



Flatbush African Burial Ground

Bedford Avenue and Church Avenue, Brooklyn

PDC Preliminary Review
Nov 17, 2025

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Total Budget: \$4M
City Council, FY23

Project Size: 0.665 acre

Parks

Goals

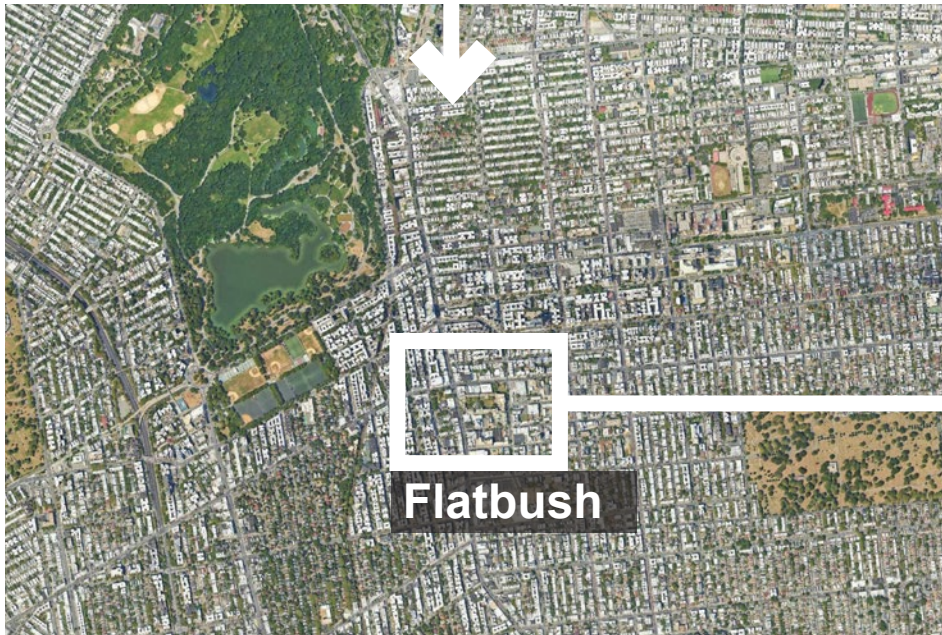
- Preserve the historic significance in collaboration with the community.
- Create a destination to educate the public about the burial ground
- Provide an interpretive design highlighting the burial ground history
- Develop a passive seating area and community gathering space
- Spiritually connect the descendant community



Brooklyn

City

2 MI



Flatbush

Neighborhood

1000 FT



Site

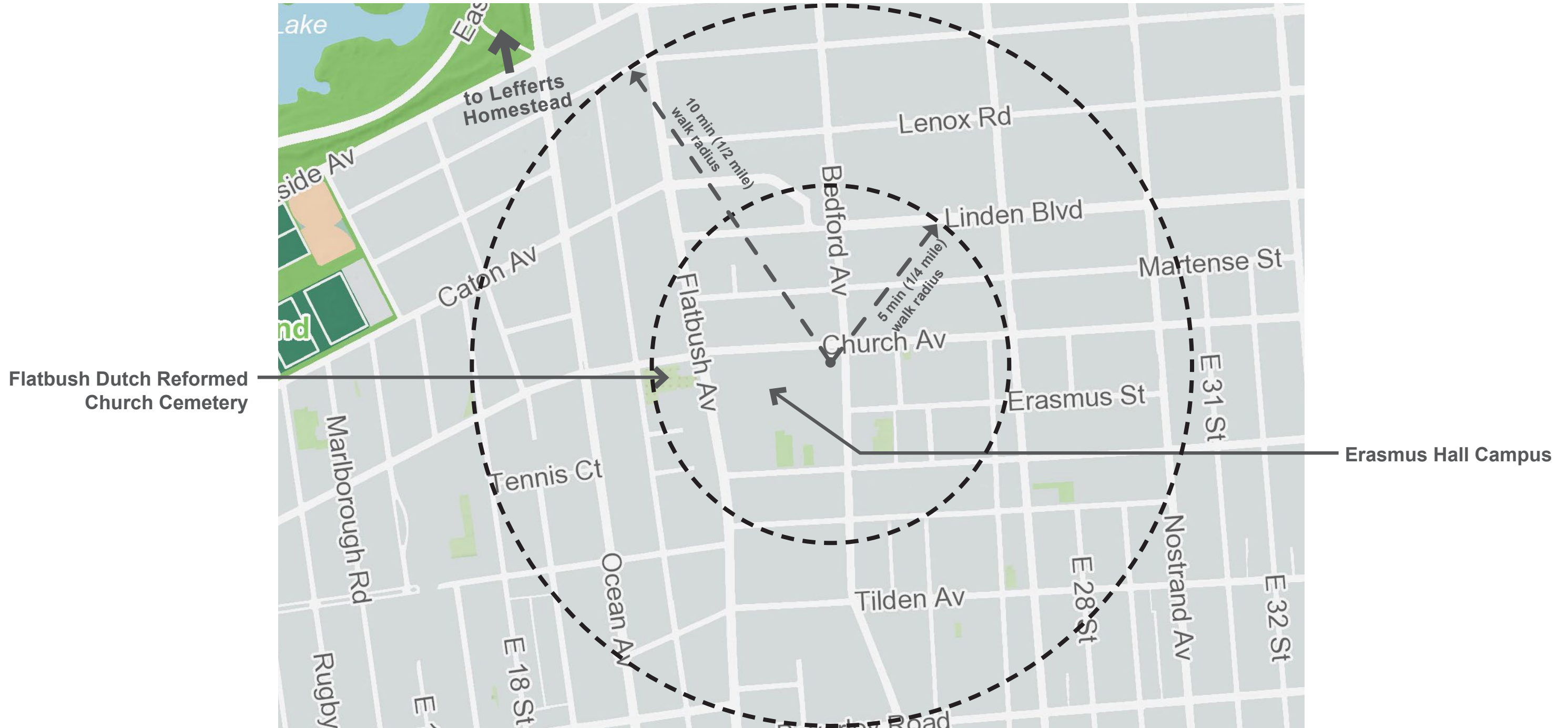
Site

200 FT



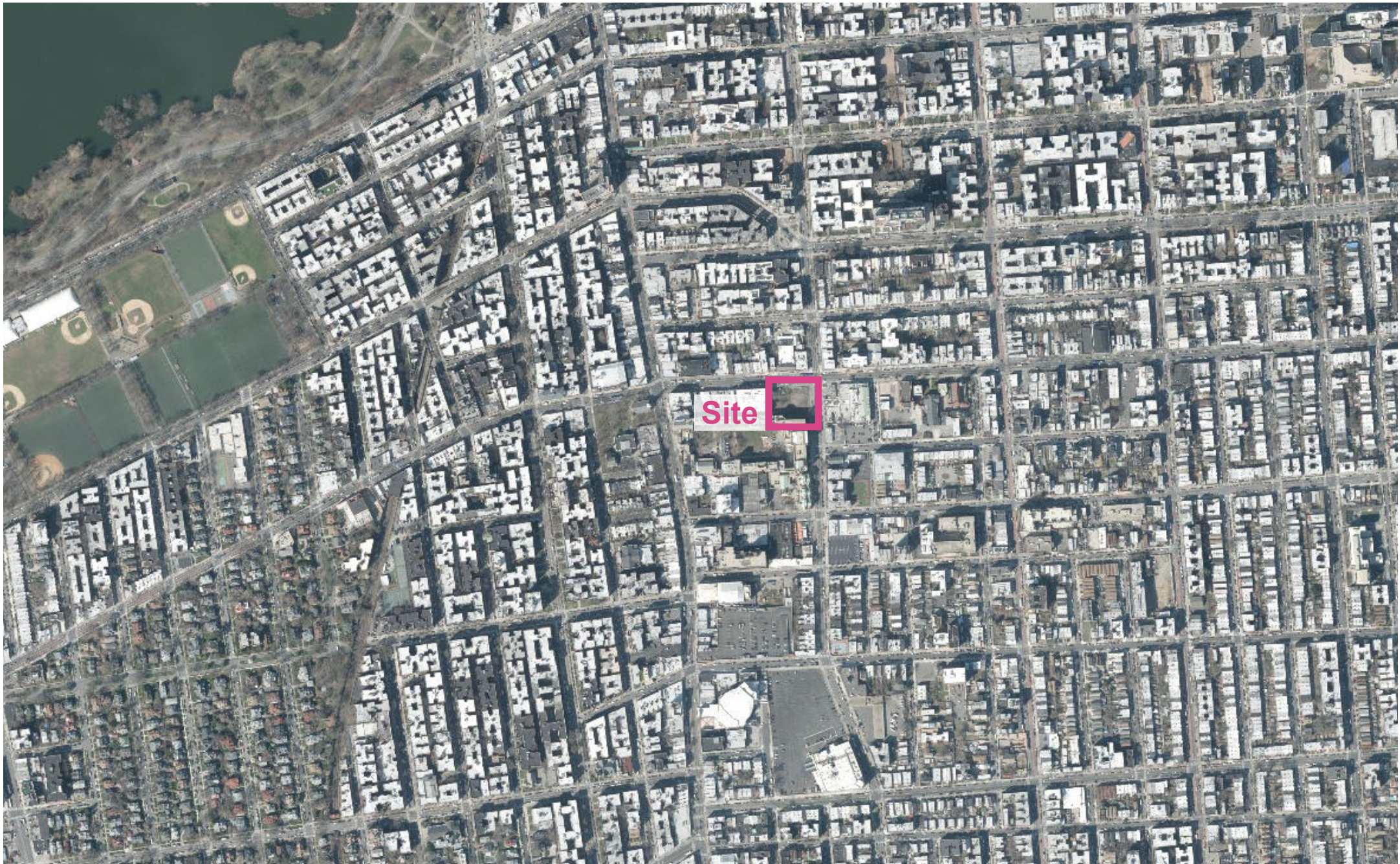
NYC Parks

Flatbush African Burial Ground | Project Location



Flatbush African Burial Ground | Neighborhood Context





Flood Hazard Zones

2015 Preliminary Flood Insurance Rate Map

- V Zone (100-year floodplain subject to wave action)**
Areas along coasts subject to inundation by the 1% annual chance flood event with additional hazards associated with storm-induced waves.
- A Zone (100-year floodplain)**
Areas subject to inundation by the 1% annual chance flood event.
- Shaded X Zone (500-year floodplain)**
Areas within the 0.2% annual chance floodplain, areas of 1% annual chance flooding where average depths are less than 1 foot, areas of 1% annual chance flooding where the contributing drainage area is less than 1 square mile, and areas protected from the 1% annual chance flood by a levee.
- Limit of Moderate Wave Action (LiMWA)**
The inland limit of the area expected to receive 1.5ft or greater breaking waves during the 1% annual chance flood event. Data from 2015 PFIRMs.

