addition to their PPE (i.e., life jacket). Entrance to and from the cordoned area is controlled via a small hut that is utilized for donning and doffing the Tyvek/Tychem.

RESULTS

Monday, August 12. Approximately one-and-a-half mini-barges of dredged sediment from Turning Basin 7 (TB-7) was screened. The material came from the center of the canal, and thus a limited amount of collapsed canal cribbing is being encountered. At day's end, the scalepan was approximately a quarter full. Due to the limited amount of material present in the scalepan, the operating team (Cashman) in consultation with the archaeological monitor (Chronicle Heritage) decided inspection of the screened materials would take place when the scalepan was full, which would subsequently be emptied into an empty mini-barge and hosed with water to remove sediment for inspection by the archaeologist. Inspection of the contents of the scalepan was thus deferred to the following day. A cursory inspection by the deck team identified pieces of cribbing currently in the pan.

Tuesday, August 13. Approximately two mini-barges of dredged sediment was screened today. The material continues to come from Turning Basin 7 (TB-7). The sediment contained only a limited amount of canal timbers. An approximate 12-foot length of 8-inch steel pipe with pipe fittings at the ends was briefly inspected while held in the grip of the excavator to confirm it was a piece of piping and not an early street lamp post – it clearly was not and was subsequently discarded. Tarps, tires and hydraulic hoses continue to represent the majority of items found in the dredged material. By the end of the day, the scalepan was full. The scalepan was moved the following morning to allow items to be hosed with water and inspected.

Wednesday, August 14. The scalepan was moved from under the shaker to the adjacent emptied mini-barge for the contents to be inspected by the field archaeologist (Level 2 monitoring, Chronicle Heritage). Items for inspection were hosed with water to reveal surfaces and aid in

identification. Items observed included a tire, a round metal gas can, corrugated culvert, orange nylon netting, remnants of a 55-gallon drum, an industrial floor fan base, a cinderblock, and the end of a wooden post with a metal bracket (Photograph 3). None of the objects can be confidently dated to pre-date 1965, nor could they be attributed to any specific industry along the canal. The items were not retained. Approximately two mini-barges of dredged material were screened throughout the remainder of the day.



Photograph 3. Items inspected (Level 2) by Chronicle Heritage after scalepan was dumped into a mini-barge for inspection morning of August 14, 2024. Items are from dredged sediment in TB-7 and brought to the Staging Area on August 12 and August 13 (Chronicle Heritage, August 14, 2024).

Thursday, August 14. Approximately two mini-barges of dredged sediment were screened. The material continues to come from Turning Basin 7 (TB-7). The sediment contained a limited amount of timbers. Tarps, tires, hydraulic hoses, and plastic bottles continue to represent the majority of items found in the sediment. By the end of the day, the scalepan was full. The scalepan will be moved in the following morning for items in it to be hosed with water and inspected.

Friday, August 15. The scalepan was moved from under the shaker to the adjacent emptied mini-barge for the contents to be inspected by the field archaeologist (Level 2 monitoring, Chronicle Heritage). Items for inspection were hosed with water to reveal surfaces and aid in identification. Items observed included crumpled sheet metal with white paint, several timbers fragments under

three feet in length, fine yellow netting (probable nylon construction), a red rag/textile, three large rocks (or possible concrete fragments - under two feet diameter), and a possible fuel/oil container (partially crushed) approximately 24-inches long, 12 inches wide, and 6 inches in height, with a visible filler opening (Photograph 4). None of the inspected objects can be confidently dated to pre-date 1965, nor could they be attributed to any specific past industry along the canal. The items were therefore not retained.



Photograph 4. Items inspected (Level 2) by Chronicle Heritage after scalepan was dumped into a mini-barge for inspection morning of August 16, 2024. Items are from contaminated material dredged in TB-7 and brought to the Staging Area on August 12 and August 13 (Chronicle Heritage, August 16, 2024).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Chronicle Heritage did not identify any objects of local interest during Level 2 inspection of PCB-contaminated sediment dredged from Turning Basin 7 (TB-7) and subsequently screened at the Gowanus Canal Staging Area between August 12 and August 16, 2024.