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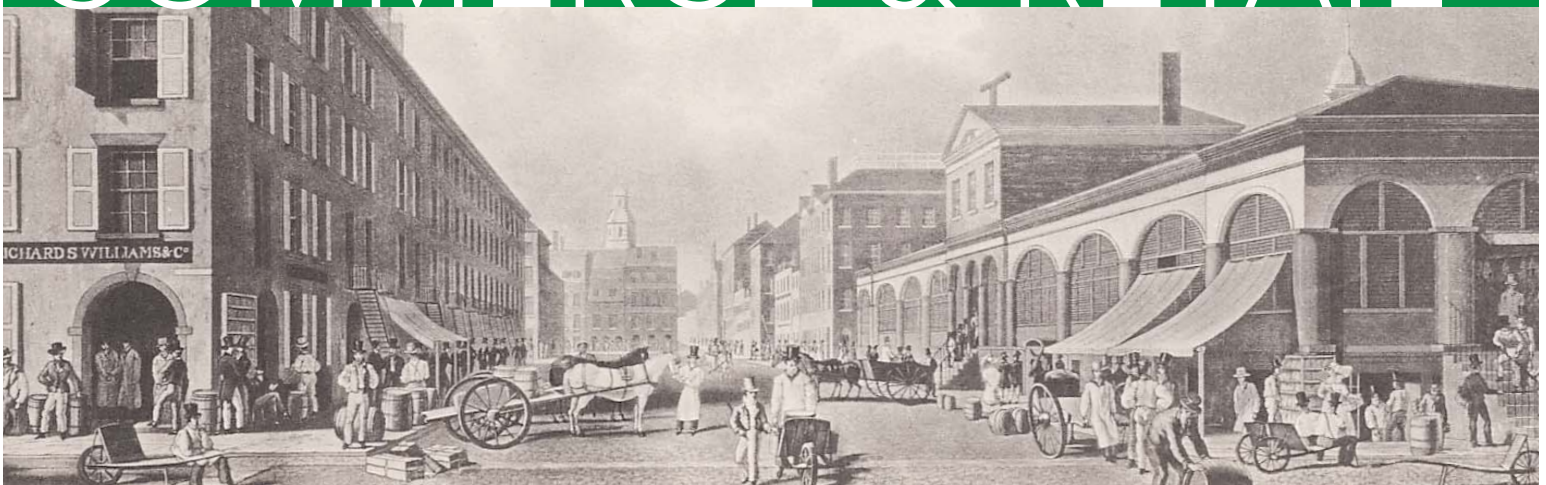
WATERFRONT