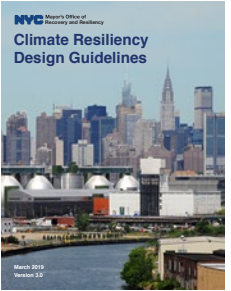
Future Floodplain 2050s

- Future 1% Annual Chance Floodplain (100-year)**
- Future 0.2% Annual Chance Floodplain (500-year)**

Resources (Links):

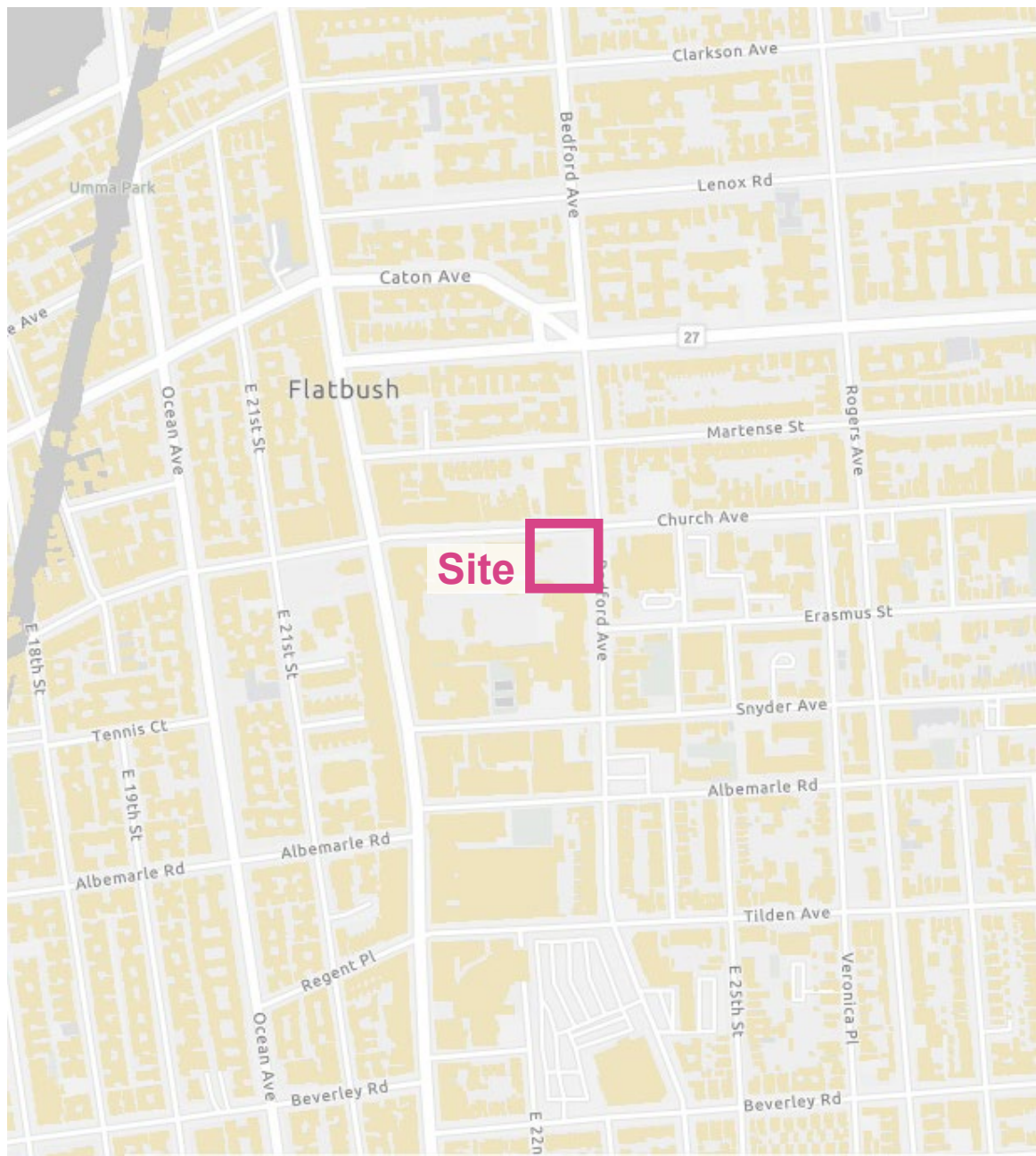


NYC Parks: Design and Planning for Flood Resiliency








NYC MOCR: Climate Resiliency Design Guidelines (v4.0)

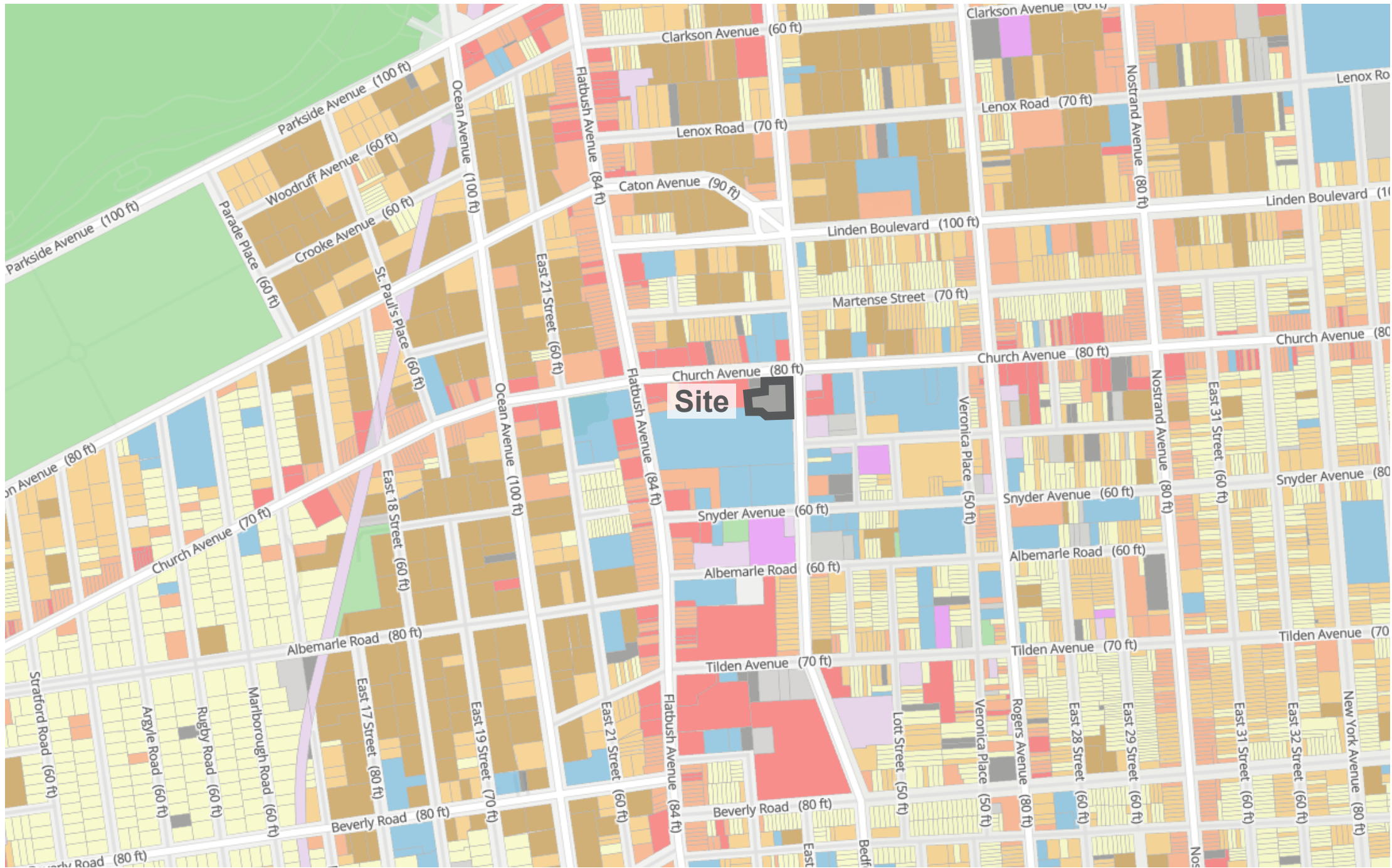




NYC Stormwater Flood Maps

-  Area not included in analysis
-  Future High Tides
2050 (Moderate) & 2080 (Extreme)
-  National Wetlands Inventory
-  Deep and Contiguous Flooding
(1ft and greater)
-  Nuisance Flooding
(greater or equal to 4 in and less than 1 ft)

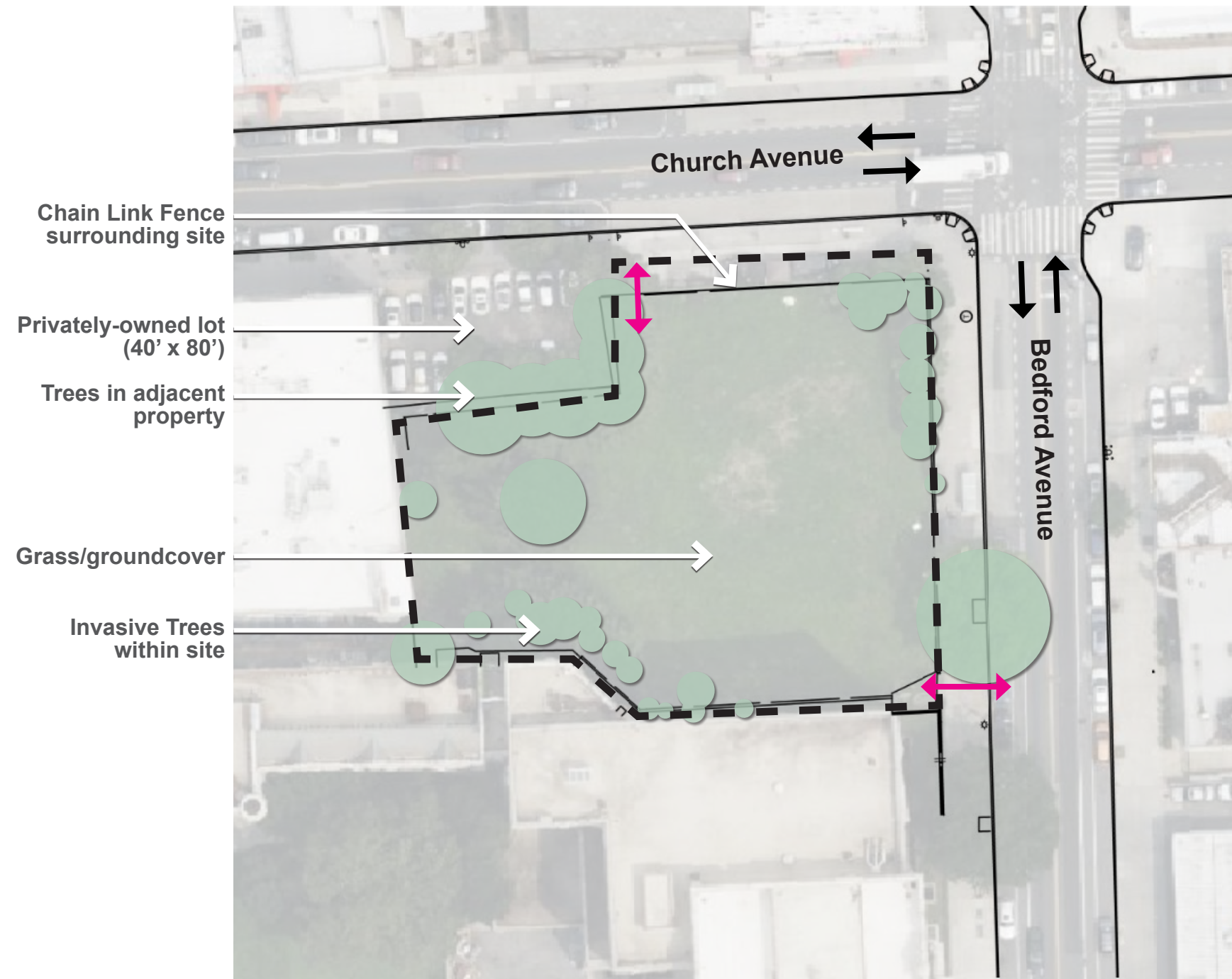




Land Use Categories

- 1 And 2 Family Residential
- Multi-Family Residential (Walkup)
- Multi-Family Residential (Elevator)
- Mixed Use
- Commercial & Office
- Industrial & Manufacturing
- Transportation / Utilities
- Public Facilities & Institutional
- Open Space And Outdoor Recreation
- Parking
- Vacant Land
- Other





