

Professional Archaeologists of New York City, Inc.

PANYC

NEWSLETTER

No. 141

November 2009

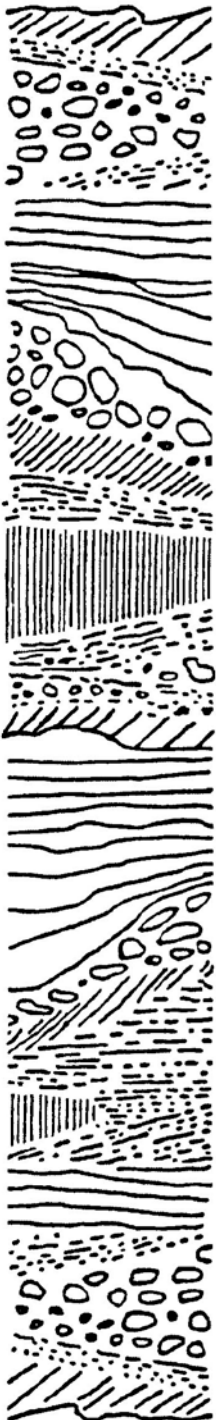
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Next Meeting:

January 20, 2010
Neighborhood Preservation Center
232 East 11th Street
New York, NY
6:30pm

Newsletter Editor:

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PANYC GENERAL MEETING MINUTES
May 20, 2009, 6:30 P.M.
Neighborhood Preservation Center (NPC)
232 E. 11th Street

Present: Geismar, Stone, Pickman, Rothschild, Spritzer, Rakos, Linn, Smith, Freeman

Secretary's Report:

Smith noted that due notices went out in March and that there had been two membership inquiries since the last meeting, but no applications were submitted.

Treasurer's Report:

Spritzer reported that the public program cost \$230.00. PANYC has \$3,534.81 in the bank and 31 members were noted as fully paid-up. Amanda Sutphin (LPC) has requested to be put on the newsletter list.

President's Report:

a) Geismar reported on a rally that she, Stone, and Rakos attended on May 6th supporting preservation and funding for the Landmarks Preservation Commission.

b) Geismar reported on the Mayor's Office of Environmental Coordination (MOEC) stakeholder meeting that she and Stone attended. The meeting's topic was proposed revisions to the City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) Technical Manual and MOEC was asking for comments. Geismar proposed to form a committee to address the potential changes in the historical resources sections, which are available on line at the MOEC site. The committee will consist of Geismar, Stone, Pickman, and Rakos.

c) Geismar reported on her discussion with Doug Mackey (at SHPO) about stimulus funding and archaeology in New York State. Mackey reported that there was money to potentially re-review 200–300 archaeological sites.

Committee Reports: (only those making a report are mentioned)

Action: Geismar commented that perhaps we should reinstate the action committee. It is presently in abeyance.

Events: Linda Stone will be giving a talk on the South Ferry project on June 7th at 2 PM at the Irvington Library.

LPC: Amanda Sutphin (LPC) would like to meet a PANYC representative to discuss potential web access to LPC archaeological reports most of which have now been scanned.

MAS: New president is putting meetings on hold for the summer starting today.

Mets Chapter, NYSAA: Spritzer reported that Wall's talk was well attended and that membership has grown to approximately thirty.

NYAC:

a) Stone reported that PANYC and NYAC have asked for changes on a proposed burial bill. The bill sponsored by State Assemblyman Englebright and is still in the Corporations, Authorities and Commissions committee. Stone suggested that we write a letter to the committee on the issue of non-native American burials being ignored. Rakos wrote a previous PANYC letter.

b) The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation has a new policy on contact with Indian Nations: "CP-42 /Contact, Cooperation, and Consultation with Indian Nations."

c) By-law revisions are being circulated.

Parks: Geismar reported that the first segment of Washington Square Park was opened May 19th.

Public Program: The program on April 19th was reported to be very well attended.

Repository: No new developments since last meeting.

Web Site: Arnold reported that the committee had met and will work on the matter over the summer. Tasks include (1) finding a host and (2) enhancing content.

New Business:

Rakos reported on a meeting of Landmark West sponsored workshop that she attended on April 19th. The workshop focused on the use of litigation by preservationists in the NYC historic preservation process.