HISTORY & CULTURE

URBAN SPACE

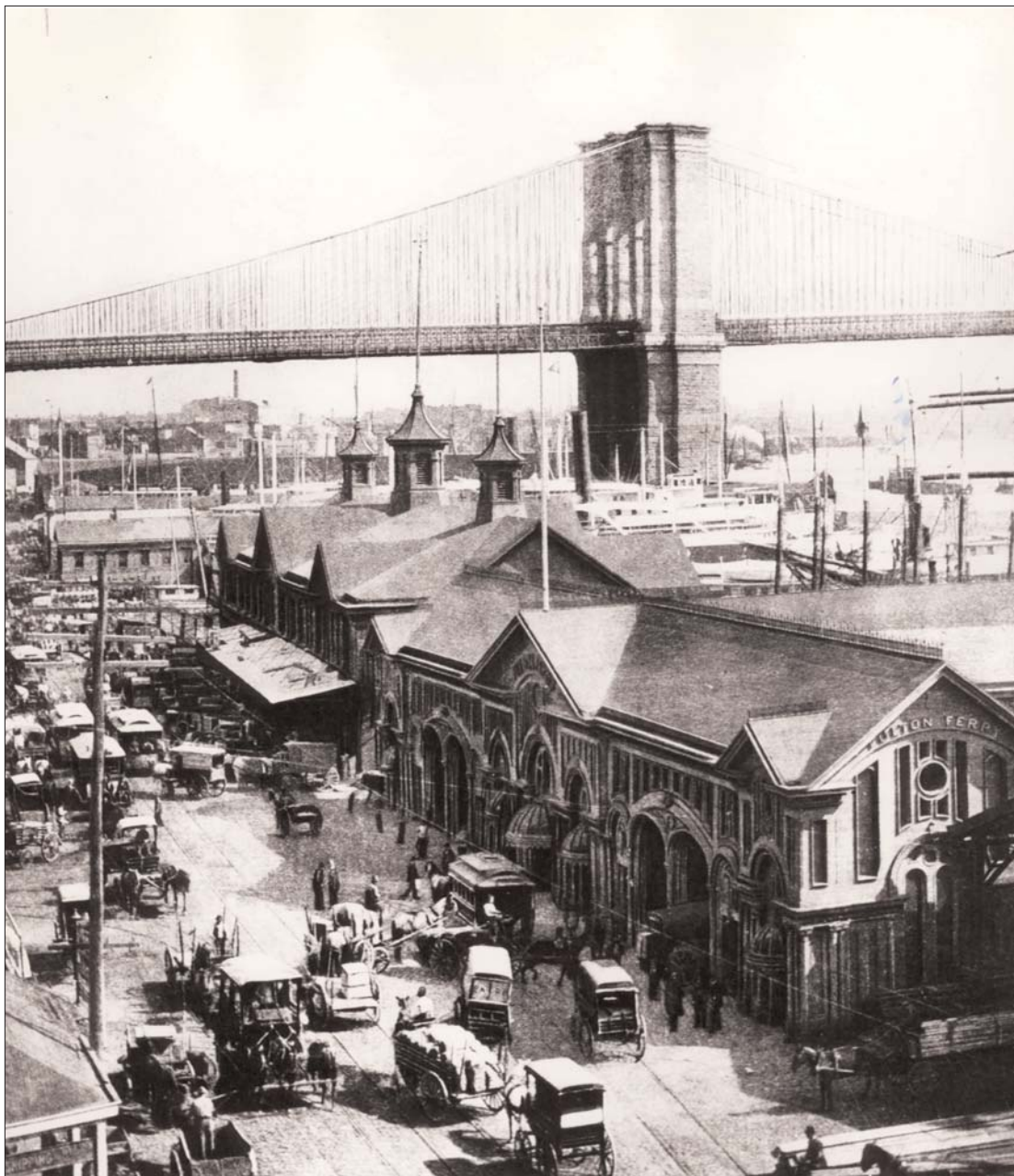
GOVERNANCE

COMMERCE & RETAIL





SeaportSpeaks is a group inspiring the best ideas for a vital, authentic South Street Seaport Historic District as a place to live, work, and visit, whose vision is informed by a respect for the area's unique, irreplaceable heritage as the original Port of New York.



From the collection of Norman Brouwer

This charrette would not have been possible without generous assistance from

- General Growth Properties*
- Seaport Community Coalition*
- Milstein Properties*
- Sciame Development*
- Yarrow LLC*
- Municipal Art Society*
- Southbridge Towers Cooperative*
- South Street Seaport Museum*
- Seamen's Church Institute*
- Pearl Street Park Association*
- Downtown Lower Manhattan Association*
- Bayard's*
- Joshua Levine*
- 3-D Laboratory*
- Seaport Best Western Hotel*
- 117 Beekman Condominium*

Fulton Market Building and Brooklyn Bridge, circa 1890

CONTENTS



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Introduction.....2
Timeline of the South Street Seaport District
 With a foreword by Steven Jaffe.....3

HISTORY & CULTURE.....7
 Historic resources.....8
 Opportunities.....9
 Historic and cultural sites map.....10

WATERFRONT11
 New York Harbor District map, Waterfront milestones..... 12
 Revenue, East River Waterfront plan, Seaport Museum fleet..... 13
 Opportunities, Talking points.....14

URBAN SPACE.....15
 Urban space map.....16
 Urban space now.....17
 Opportunities, Talking points.....18

COMMERCE & RETAIL.....19
 Land use map, Retail in context.....20
 Historic milestones, Retail now.....21
 Opportunities, Talking points.....22