Legend

- Park Boundary
- ↔ Existing Entrance
- Tree
- ← Traffic



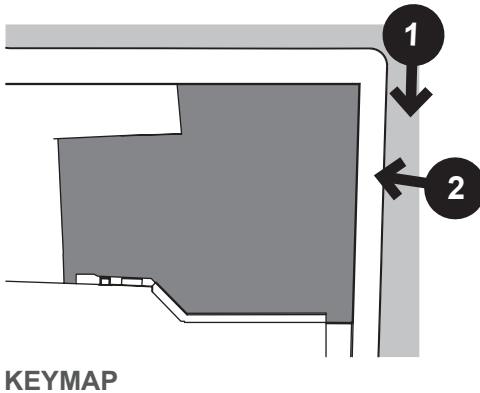
1. View looking south on bedford avenue



2. View of community art installation on existing perimeter fence



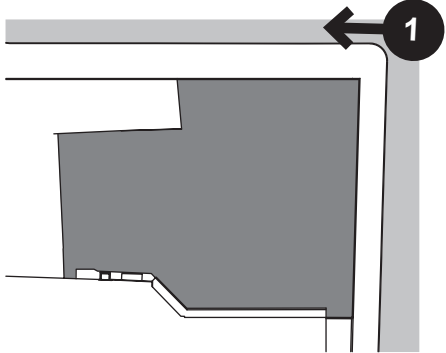
Flatbush African Burial Ground | Current Site Edge Conditions Along Bedford Avenue



KEYMAP



1. View looking west on Church Avenue



KEYMAP

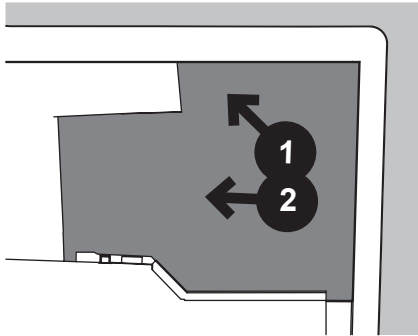




1. View looking northwest



2. View looking west



KEYMAP



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Flatbush African Burial Ground | Interior Photos



