Building History on Staten Island’s North Shore

Ethan Brown, MS in Historic Preservation
Nicholas Zvegintzov, Community Board 1 Member

1940s Tax Photos via Municipal Archives
“It is very rare to find anyone who knows anything about the origin of their own house in Staten Island.”

BARNETT SHEPHERD, STATEN ISLAND HISTORIAN
(in conversation with Nicholas Zvegintzov)
Renovations may obscure buildings’ historical significance

INTRODUCTION

METHODOLOGY

FINDINGS

CONCLUSION
DISTRIBUTION OF BUILDING AGE IN STATEN ISLAND COMMUNITY DISTRICT 1, ACCORDING TO DOB DATA

Visualized by Ethan Brown

1898 Consolidation of NYC

1936 Citywide DOB created

1977 DOB + HPD created

Inaccurate year-built data for 19th century structures, based on building permits
Correct and map building dates for buildings in various sample areas of the North Shore to provide a better understanding of the historic fabric that should inform future planning decisions of the community board.
Creating and Mapping the Database
Download MapPLUTO data from NYC Open Data and add columns.

MapPLUTO merges PLUTO tax lot data with tax lot features from the Department of Finance’s Digital Tax Map (DTM) and is available as shoreline clipped and water included. It contains extensive land use and geographic data at the tax lot level in ESRI shapefile and File Geodatabase formats.

For the previous MapPLUTO files, see theBYTES of the BIG APPLE archive page.

Release 22v3.1

- MapPLUTO - Shoreline Clipped (FGDB)
- MapPLUTO - Water Included (FGDB)
- MapPLUTO - Shoreline Clipped (Shapefile)
- MapPLUTO - Water Included (Shapefile)

Screenshot from NYC Planning. Source: on.nyc.gov/3JHcKYI.
Map data by ‘Year Built’ in ArcGIS Online
3

Link historic photos and street view

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corrected Building Age</th>
<th>New expression</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000 - 2022</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975 - 2000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950 - 1975</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925 - 1950</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900 - 1925</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1875 - 1900</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1850 - 1875</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1800 - 1850</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1700 - 1800</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1600 - 1700</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsurveyed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Year Built**
- PLUTO Year: 1931
- Corrected: 1857
- Source: View
- Notes: 

**Building Information**
- **bldgclass**: M1
- **builtfar**: 0.17
- **HEIGHTROOF**: 40.32

Visualized by Ethan Brown
Select sample areas based on conversations & areas with high concentrations of a single date.
Select sample areas based on conversations & areas with high concentrations of a single date.
Select sample areas based on conversations & areas with high concentrations of a single date.
5

Georeference and overlay historic atlases and fire insurance maps from **NYPL** and **LOC**

Available CB1 Historical Maps

- **1874 J.B. Beers & Co. Atlas**
  - Link
  - Plates 1-13

- **1885 Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps**
  - Link
  - Plates 1-30

- **1898 Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps**
  - Link
  - Plates 1-71

- **1907 E. Robinson Atlas**
  - Link
  - Plates 1-12, 26-32

- **1917 Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps**
  - Volume 1
    - Link
    - Plates 111-147, 150-154
  - Volume 2
    - Link
    - Plates 1-40

- **1937 Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps**
  - Volume 1
    - Link
    - Plates 1-89
  - Volume 2
    - Link
    - Plates 261-262, 265, 269-278, 273
  - Volume 3
    - Link
    - Plates 302, 306-312, 363-369, 371

Correcting the Data
Trace evolution of building footprints and compare to modern ones.
Compare historic tax photos to the modern street view
Consult histories, newspapers, real estate records, and other written resources
Correct date and link the relevant source
Findings
The DOB dates of\[1/3\] of designated landmarks in SI CDI are incorrect.
The DOB dates of buildings surveyed in sample areas are incorrect for buildings.

The DOB dates range from 1/3 years incorrect for buildings surveyed in sample areas.
Lots with more than one structure skew the reliability of the DOB data.

According to DOB, all were built in 1931 and all are LPC designated landmarks.
Lots with more than one structure skew the reliability of the DOB data.

In actuality, only 2 are LPC designated landmarks and were built in 1892.
Inconsistencies with addresses also skew the data reliability

1. Minthorne Street
2. 14 Victory Boulevard
3. Navy Pier Court
4. **355 Front Street**

Only one with the correct date
Further Research

Determine other potential sample areas in Staten Island CD1 for historical research and data correction

Pursue research in other CDs; problem isn’t confined to Staten Island
Limitations

Deeds are the most reliable resource, but...
1900-1920s SI deeds are not digitized
Pre-1900 SI deeds were lost (supposedly to a fire)

Historic maps can be limiting
1874 is the earliest available map with buildings
Street widths and building footprints aren’t entirely accurate
Correct and map building dates for buildings in various sample areas of the North Shore to provide a better understanding of the historic fabric that should inform future planning decisions of the community board.
Thank you.
Contact Information

Ethan Brown
- Email: ebrow338@pratt.edu
- LinkedIn: linkedin.com/in/ethnmbrwn
- Instagram: @ethnmbrwn

Nicholas Zvegintzov
- Email: zvegint@hotmail.com

Fund for the City of New York