GOVERNANCE.....23
 Areas of Focus map.....24
 Crucial needs.....25
 Opportunities, Talking points.....26

East River Waterfront Study.....27
Fulton Corridor Plan.....31
General Growth Properties.....31
Bibliography.....32

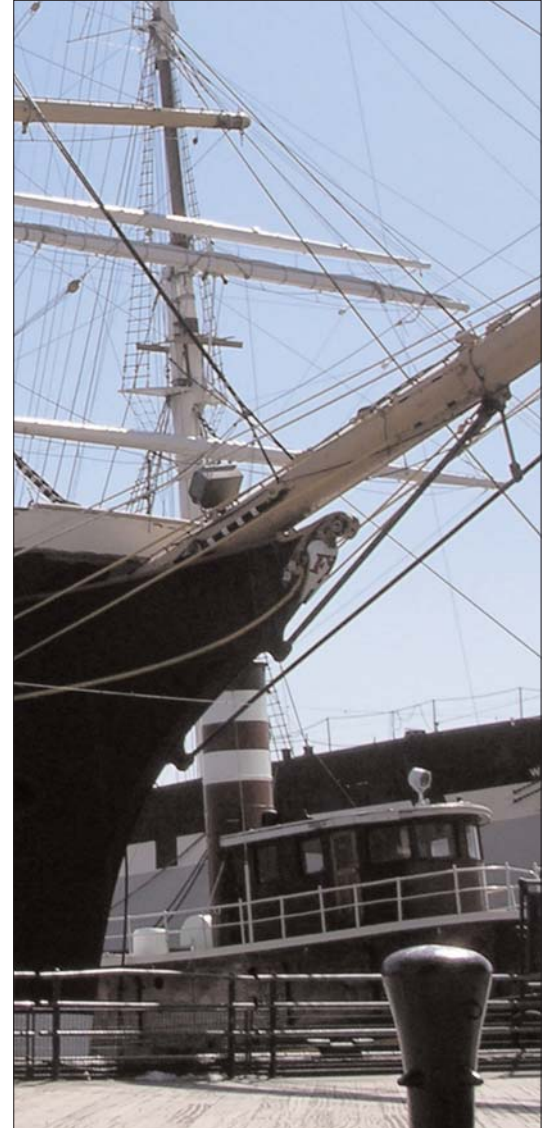
INTRODUCTION

For more than 300 years, the site of the South Street Seaport Historic District has been a place of exchange for people, goods, and ideas:

- a port where ships from as far away as Asia and Europe and as close by as Long Island docked to unload goods both exotic and humble, and where mercantile and financial businesses grew up to support that trade;
- an immigration station where newcomers disembarked for the first time on American soil and where citizens of all classes and races, from rough sailors to wealthy merchants, tradesmen, and immigrants mingled;
- an entry point for new ideas in art, literature, and science, where enterprises grew up to spread those ideas around the world.

In the 1960s the unique qualities of this place – which was then being targeted for development – were recognized by a group of visionaries, led by Peter Stanford with his wife Norma, who succeeded in securing landmark status for the District’s 19th-century streetscape with its fine examples of early commercial architecture and its stone-paved streets. Here they founded a museum, acquired and restored the buildings, and brought tall-masted ships and schooners back to the docks – ships that have become beloved icons of Lower Manhattan.

Today, with the departure of the area’s last remaining maritime business, the Fulton Fish Market, a new chapter is about to begin for this storied place, whose residential population is burgeoning and whose commercial potential is ripe for development. The goal of SeaportSpeaks is to ensure that whatever the future holds for the District, its roughhewn charm and maritime roots will be respected, not only because they are worthwhile in themselves, but because they draw new residents, visitors, and area workers to its piers and streets.



Robert Simko

[The Peking \(four-masted barque, 1911\)](#) and the [Helen McAllister \(tug, 1900\)](#) at Pier 16.

We welcome you to SeaportSpeaks and thank you for your participation. Your knowledge, your passion, your vision, and your commitment to the qualities that make the Seaport an irreplaceable New York treasure will help to ensure that it continues to be an authentic and vital place to live, work, and visit.