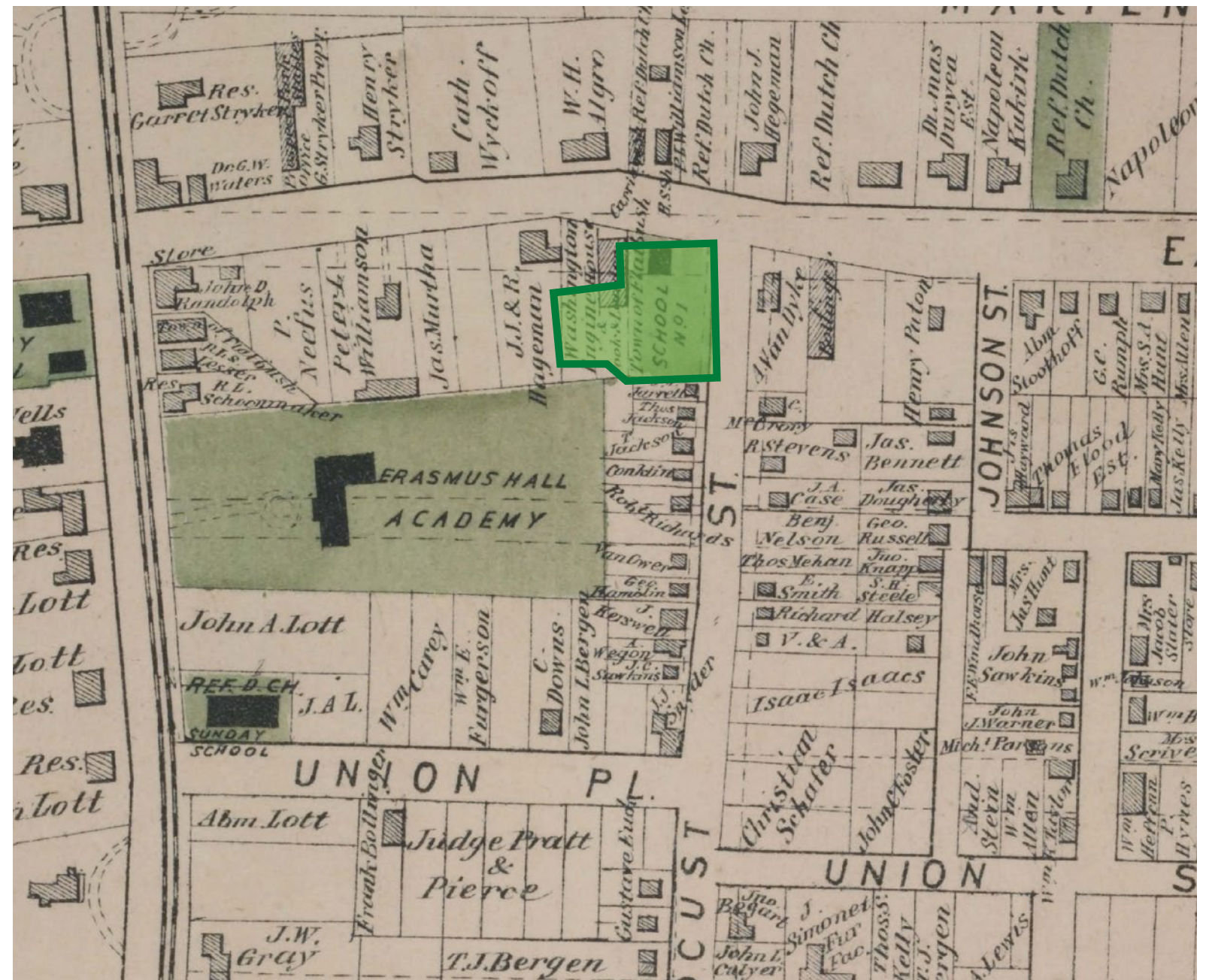
Legend

- 1855 Mapped Burial Ground
- Unmapped Burial Ground

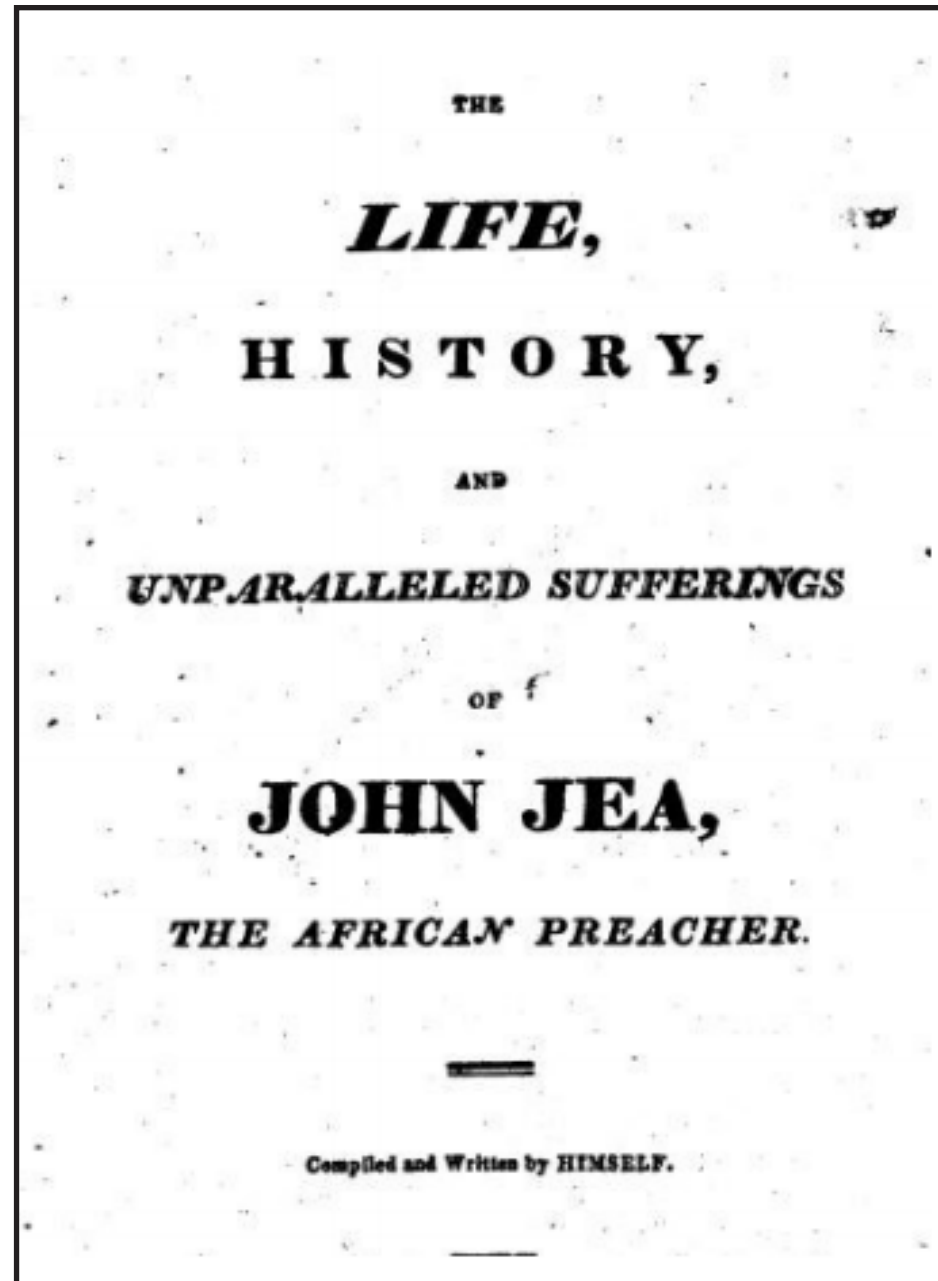




Brooklyn Early 1800's



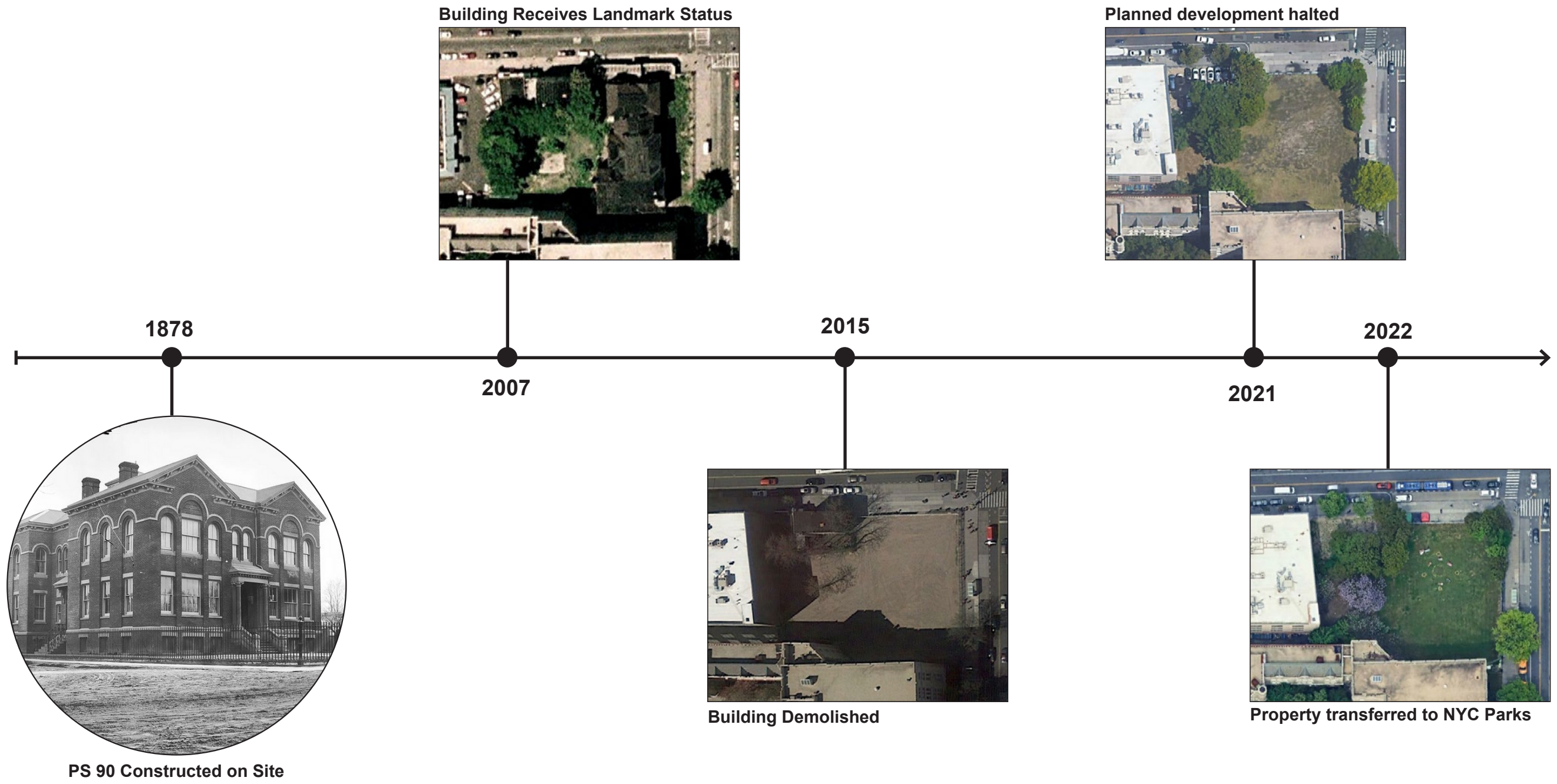
Beers Map 1873

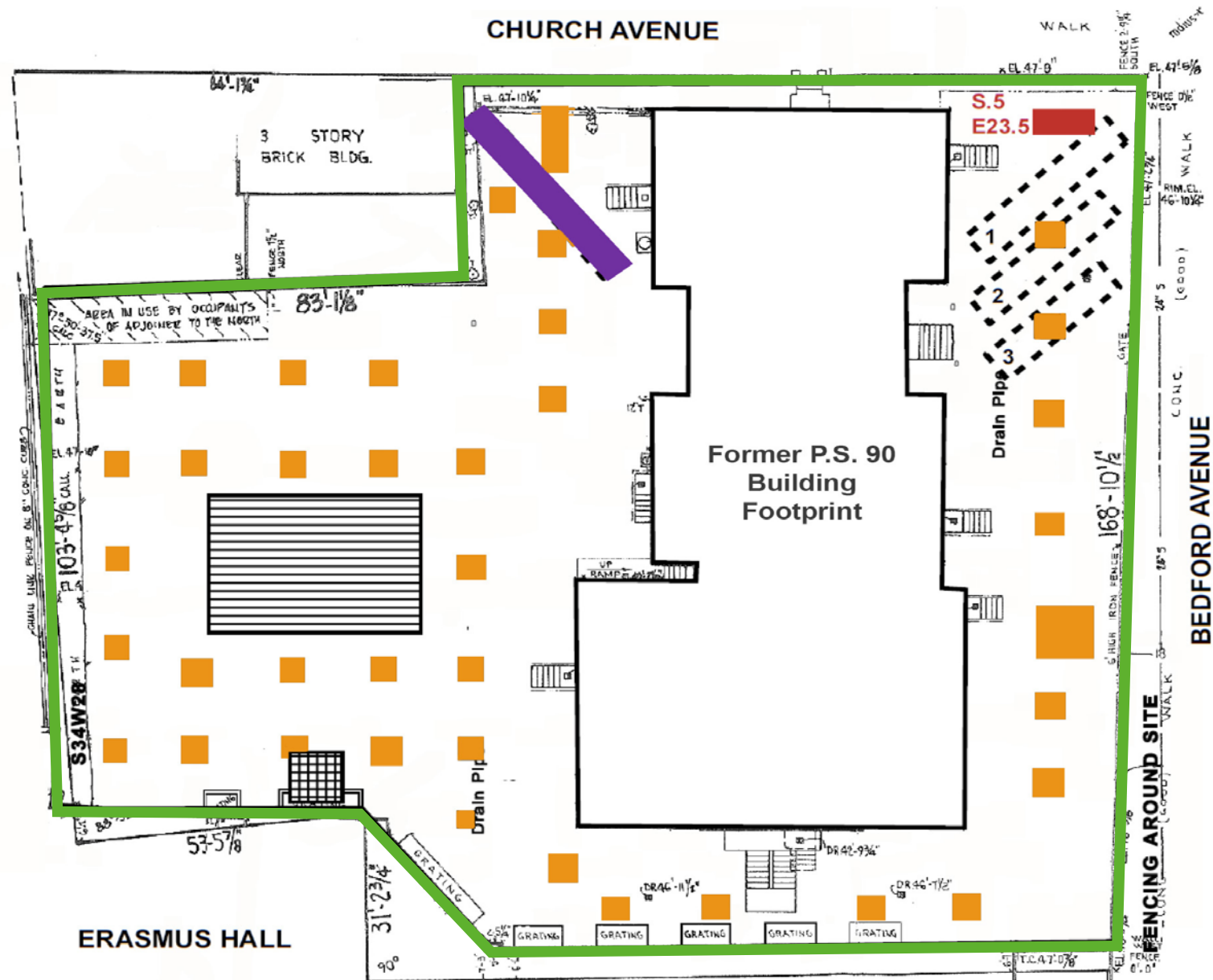


(10)

they did, beat me in a most dreadful manner ; but, instead of making me obedient, it made me the more stubborn, not caring whether I lived or died, **thinking that after I was dead I should be at rest, and that I should go back again to my native country, Africa (an idea generally entertained by slaves) ; but when I told**

Excerpt from "The Life, History and Unparalleled Sufferings of John Jea, The African Preacher"



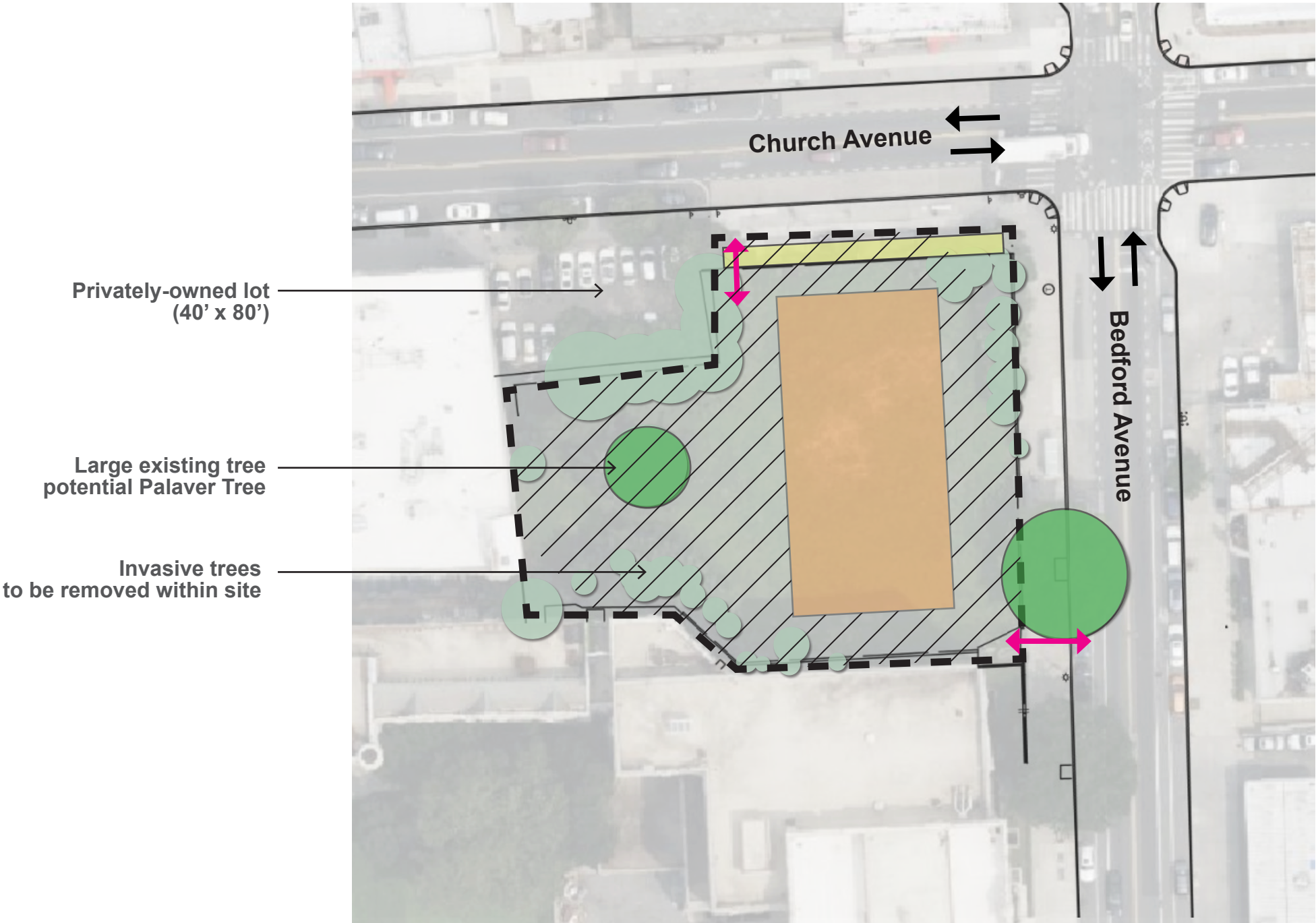


Legend

- Project Limit Line
- Shovel Test Pit
- Machine Excavated Trenches
- ca. 1905 Water Closet
- Brick Lined Privy Shaft
- ▭ Trench with Jaw Bone
- Test Pit with Tooth

