



**Studio 3**  
**Fall 2009**

**CCA**  
**Anderson/Bieg/Findley/Kudless/Scott/Zylberberg**

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### **PROJECT 1A: HIGH LINE Adjacent: The Site**

**Issued:** 08.26.09  
**Due:** 09.02.09

You will be using part of your time in NYC to get to know the site for the semester project. However, this getting-to-know is far more than simply walking around and taking some photos so you can build an accurate site model. We want to get to know the site in multiple ways: physically, experientially, temporally and in ways that are initially invisible, but equally as important. These include forces such as history, culture and perceptions that have profound impact upon the site. Each of these visible and invisible aspects has important implications for any architecture.

When an architect takes on a project s/he spends a great deal of time getting to know all the aspects of the site. However, due to the brief time you have in NYC, we will be dividing up the gathering of common site information, but you will also be beginning your own reading of the site.

The gathering and translation of information from Project 1A (done in small groups, as well as individually) is the raw material for Project 1B (done individually). Be sure to attend to your on-site work carefully and fully as you are responsible to the entire studio for the completeness and accuracy of your analysis and observations. And, of course, you will not likely have an opportunity to return to the site.

Those of you unable to go to NYC will be taking on the work in groups 3, 11 and 13. See specific comments below. Assignments through Jason Anderson via email.

## **TEAM SITE WORK:**

The site work will consist of many different but parallel actions. The site documentation and information gathering will be accomplished by dividing the three studios into 13 teams, with representatives from each studio section on each team. Each team will be responsible for an aspect of the site—visible or invisible. This will assure an “expert” in each activity/analysis category in each studio section.

You will also notice from the below that the definition of what constitutes the “site” varies greatly depending upon what aspects you are looking at. Discuss with the faculty who are working with you in NYC what the boundaries of your group’s site should be. This is a neighborhood in the midst of a profound transition from what it was fifteen years ago, even five years ago. To some extent this has been catalyzed by the High Line Project, but it is also the result of gentrification of the area due to economic pressures from Manhattan economic development in general. Please consider and incorporate these facts into all of your research.

Also many groups may have need of similar information and data. This is sometimes noted below, but there may be other overlaps that are not noted. Pay attention to what other people are doing and collaborate.

Regardless of which team you are on, keep in mind that the act of researching, observing, measuring, documenting and quantifying site information as well as observing the invisible city [spaces between, urban turbulences, architecture’s other and on site phenomena] are part of your general charge.

### **1) TEXTURE/COLOR/SIGNAGE:**

- *Observe, Describe, document:* All essential surfaces, including ground and underside of things, adjacent conditions, side walls, in between and details. All signage (both verbal and visual, intended and unintended, formal and informal). Compare notes with Visual Character people.
- *Curate:* Experiment and develop a system of organizing your data so that others can use it. For instance photos. Photomontages referenced to maps, referenced listing, etc.
- *Design and Print:* pertinent photos, diagrams and reference maps
- *Construct:* maps, diagrams montages & panoramas [splice images, smooth & continuous]

### **2) SITE and NEIGHBORHOOD HISTORY/CHANGE: [2 members On-Site, 1 Off-Site]**

- *Research:* History of the site, the High Line and the neighborhood, how it evolved, who lived there, what went on there and how it is changing right now. Also include the physical materials of the neighborhood and how these have changed. For instance the sidewalk/street construction, condition and materials. Off-Site Member will be responsible for researching the history of the High Line and its redevelopment, including the competition.
- *Document:* Collect historical and current photos, maps, verbal texts, etc. These may be found in city archives & on line. May also interview people.
- *Produce:* Verbal descriptions and diagrams, at least three maps, and compile/label historical photos. Draw, write, copy & montage storyboards

### **3) URBAN MORPHOLOGY/GEOMETRY:**

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- *Observe, Research and Document:* Urban patterns including urban grain and scale, street patterns/widths/directions/speed, building heights and massing, awnings/street encroachment, etc. Understand historical changes as needed.
- *Develop:* Photographs along with diagrams and maps. Do NOT just copy Google Earth images.
- *Produce:* Diagram at least ten aspects, compile 3 summary maps, montage storyboards

### **4) ECOLOGY:**

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- *Observe, Research and Document:* Animals (including nocturnal), plants (including street trees), hydrology, manufactured nature, and their relationships, climate (rain and snow fall including seasonal patterns, prevailing winds, etc), local micro-climates due to tall buildings, street canyons and/or High Line shadowing. Be sure to look at the High Line and its role as a linear public space.
- *Develop:* techniques to visually summarize these aspects of the site. These might include diagrams of relationships, species maps and sections, hydrological diagrams and maps, and so on.
- *Produce:* Diagrams, maps, charts that convey information and demonstrate relationships between and among the various factors.

### **5) BUSINESS, SOCIETY & CULTURE:**

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- *Observe, Research and Document:* Businesses in neighborhood (noting not only types but hours of operation, etc.). All cultural institutions (formal like theaters, galleries, music venues; semi-formal like bars and nightclubs; and informal like street performers, well done graffiti, street vendors, etc.) all social institutions (schools, clubs, restaurants/bars, gyms, etc.) and other relevant social structures. Don't forget that these may differ substantially from day to night and from weekday to weekend. In addition, look at the way the High Line offers connection to the ground. Compare notes with Networks people.
- *Develop:* photographs (photo montages), along with diagrams, sections and maps of these various aspects
- *Produce:* Summary diagrams and maps along with relevant photo montages.