SOUTH STREET SEAPORT TIMELINE

Throughout its history, persistent and often unpredictable change has remained the one constant in the South Street Seaport Historic District. Originally situated at the outer edge of the port, the District became a vital section of the port's core as the city and harbor region expanded in population, geographical size, and economic activity. In the half century between the War of 1812 and the Civil War, the junction of South and Fulton Streets was at the very heart of the port, a crossroads whose daily transactions and movements were felt throughout the nation and the world. Merchants, seamen, longshoremen, market vendors, transit workers, artisans, restaurateurs, hotel workers, immigrants, commuters, consumers, and others converged and mingled here. In the late 19th and 20th centuries, this crossroads became secondary and then marginal once more, as the center of port activity shifted west to the Hudson River waterfront and then to Newark Bay. Today the District exists as museum, mall, sightseeing stop for tourists, and loft space for small businesses and residents. But the neighborhood's past surfaces and intrudes everywhere. — *Steven Jaffe*

In 1834, artist William James Bennett made this view of Schermerhorn Row and the Fulton Market. Of all the buildings in this picture, only Schermerhorn Row (left side) remains today.



From the collection of Norman Brouwer

1624 First European colonists, sponsored by Dutch West India Company, arrive in New Netherland. First primitive dock constructed in East River.

1647 Peter Stuyvesant becomes governor. Isaac Allerton constructs great warehouse near Peck Slip, in the countryside beyond the town limits. By this date, the original East River shoreline (now Pearl Street) is known as “the Strand;” it remains the waterfront and the center of commercial activity until Water Street emerges at the end of the century.

1648 First stable pier in the city, rock fill with timber cribbing, completed at Pearl and Broad Streets, on the East River.

1664 British take possession of New Netherland; rename city and province after James, Duke of York, later James II.

1675-76 Great Dock built between Whitehall Slip and Coenties Slip.

1686-94 City begins to grant land to East River waterline, on condition that grantees build street or wharf there; this shoreline extension becomes Water Street. City grants lots from present Peck Slip to Fulton Street in 1719; Water Street is extended to Corlears Hook in 1784.

SOUTH STREET SEAPORT TIMELINE



In the early 19th century, the Port of New York was booming, and South Street was known as the Street of Ships.

- 1719-22** Gerardus Beekman receives first water lot grant east of Pearl Street between present Fulton and Beekman Streets, on which he builds a public slip, Beekman Slip.
- 1737** Merchant Benjamin Peck secures permission to build a wharf and waterfront land from the city; area becomes Peck Slip.
- 1774** New York Tea Party (April 22): following Boston's lead, New Yorkers dump tea from the ship *London* into harbor.
- 1776** August 29-30. Under cover of night and fog, George Washington evacuates 9,000 Continental Army soldiers from the ferry steps in Brooklyn to Peck Slip area after defeat in the Battle of Brooklyn, thereby allowing the Revolutionary War to continue.
- 1793** Peter Schermerhorn consolidates Beekman Slip water lots.
- 1795** Common Council orders creation of a new street, 70 feet wide, around the perimeter of the island. This becomes South Street.
- 1795** New York becomes leading American port, surpassing Philadelphia's import and export volume for the first time.
- 1807** Beekman estate offers land for use as public market (site of future Fulton Market); acquisition authorized by State Legislature (1817). Beekman Slip landfill to South Street begun.
- 1810-12** South Street becomes city's waterfront, from the Battery to former Beekman Slip. Schermerhorn Row is constructed. Common Council orders Peck Slip filled in to Front Street.
- 1812-15** War of 1812. Port participates through privateering and shipbuilding.
- 1816** Fulton Street (incorporating Partition Street, Fair Street, and Beekman Slip) is named in honor of Robert Fulton (d. 1815).
- 1817-25** Erie Canal opens in stages, starting in 1820, significantly enhancing the Port's economy.
- 1822** Fulton Market opens at Pearl Street and Maiden Lane. East wing becomes fish market.
- 1835** Great Fire (Dec. 15-16) destroys 674 lower Manhattan buildings. Burling Slip is filled in.
- 1842** Abraham Sweet's restaurant reputedly first opens at 8 Fulton Street.
- 1844** Beginning of clipper ship era: *Houqua*, first streamlined ship, designed by Capt. Nathaniel B. Palmer for China trade, launched in New York for A.A. Low & Brothers of Burling Slip.
- 1849** California gold rush; many "forty niners" embark from South Street.
- 1870** Board of Docks reports that the busiest port activity has shifted to the area between Pier 1 and West 12th Street on the Hudson River.
- 1882** Thomas Edison's 257 Pearl St. generating station, first central electric-light power plant in the world, begins operation: Seaport District becomes first commercial area ever with electric light.