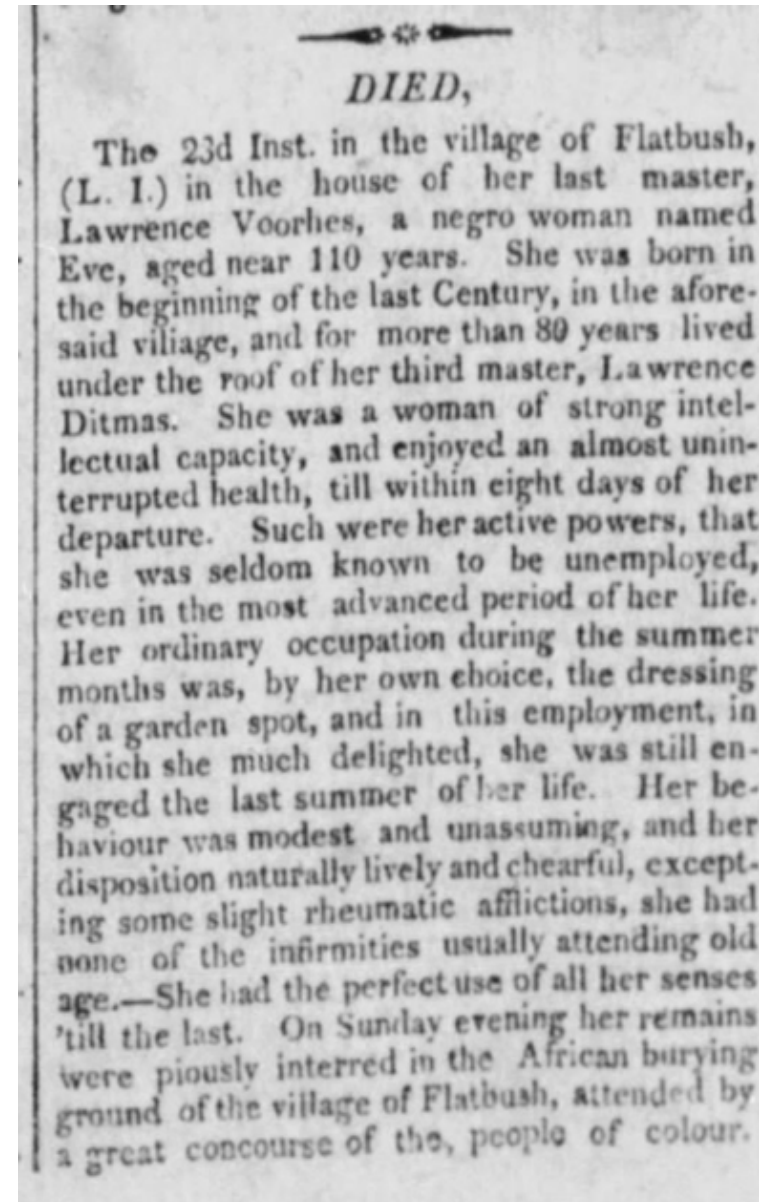
Legend

- Project Boundary
- ↔ Existing Entrance
- Existing trees to be removed
- Existing trees to remain
- ← Traffic
- Site of former PS90; Optimal location for elements requiring deep excavations
- Minimize excavation/soil disturbance within this area of site.
- Area for expansion beyond existing fence





Memorial for Phyllis Jacobs and Eve



1810 obituary of Eve from The Long Island Star



Memorial for Phyllis Jacobs and Eve at the Flatbush African Burial Ground



<https://www.ketafoundation.org/map-1750-map-of-west-africa-showing-slave-ports/>

Door of Return (previously the Door of No Return) at Cape Coast Castle, Ghana



Cape Coast Castle is one of about forty "slave castles", or large commercial forts, built on the Gold Coast of West Africa by European traders.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cape_Coast_Castle



Slave Quarters at Hopsewee Plantation, SC



Sylvester Manor Attic, Long Island



Attic Floor Boards at Lefferts House, Brooklyn



Attic Floor Boards at Raynham Hall, Long Island

What is a Palaver Tree?

In African tradition a palaver tree is a natural gathering spot for community discussions, storytelling, problem solving, and festivals. Roughly equivalent to a civic plaza, zocalo, or agora, the palaver is a place for comfortable community engagement.

<https://www.instituteforpublicart.org/case-studies/palaver-tree/>



African Cosmic “Me/We” Circle Of Wholism

“Very Ancient Africans considered the Circle to represent God. Hence, they concluded, that whatever Emanated (natural extensions) from it to be an associate of it was natural and thus God-made.”

—Dr. Joseph A. Bailey, II, MD., FACS

<https://theievoice.com/african-cosmic-mewe-circle-of-wholism/>



Traditional Masai Village



Stone Circles in South Africa



Traditional Dance in the Karo Village of Duss, Ethiopia

John Warburton-lee

Pan African Colors

“On October 11th, 1897, a year after Ethiopia defended itself from Italian colonization at the Battle of Adwa, Emperor Menelik II authorized the creation of a flag containing a rectangular tri-color from top to bottom: red, yellow, and green.”

<https://medium.com/illumination-curved/why-most-african-flags-use-the-red-yellow-and-green-colors-61e90d6164c>



Flag of Ethiopia (1897–1913)

“You see, the concept of Pan-Africanism is a worldwide movement that aims at encouraging and strengthening the bonds of solidarity between all indigenous and diaspora ethnic groups of Africa.”

<https://medium.com/illumination-curved/why-most-african-flags-use-the-red-yellow-and-green-colors-61e90d6164c>

Current country flags with the Pan-African symbolism

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pan-African_colours#Red-black-green



Benin



Burkina Faso



Camaroon



Central African Republic



Chad



Republic of Congo



Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia



Ghana



Guinea



Guinea-Bissau



Mali



Senegal



São Tomé and Príncipe



Togo



Poster advertisement for Nine Nights festival at the Flatbush African Burial Ground



A seating circle at the Flatbush African Burial Ground to celebrate Pan-Africanism and honor ancestors.



Community members dancing at the Flatbush African Burial Ground

Legend

- Park Boundary
- ↔ Existing Entrance
- Tree
- ← Traffic

Axial Marker referencing the spiritual return home through 'Door Of Return' at Cape Coast Castle

Gardens along edge

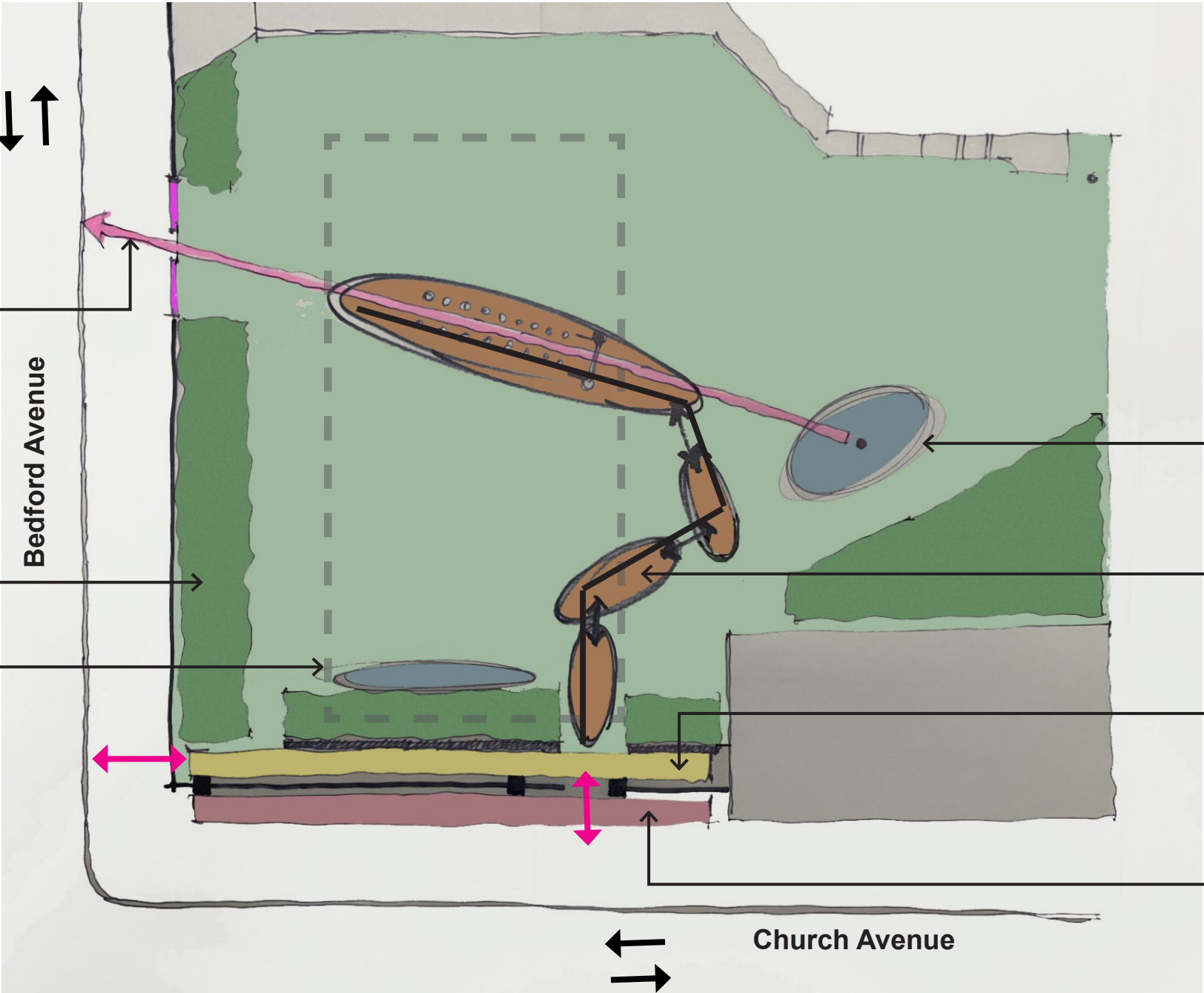
Buildable area for elements requiring deep excavation

Largest on-site tree to serve as Palaver Tree and reference point to West Africa

Procession of hard life, perseverance and liberation in death:
TOILED
ENDURED
TRANSFIGURED

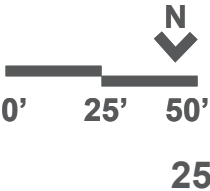
Resilience:
Area depicting enslaved and the various accomplishments of the enslaved people and their descendants