### **6) SOUND/NOISE/SILENCE:**

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- *Observe, Research and Document:* Sounds surrounding the site—including direction, degree of intensity, over time of day and day of week. These include ambient noise, event noise (planes, helicopters, trash trucks, boom boxes, etc), and silence. Also note the elevation of the noise both at its source and where one hears it (ground level, High Line, etc.) and rate noise in terms of degree of disturbance. Include observation of visual aspect of noise generation, ie: do we see the bus we hear roaring down the street at 6 PM?
- *Develop:* diagrams, maps and sections of the sound and noise and silence around the site.
- *Produce:* Set of comprehensive composite pages showing above.

### **7) SAFETY/DANGER:**

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- *Observe, Research and Document:* Aspects of safety, danger and security in the neighborhood. Look beyond the obvious (bars on windows, locks on doors, security guards at entries) to the less obvious (urban indicators of danger and

neglect like trash on the street, poorly maintained sidewalks, curbs and streets, broken windows, gang graffiti, loitering) and safety (lively street life, businesses with windows on the street, sidewalk cafes, etc.). Look at weekdays, weeknights, Saturday and Sunday day and night. Interviews with neighborhood businesses as well as people on the street will provide useful information. May be able to get reported crime stats from NYPD.

- *Develop*: photographs along with diagrams, maps and sections
- *Produce*: Set of comprehensive composite pages showing above.

## **8) LIGHT/SHADOW:**

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- *Observe, Research and Document*: Natural light: sun angles, quality of light (time of year, time of day), number of sunny days, etc. Artificial light: Street lights, buildings lights, lighted signs, degree of ambient nighttime light. Shadows cast by buildings and High Line onto the site (by time of day and time of year).
- *Develop*: Photographs along with diagrams, maps and sections
- *Produce*: Set of comprehensive composite pages showing above.

## **9) MOVEMENT/ACCESS/TRANSIT:**

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- *Observe, Research and Document*: Movement of humans and goods around, near and to and from the site. This includes pedestrian, bicycle, vehicles, public transit, and so on. Note bus stops, parking for bicycles and cars, and so on. Note sidewalk conditions and widths. Also note handicap accessibility along sidewalks, at intersections etc. Note loading zones, ramps and areas. Note vertical connections as a result of the High Line. Also look at connectivity of the site to other areas of Manhattan and the region. Compare notes with Infrastructure and Services people.
- *Develop*: Photographs along with diagrams, maps and sections
- *Produce*: Set of comprehensive composite pages showing above.

## **10) NETWORKS (Social and Cultural)**

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- *Observe, Research and Document*: Aside from physical connectivity, how is the neighborhood connected within itself (visual and social connections), with Lower Manhattan (cultural, institutional) and even further afield (communication, digital, cultural, institutional, through franchises or couture, import/export, and so on). Also note that this includes vertical connections with the High Line—where are these made, how do they reinforce physical changes/improvements? How do these tie in or overlap with existing networks? In addition, note how new technology social networks (ie: Twitter, etc.) in tied to the site. Compare notes with Business, Society & Culture People.
- *Develop*: Photographs along with diagrams, maps and sections
- *Produce*: Set of comprehensive composite pages showing above.

## **11) INFRASTRUCTURE & SERVICES: [Off-Site group: SF based]**

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- *Observe, Research and Document*: All physical infrastructure systems: roads, transit, sidewalks, vertical circulation and connections, other pedestrian access/services, green space, water, sewage, power and data. Police, fire and emergencies services. Compare notes with Movement/Access/Transit people.
- *Develop*: Photographs along with diagrams, maps and sections
- *Produce*: Set of comprehensive composite pages showing above.

## **12) VISUAL CHARACTER:**

- *Observe, Research and Document:* the site in terms of the neighborhood immediately surrounding the site. What is seen from the site, who/what sees it? How will the site be viewed from people on the street? On the High Line? What is the general character of the neighborhood (visually, materially, building heights, type of construction). What are the adjacent building like? Compare notes with Texture/Color/Signage people. The work of this group is observational and more qualitative than group 13.
- *Develop:* Photographic montages, diagrams, maps, etc.
- *Produce:* Set of comprehensive composite pages showing above.

## **13) PHYSICAL DIMENSIONS: [OFF-SITE GROUP: SF Based]**

- *Observe, Research and Document:* Careful baseline measurements of site and adjacent streets and lots. You are fixing exact physical locations. The drawings produced by this group are the base information for all work for the project, [model and each person's project drawings].
- *Develop:* Detailed to-scale digital plan, massing model and sections. Work with faculty member to determine scale and scope.
- *Produce:* Digital files to share with all class members

## **Deliverables:**

The deliverable for each team is noted above in the team description and should be presented as a set on horizontally formatted 11 x 17 sheets [in format provided ONLY] with the team's assigned area noted in the upper right hand corner. 3 copies of each set should be produced by the team. After the presentation/discussion of the research and analysis, the materials will be assembled by the faculty into three 11 x 17 binders, one for the use of each studio section.

The binder we produce will be part of the exhibition we will be mounting on our research and analysis of the site.

Above pinned up in the NAVE and ready to discuss ***promptly*** 3 PM on Wednesday, September 2. Since there are other aspects to class that day promptness is essential.

## **Schedule:**

**W 08.26.09 – Assignment Issued**

W-S08.26.27.28.29 – Work with colleagues on data/information/visual gathering and translation into useful formats.

M 08.31.09 – Work with team-mates in studio until Convocation (5:30)

**W 09.02.09 – Pin-up of completed work for discussion and dissemination.**