Brooklyn-bound ferries can be seen in this detail of an 1849 print, "View of New York from Brooklyn Heights" by Currier.

1883 Brooklyn Bridge, under construction since 1870, opens May 24.

1913 Seamen's Church Institute opens Seamen's Home at 25 South Street.

1930 Sloppy Louie's Restaurant opens, 92 South Street.

1962 Widening of 13-block stretch on Water and Pearl Streets completed; called the "most significant traffic improvement in the financial district since the turn of the century." Demolition of buildings contributes to dispersion of old coffee and roasting district.

1965 Landmarks Preservation Commission established to protect city's historically and architecturally valuable sites.

1966 City Planning Commission issues Lower Manhattan Plan, calling for public overhaul of piers and blighted areas, creation of recreational spaces, and residential and business development in Manhattan south of Canal Street. National Historic Preservation Act prompts conservation and rehabilitation of historic urban waterfronts.

1967 South Street Seaport Museum chartered, with Peter Stanford as its first president.

1968 Landmarks Preservation Commission designates Schermerhorn Row Block and Baker, Carver & Morrell Building as Historic Landmarks.

Schermerhorn Row,
ca. 1970

1971 Schermerhorn Row Block approved for National Register of Historic Places. South Street Seaport District approved for National Register of Historic Places.

1973-74 Con Edison transformer station replaces two of Jasper Ward's 1806 counting-houses on Peck Slip; wall mural of Brooklyn Bridge created by artist Richard Haas.

1974 New York State purchases the Schermerhorn Row Block for the site of the State Maritime Museum.

1981 City signs revised lease with South Street Seaport Museum.

1989 An additional block, bounded by Peck Slip, Pearl, Water, and Dover Streets added to the South Street Seaport Historic District.



SOUTH STREET SEAPORT TIMELINE



Courtesy General Growth Properties

South Street Seaport today.

1991 New Seamen's Church Institute opens at 241 Water Street.

1993 Plan for Lower Manhattan, a public-private project for area south of Chambers Street, announced. Goals include refurbishing of waterfront between Wall Street and the Seaport, and the creation of a continuous esplanade around Lower Manhattan.

1995 New York City renegotiates lease with the South Street Seaport Museum and removes the Museum from controlling the city's non-Museum properties.

1996 Pier 9 demolished by Economic Development Corporation.

1997 East River bikeway/walkway, an EDC project funded by the Federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA), opens.

1998 Sloppy Louie's restaurant closes.

1999 EDC deactivates Pier 15 and makes plans to demolish it. Community Board 1 leads successful effort to gain approval from the state Dept. of Environmental Conservation that the pier will be rebuilt at later date.

2001 EDC demolishes structures on Piers 13 and 14

2002 EDC selects Yarrow LLC to develop significant residential properties on Front Street with sensitivity to history and architecture.

2003 City Council votes unanimously to downzone 10 blocks of historic district from no height restrictions to height restriction of 120 feet. South Street Seaport Museum opens 30,000 square foot, \$22-million complex inside the buildings of Schermerhorn Row. Pier 15 demolition is completed.

2004 General Growth Properties takes over Rouse Company's lease of Seaport properties.

2005 Lower Manhattan Development Corporation earmarks \$150 million to fund elements of the City's East River Waterfront plan. Fulton Fish Market moves to the Bronx.

2006 LMDC allocates funds for redevelopment of Burling Slip and Titanic Park. SeaportSpeaks charrette is convened.

HISTORY & CULTURE



From the collection of Norman Brouwer

19th century waterfront scene, looking south on South Street.