Struggle:
Area evoking internalization of the Transatlantic Slave Trade

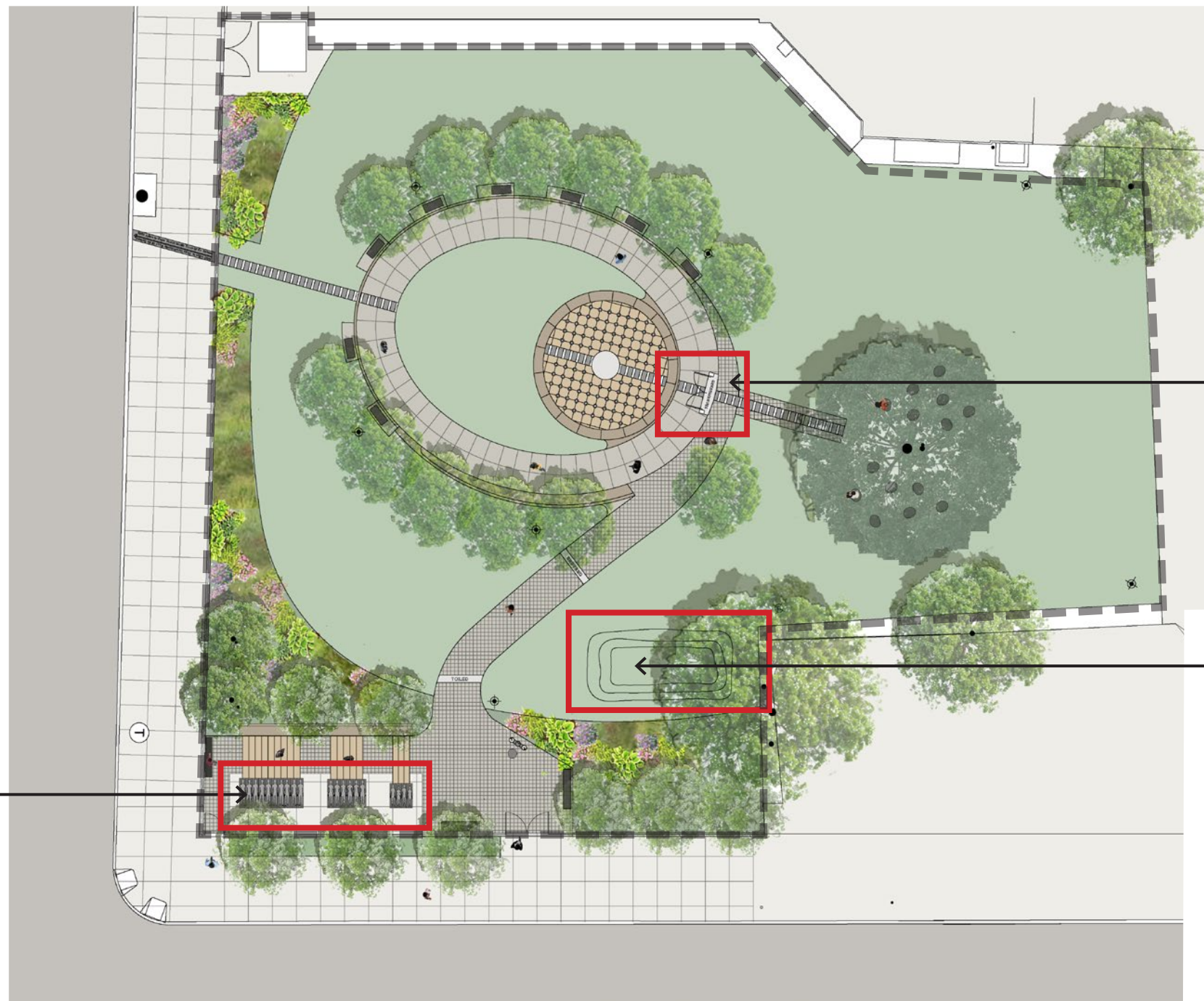


Flatbush African Burial Ground | Conceptual Sketch

NOTE:
Plan has been rotated to emphasize the recognized point of entry







Legend

- Project Limit
- Traffic
- Entrance
- Light Pole
- Bench

Door of Return
(with signage)

Burial Mound

"Atrocities"





Legend

FENCE GATE OR PORTAL

EXISTING FENCES (x = HEIGHT)

CLF

STEEL

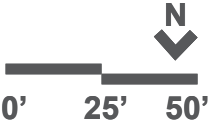
MEDIUM FENCES
FENCES 4' - 7' - 6" HT. (x = HEIGHT)

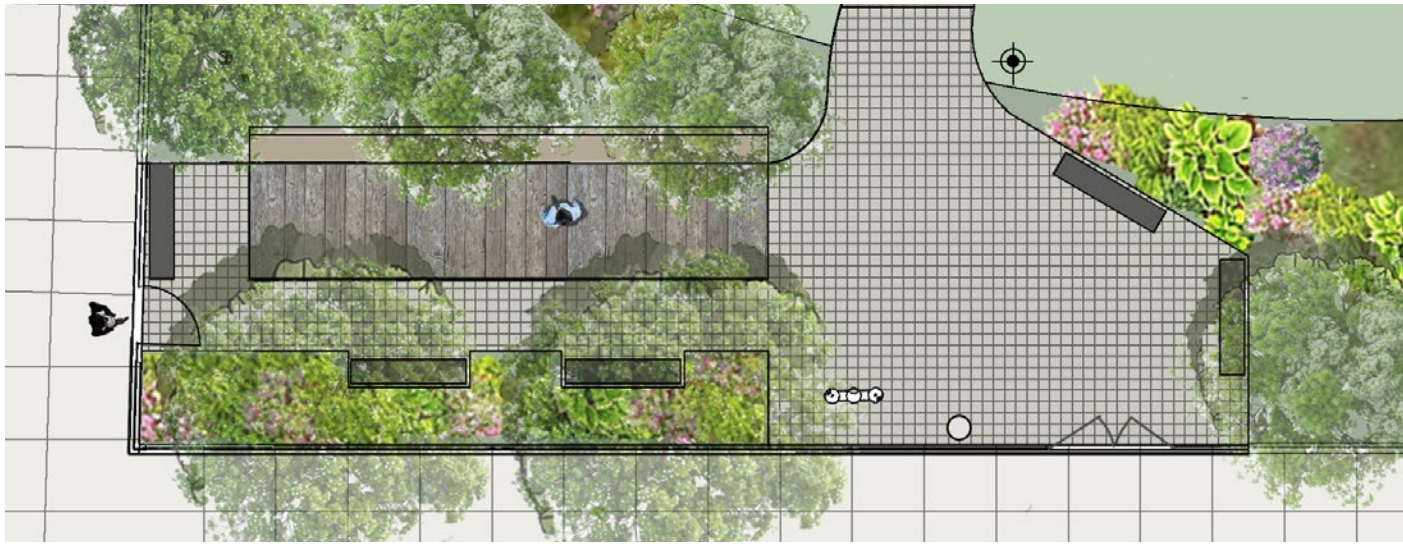
STEEL

Burial Ground Entrance



Flatbush African Burial Ground | Proposed Fence Diagram





Decking evocative of the distressed wood from slave ships and slave quarters



Accomplishments:
to be Selected by the community

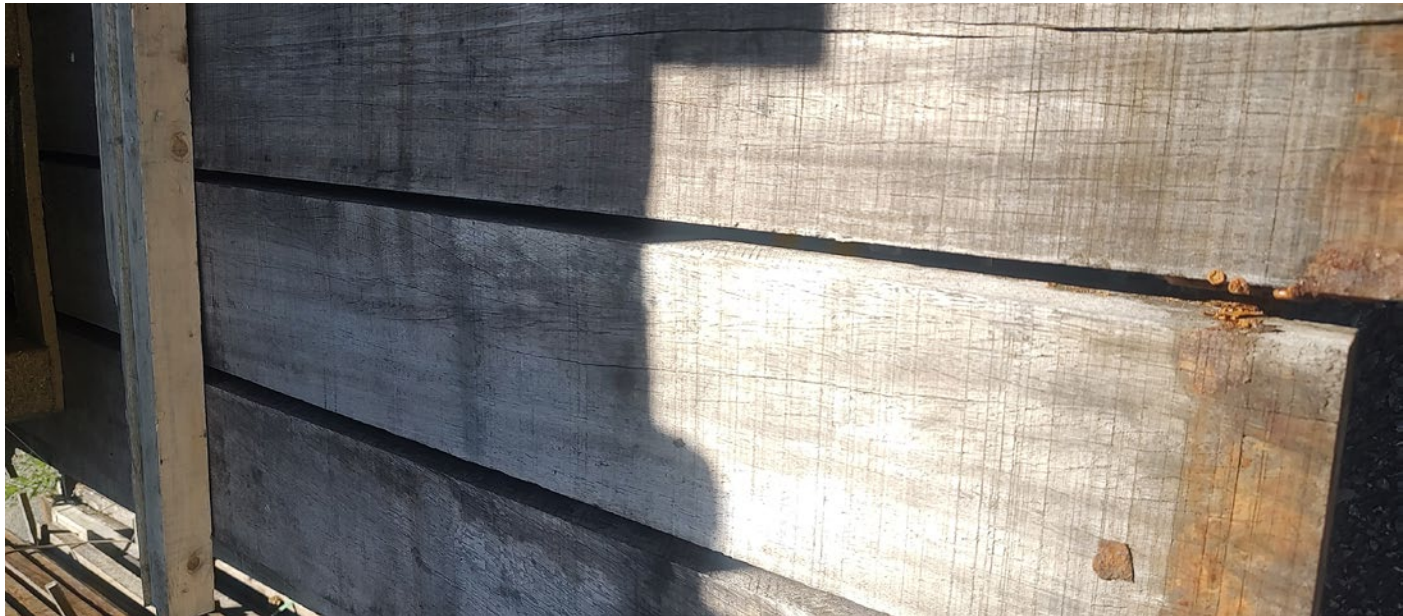
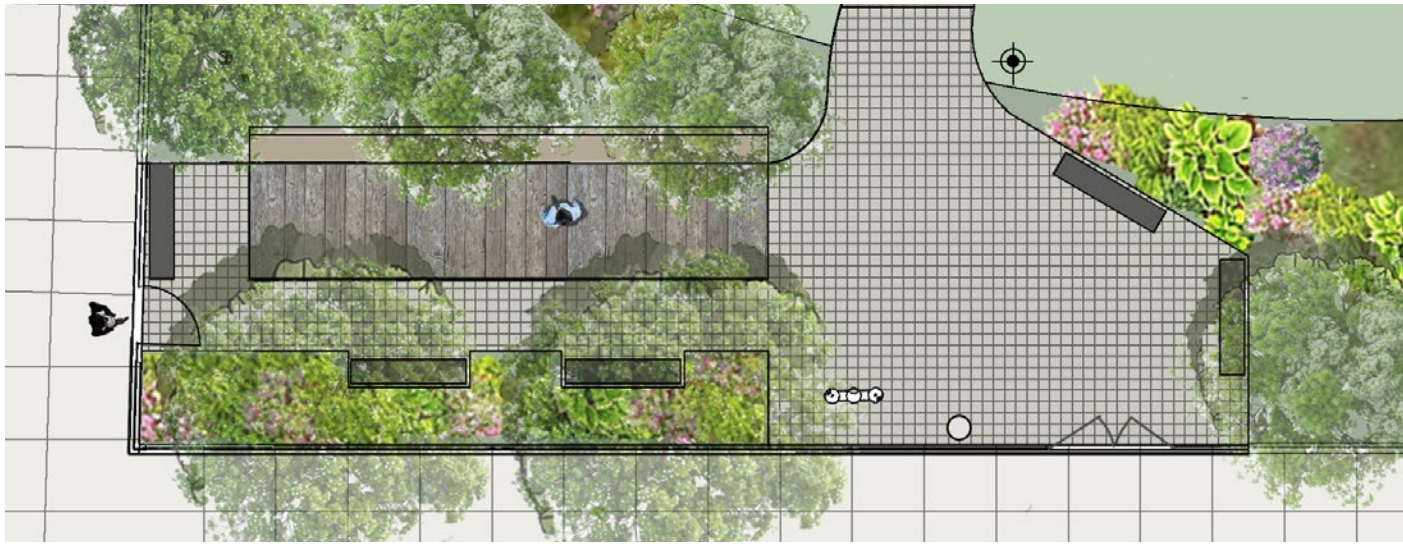
Aya Adinkra Symbol For Resiliency & Perseverance

Note: Final text will be determined with the community and a consultant historian and will be submitted with the final submission.