A discussion on how to get more members to attend PANYC general meetings was initiated by Spritzer. Possible strategies discussed were making certain meetings mandatory, having fewer general meetings, and adding student outreach elements including speakers, food, and drink.

General meeting was adjourned at 7:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Mark Smith



Thank You For Filling Out This Form

Shown below is your submission to **NYC.gov** on Monday, June 22, 2009 at 14:26:45

This form resides at http://www.nyc.gov/html/misc/html/2009/environmental_questionnaire.html

Name of Fields	Data
Topic 1:	In regard to archaeological issues, assessment of project sensitivity by uninformed or unqualified parties can in the end make the review process far more time consuming and expensive. The process is certainly more efficient when conducted by an archaeological professional early in project planning. In addition, "boiler plate" language and abbreviated applications can lead to inefficiencies when interpreted by uninformed parties. The language in boiler plate is often misunderstood. For example, while the "No Build" alternative is relevant to many aspects of environmental review, in regard to archaeological issues, it can be--and has been--manipulated to eliminate the archaeological component. These weaknesses in the process need to be addressed. Consulting early with NYC Landmarks and archaeological professionals will improve efficiencies in the review process.
Topic 2:	Ideally, there should be centralized and readily available access to information regarding upcoming applications and projects. This would allow interested parties to keep abreast of relevant issues.
Topic 3:	NYC initiated an admirable and very efficient system when CEQR was first implemented: the NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission, the only city agency with archaeologists on staff, reviewed and flagged potentially sensitive projects in regard to archaeology. Removing expert staff from the assessment was a diminution of the process. Ideally, this early intervention by experts in the field would be a great improvement in carrying out the law.

Respondents Information:	Professional Archaeologists of New York City (PANYC), a not-for-profit organization of archaeological practitioners, educators, and agency archaeologists, has a vast collective archaeological experience. Many of us, as long-time practicing urban archaeologists in the NY-metropolitan area, have years of hands-on experience with environmental review--with both its successes and its abuses. We thank you for the opportunity to comment.
Willing to share:	Yes
Name:	Joan H Geismar PhD - PANYC President
Organization:	Professional Archaeologists of New York City (PANYC)
Email:	panyc2006@yahoo.com
Phone:	212 734-6512
Acknowledgement:	Yes

Use http://www.nyc.gov/html/misc/html/2009/environmental_questionnaire.html to return to the referring City agency



Professional Archaeologists of New York City, Inc.

June 25, 2009

Ms. Katie Kendall, Counsel
Mayor's Office of Environmental Coordination
253 Broadway, 14th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Re: Professional Archaeologists of New York City (PANYC): Comments on CEQR Manual Revisions

Dear Ms. Kendall:

Thank you for including us in the stakeholders' discussion on May 18, 2009, regarding revision of the CEQR manual. We understand that the MOEC effort is not meant to modify or revise the CEQR law, but rather to streamline and improve the CEQR manual and the way it is used to address the city's environmental review process. In this regard, we do have some comments.

Given our familiarity with CEQR, we have noted—and rued—changes in review procedures implemented in the 1991 modifications to the manual that present the opportunity to distort the procedures. To us, among the most significant concerns were the shift in responsibility for determining potential archaeological sensitivity and the very language of environmental review.

Prior to 1991, the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, the only agency with professional archaeological staff, flagged potentially sensitive projects. The 1991 revisions to the manual incorporated the shift of this responsibility to the lead agency. This neither benefited the procedure nor the resource. Assessment of a project's archaeological sensitivity by uninformed or unqualified parties can, in the end, make the review process far more time consuming and costly than need be. It is a process that is certainly more efficient when conducted by an archaeological professional early in project planning.

In regard to language, "boiler plate" language and abbreviated applications can lead to abuse when interpreted by uninformed parties. For example, while the "No Build" alternative is relevant to many aspects of environmental review, in regard to archaeological issues, it can be—and has been—manipulated to eliminate the archaeological component. This can be avoided by consulting with the NYCLPC and archaeological professionals early in the review process.

Another concern is where and how archaeology is addressed in the manual. The manual's current organization includes archaeology in a format that alternates archaeological and historic structures review for each stage of project assessment. It would be much clearer to the uninitiated, or, for that matter, to anyone using the manual, if the components of archaeological review were presented in their entirety in a discrete section. This, too, would make the process more efficient.