The history of the South Street Seaport Historic District is deeply embedded in the weathered bricks of its centuries-old buildings, its stone-paved streets, and the lap of the East River at its piers and bulkheads. We are fortunate these material remnants of the past have been preserved, but the historic sense of this place and its importance in world history transcend its physical assets. After more than 300 years as a commercial hub – a place of local and international buying, selling, trading, manufacturing, adventure, and risk – the Seaport’s fragile character as a unique survivor of the age of sail, steam, and sweat is at risk. How to preserve its grittiness and authenticity, while making it work as a place to live, work, and visit in the 21st century, is the challenge we face today.

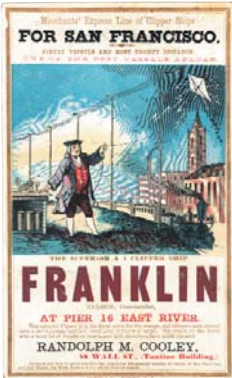
“You cannot underestimate the role of the Port of New York, whose birthplace was South Street, in western civilization and world history. It is the touchstone of our experience as an international trading center, with huge ramifications and meaning not just to New Yorkers, but to the people of the world. Miraculously, South Street has survived as an historic place, but at the moment its urban and maritime character is very fragile.”

– Mark Peckham,
New York State
Historic
Preservation
Office

HISTORIC RESOURCES

THE SOUTH STREET SEAPORT MUSEUM

The South Street Seaport Museum was founded in 1967 by a group of visionaries who understood the need for a maritime museum on the site of New York's original port. With its prime location in one of Manhattan's most historically important districts; its unique collections of buildings, ships, and artifacts; and its globally significant mission, the Museum is poised to become a world-class cultural institution that not only delights and educates visitors, but also serves as a major resource on vital issues facing the district, city, nation, and world.



- **Curatorial and archival collections** including Seaport District-specific items such as Fulton Fish Market ephemera; building artifacts and signs salvaged from the area; local business records, handbills, business cards; photographs, prints, and paintings;
- **Bowne & Co. Stationers** A re-creation of the hundreds of print shops that were prevalent in the area in the 19th century, which produced the documents so necessary to commerce in a port city. Located on Water Street, at the western entrance to the Historic District, the retail shop is also a curatorial department of the museum, and houses an important collection of 19th-century wood and metal type.

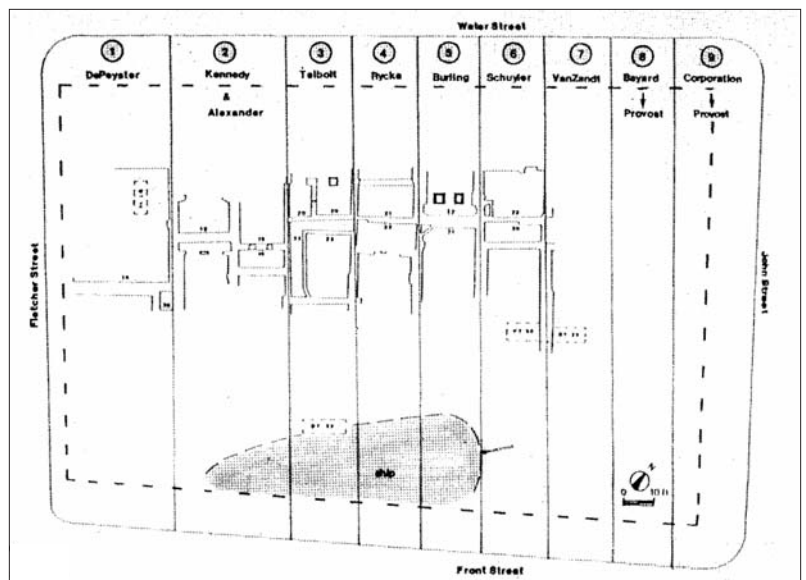
• **Buildings** The museum's main site is the upper floors of the Schermerhorn Row block. These buildings individually and collectively constitute one of the most important collections of early 19th century buildings in the nation. The museum also owns/holds leases on the following significant historic buildings: 12 Fulton Street; 14 Fulton Street; 91, 92, and 93 South Street; 165, 167-171 John Street; 207-209, 211, and 213 Water Street.