KEYMAP





EKKI

A reclaimed lumber originally from West Africa

- incredibly durable and strong
- naturally rot resistant
- salvaged from cargo ships
- available from a US supplier.



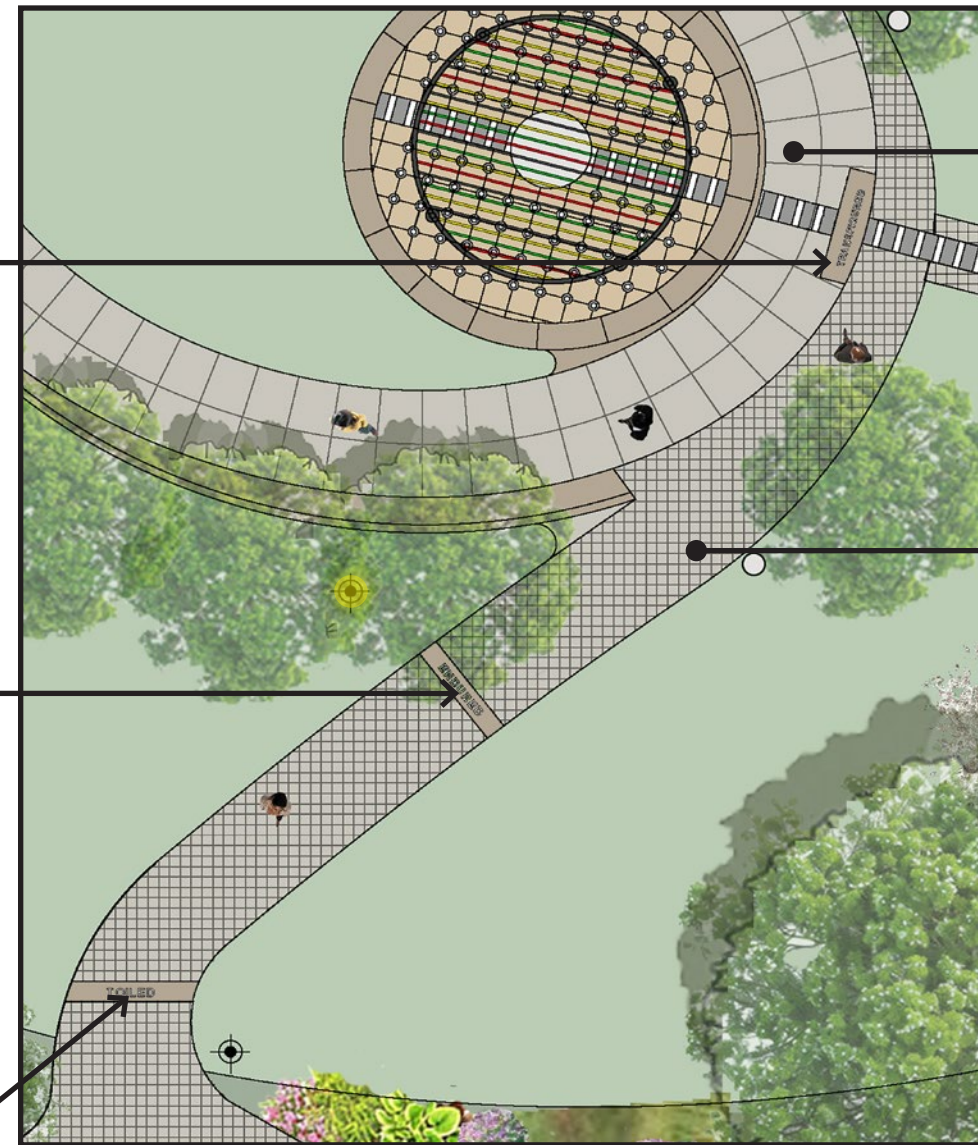
KEYMAP



Transfigured

Endured

Toiled



Large Granite Slabs



Engraved lettering
Typeface to be reviewed in subsequent submission



Square Granite Cobble

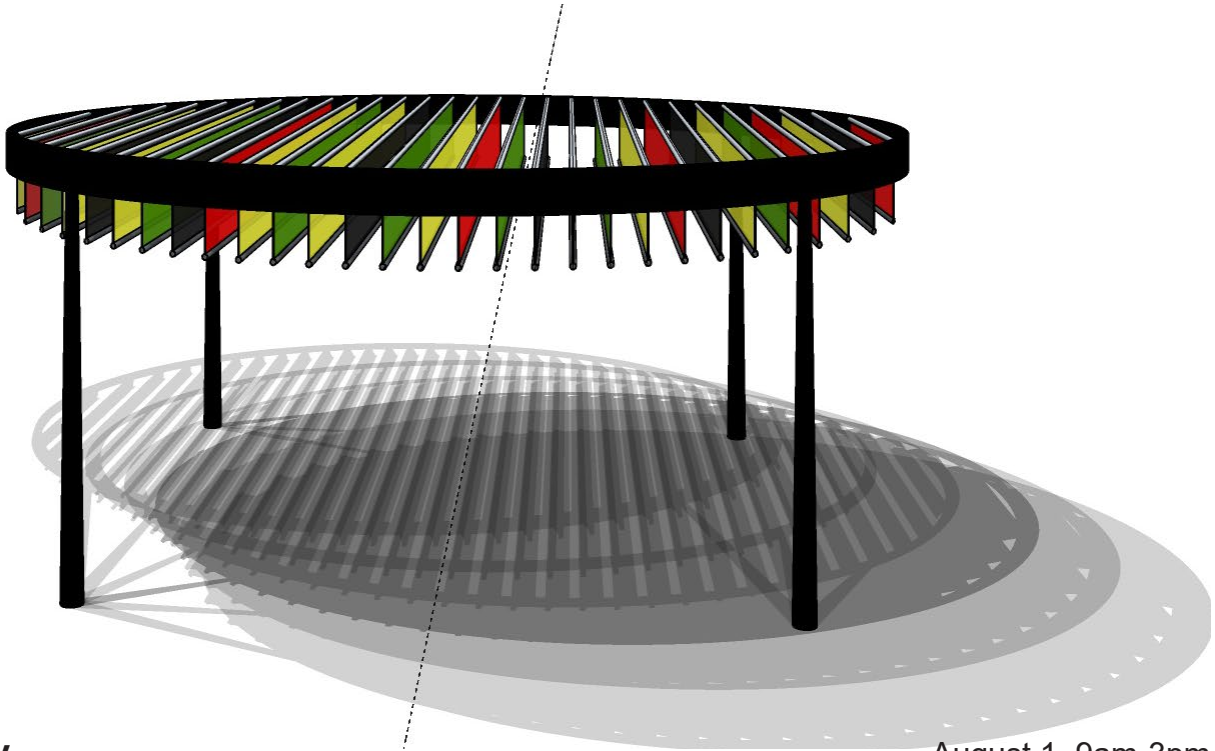


KEYMAP





1. View of shade structure tructure with Palaver seating in foreground

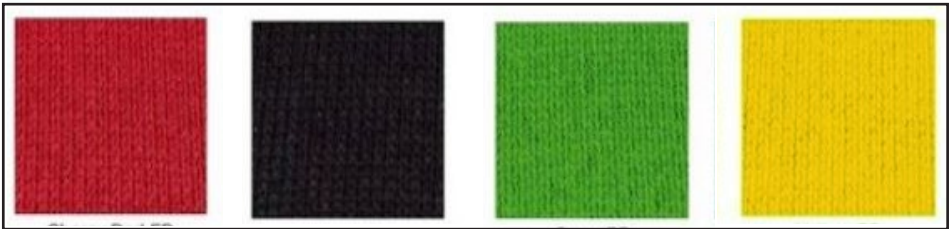


2. Shade Study

August 1, 9am-3pm



Photo of tensile structure installed in 1995 at Orchard Beach



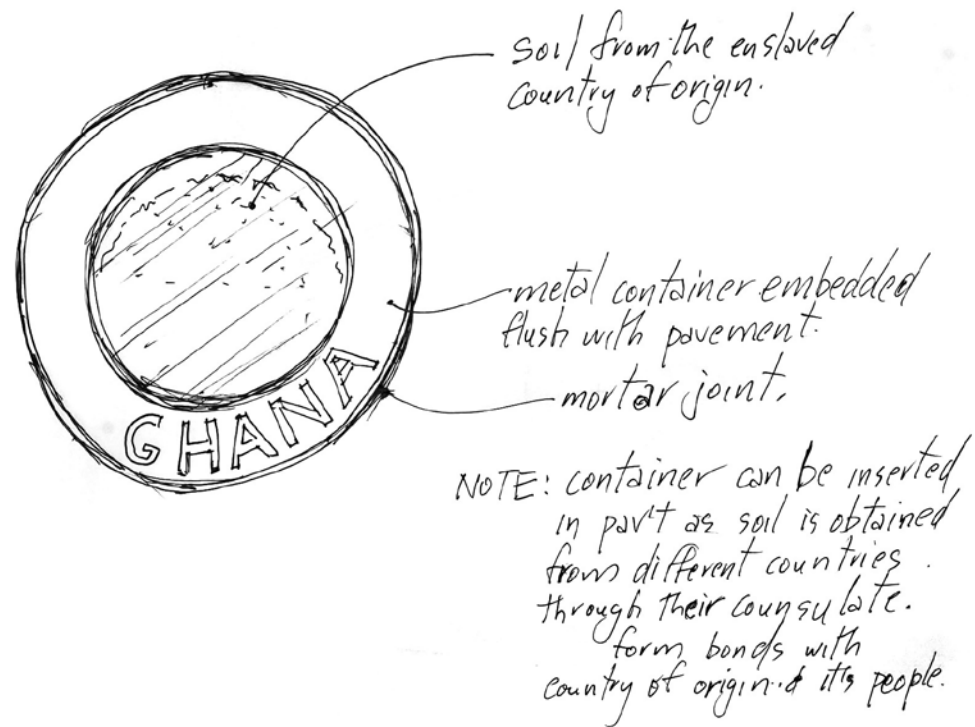
Panel colors representing various flags of African nations

The tensile fabric specified has been installed successfully at previous NYC Parks locations, including Orchard beach (see photo to the left).