Again, thank you for soliciting our comments. We look forward to continued participation in this very worthwhile undertaking, including the opportunity to review the updated draft manual.

Sincerely,

Joan H. Geismar

Joan H. Geismar, PANYC President
40 East 83 Street, New York, NY 10028
PANYC2006@yahoo.com

June 25, 2009: Acknowledgment of receipt of PANYC's e-mailed Letter of June 25, 2009, to MOEC re proposed revamp of CEQR Manual:

Thank you, Joan.

We will read through these comments carefully and discuss them with the appropriate agencies.

Thanks for participating,
Katie

Katie Kendall
General Counsel
Mayor's Office of Environmental Coordination
253 Broadway, 14th Floor
New York, New York 10007
212.788.2932
www.nyc.gov/oec

FUN STUFF:

New Discovery

After having dug to a depth of 10 feet last year, New York archeologists found traces of copper wire dating back 100 years and came to the conclusion that their ancestors already had a telephone network more than 100 years ago.

Not to be outdone by the New Yorkers, in the weeks that followed, a California archaeologist dug to a depth of 20 feet, and shortly after, a story in the LA Times read: "California archaeologists, finding traces of 200 year old copper wire, have concluded that their ancestors already had an advanced high-tech communications network a hundred years earlier than the New Yorkers."

One week later, The Sun Journal, a local newspaper in New Bern, NC, reported the following:

"After digging as deep as 30 feet in his back yard, 'Bubbah Yancey , a self-taught archaeologist, reported that he found absolutely nothing. Bubbah has therefore concluded that 300 years ago, North Carolina had already gone wireless."

Just makes me proud to be from North Carolina.

Event	Topic	Speaker	Time	Date	Location	Contacts	Fee
American Anthropological Association (AAA) Annual Meeting	<i>The Ends of Anthropology</i>			December 2-6, 2009	Philadelphia, PA	http://www.aaanet.org/meeting/	
Dutch New York Between East and West: The World of Margrieta Van Vainck, sponsored by the NY Historical Society				through January 3, 2010	Bard Graduate Center, 18 W.86 th St.	www.bgc.bard.edu/gallery/gallery-eries-at-bgc/main-gallery.html	free with NY Historical Society membership
INDIANS/DUTCHMEN LECTURE SERIES at the National Museum of the American Indian, NYC	Representations of North American Natives in the Dutch Golden Age		9pm	November 19, 2009	National Museum of the American Indian, 1 Bowling Green		
A CUNY Graduate Center Event:	<i>Mannahatta: A Natural History of New York City</i>	Eric W. Sanderson	6:30pm	November 17, 2009	Graduate Center, 365 Fifth Ave. at 34 th St.	212-817-8215 for reservations, http://www.gothamcenter.org/	free
A CUNY Graduate Center Event:	<i>The Lower East Side Remembered and Revisited</i>	Joyce Mendelsohn, Clayton Patterson, and Annie Pollard	6:30pm	December 2, 2009	Graduate Center, 365 Fifth Ave. at 34 th St.	212-817-8471 for reservations, http://www.gothamcenter.org/	free
Met Chapter Event: <i>A Talk on the Archaeology of New Netherland</i>		Anne Marie Cantwell and Diana Wall	1:30pm	November 14, 2009		Contact the Met Chapter for further information	
Met Chapter Event: <i>Mannahatta</i>	A talk about the Mannahatta project: a natural history of Manhattan Island	Eric W. Sanderson	6:30pm	December 3, 2009		Contact the Met Chapter for further information	

MEMBERSHIP/NEWSLETTER/INFORMATION:

If you are interested in joining PANYC or if you would like to subscribe to the PANYC Newsletter, please complete the form below and return it to:

Mark A. Smith
92 Main Street - Suite 207
Yonkers, New York 10701

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY/STATE: _____

ZIP (+FOUR): _____

PHONE: _____

E-MAIL: _____

Please indicate preferred mailing address and check below as appropriate.

I wish to apply for membership to PANYC and would like to receive the application form _____

I wish to subscribe to the PANYC Newsletter (Fee \$10) _____

I wish to make an additional donation to PANYC _____

I wish to receive the PANYC Newsletter in digital (e-format) _____

I wish to receive the PANYC Newsletter in printed (mailed) form _____

If you have any questions please email: panyc2006@yahoo.com