• **Historic ships** The museum owns the largest fleet, by tonnage, of historic ships in the country (see page 10 for inventory). The vessels were brought to South Street to be preserved, to recreate a sense of the 19th-century working waterfront, and to serve as interpretive and educational platforms. The masts of the stationary vessels, *Wavertree* and *Peking*, have become icons of the Lower Manhattan skyline.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MATERIALS

The streets of the District are rich in archaeological artifacts. For much of its history, the museum housed a large archaeological collection and had an archaeology curator on staff. Those collections were transferred in 2005 by deed of gift to the New York State Museum in Albany. While archaeological surveys are required by law before any construction is done in the District, some preservationists are nonetheless concerned about risks of damage to archaeological materials.

This map of a block of Water Street shows property lines and the location of an 18-century merchant ship that was sunk to hold the landfill in place. The ship was discovered in 1982 when excavation began for a new building. The \$6 million necessary to remove, conserve, and exhibit the ship could not be raised; a 25-foot section of the bow was saved and the rest of the ship destroyed. The bow was sent to the Maritime Museum in Newport News, Virginia.



HISTORIC RESOURCES continued

Stephenie Hollyman/www.blazingcontent.com

Old signs can still be seen on the Seaport's historic buildings.

URBAN FABRIC

The District's narrow streets and low-rise architecture belie the magnitude of what happened here: the birth of the world's most important port city and the rise of global trade. The following District features still embody that sense of place:

- **Fulton Fish Market buildings**, recently vacated, but still possessed of their character as places of trade on the water's edge;
- **Piers** where maritime trades are still practiced in full view of passersby;
- **Streetscape infrastructure**, including Belgian block paving;
- **Street patterns** that still allow direct access to the water's edge;
- **View corridors** and vistas largely unchanged since the 19th century encompassing the Brooklyn Bridge, Brooklyn waterfront, and Governors Island. The massive structure on Pier 17 is an exception and should stand as a cautionary tale of the fragility of the district's character.
- **Building features** including important examples of Greek Revival, Federal-style, cast-iron, and Eastlake architecture; Flemish bond brickwork, tie-rod construction, and painted signage; interior features such as hoists used to move goods to the upper floors of warehouses.

OPPORTUNITIES

Talking Points

- How can history be brought to life here?
- What kind of preservation is appropriate and, apart from physical structures, what needs to be protected?
- How can we strengthen the South Street Seaport Museum's capacity to fulfill its founders' vision?
- What kinds of commercial activity – retail and non-retail – could enhance rather than undermine the unique sense of place here?
- What kinds of economic development and governance models can be developed to support non-market-driven cultural tourism, preservation, and historic interpretation in the District?

- **To strengthen** the South Street Seaport Museum as the primary vehicle for preserving the District's sense of place through the collection, preservation, and interpretation of material culture, maritime skills, and district folk life through its programs and exhibits.