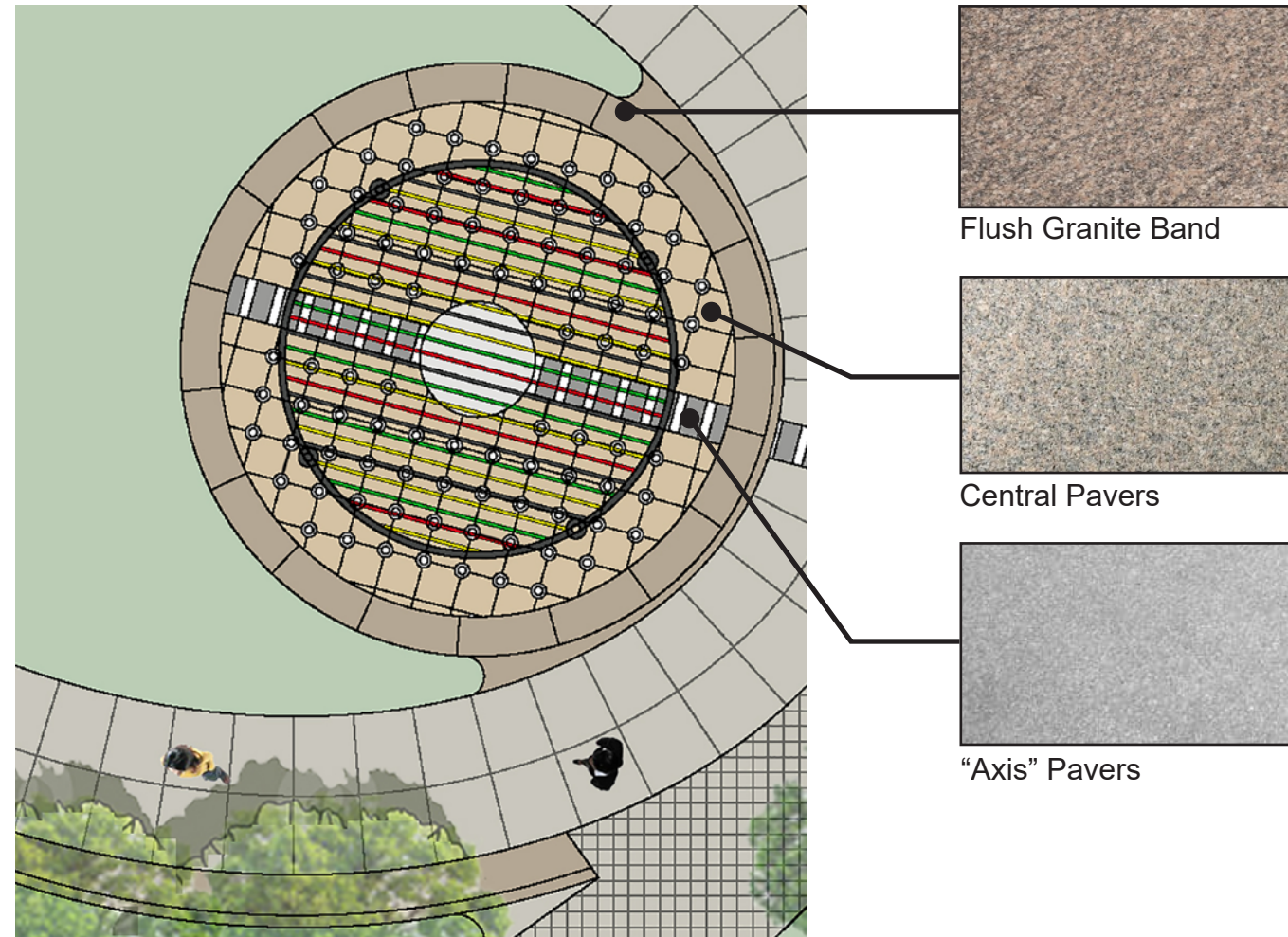


KEYMAP





Example of flush element in pavement at spray area from Domino Park, Brooklyn



1. Country of Origin Soil

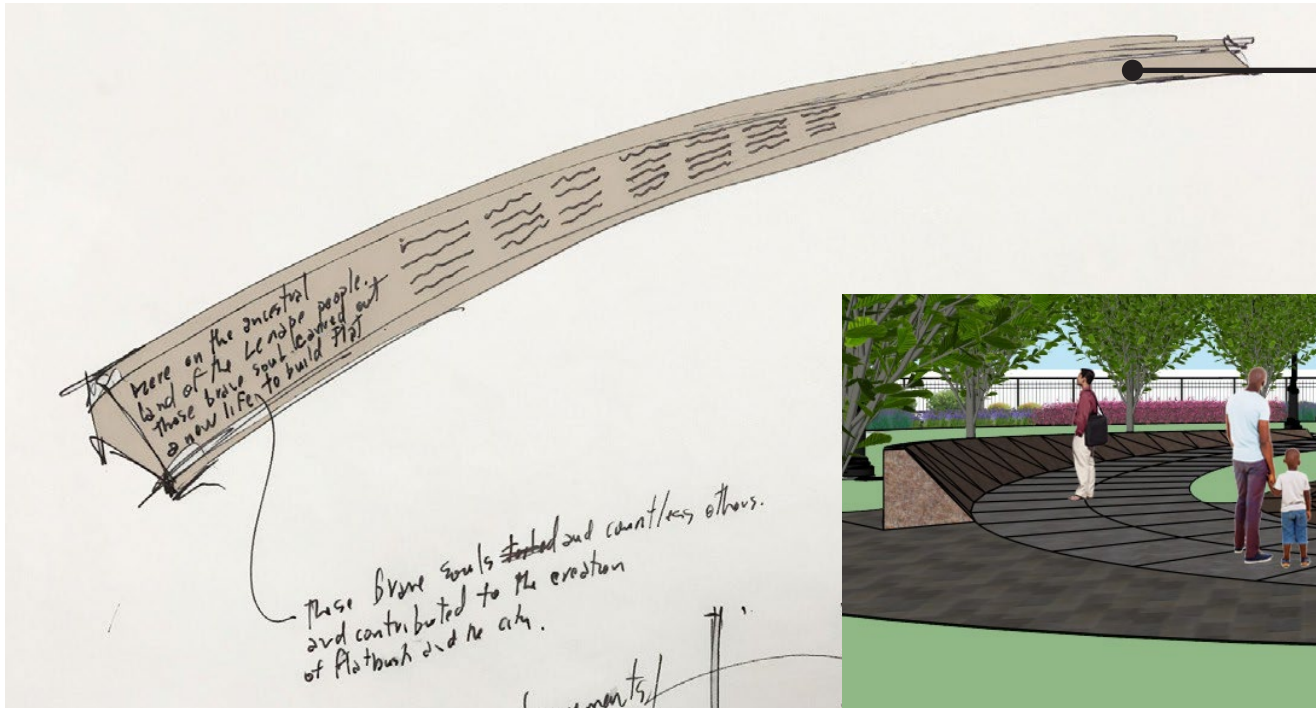


KEYMAP





1. Name Wall Elevation



Name Wall Stone



2. Name Wall

Names will be determined based on historical evidence and in collaboration with the community and consultant historian.



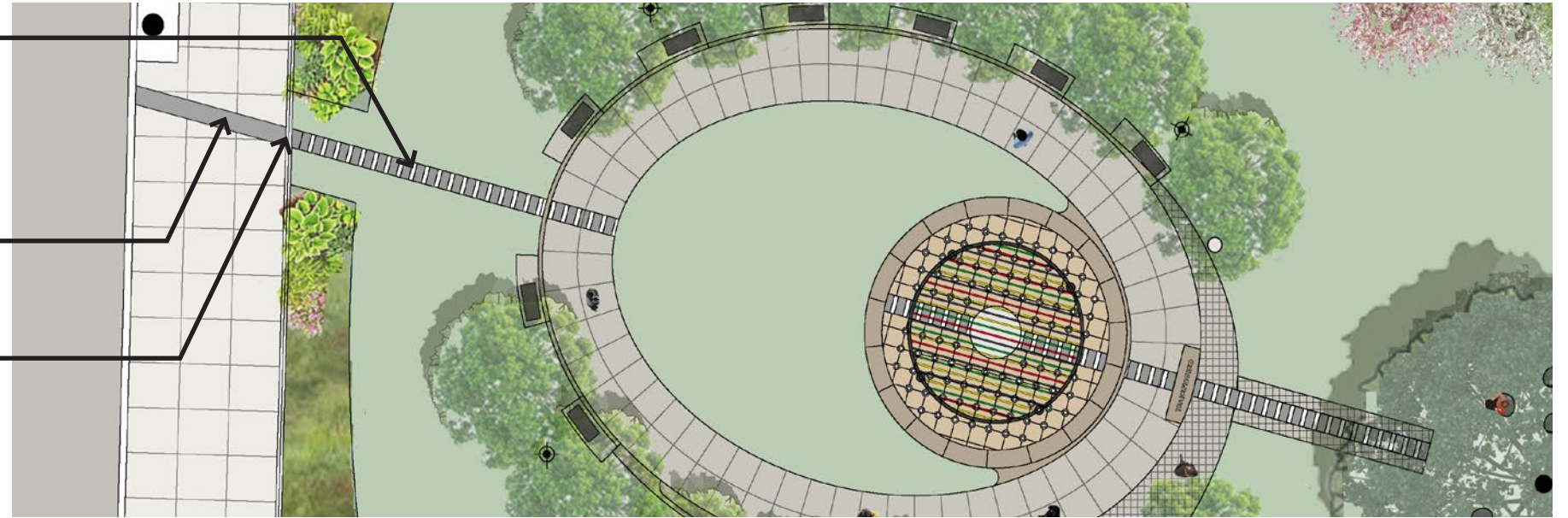
KEYMAP



Axial Marker directed to the
'Door Of Return' at Cape Coast Castle'

Extension of Axis as landmarks grey
concrete 'inset' in sidewalk

Special Fence Panel at Axis



The Axis Enlargement

Special Fence Panel with Sankofa
symbol aligned at axis intersection



Fence elevation at Axis intersection

Curb
Axis pavers



KEYMAP



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Type B Lightpole



Type E Hi-Lo Drinking Fountain



Public Space Trash Receptacle



DOT Bike Rack



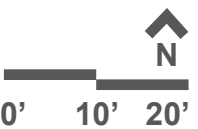
Bottle Filler



NYC Parks

Program Name (delete if none)

Flatbush African Burial Ground | Site Materials





Palaver Stool



Stone Bench
Color: Black



Carpinus betulus



Betula nigra



Magnolia soulangiana



Amelanchier canadensis



Cercis canadensis



Euonymus 'manhattan'



Hydrangea quercifolia



Prunus laurocerasus



Cornus sericea



Liriope muscari



Flatbush African Burial Ground | View from Church Avenue



KEYMAP



Flatbush African Burial Ground | Section Through Site



KEYMAP



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Flatbush African Burial Ground | Section Through Central Gathering Area



KEYMAP

N



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Flatbush African Burial Ground | View from Bedford Avenue







Legend

- Project Limit
- ← Traffic
- ↔ Entrance
- Light Pole
- Bench



Flatbush African Burial Ground | Preliminary Design