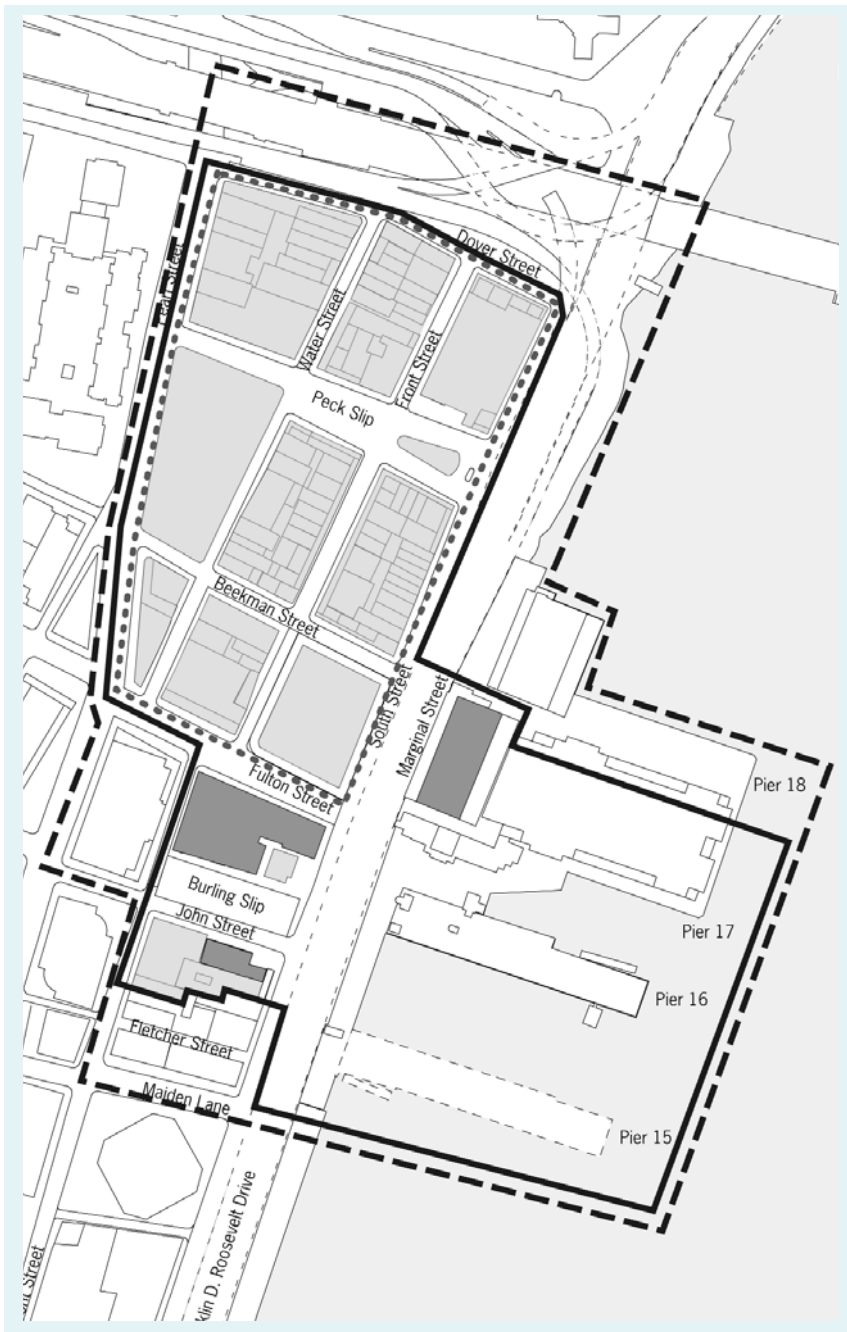


South Street Seaport Museum

At Bowne & Co. Stationers, antique printing presses produce goods for sale in the retail shop.

- **To explore** opportunities for interpretation of the District through signage, walking tours, and other kinds of cultural programming that bring the District's history to life for even the casual visitor.
- **To use** the District's waterfront/urban/industrial character – now unique in Manhattan – as the touchstone for redevelopment of its streetscape and shoreline that respects its historical authenticity.
- **To attract** cultural uses, such as the proposed Drawing Center, that reflect the traditional function of a port as a place of exchange not only for goods, but also for ideas and culture.

HISTORIC SITES



- Key**
- South Street Seaport Historic District
 - - - National Register of Historic Places
 - Designated City Landmarks
 - 2002 Downzoning

WATER STREET

Between Dover Street and Peck Slip

- #279 (1794) District's only wood-frame building; city's oldest continuously operating tavern (Bridge Cafe).
- #277 Water/130 Beekman (Remodeled in Greek Revival style c. 1824) Originally loft for sailmaker Augustus Wright.
- #273 (1773) Built by Captain Joseph Rose. Manhattan's third oldest surviving building. Converted to an apartment house in 1998.
- #265-267 (1872).
- #261-263 (1847).

Between Peck Slip and Beekman Street

- #257-259 Water/21-23 Peck Slip (1873). Warehouse by architect Richard Morris Hunt.
- #251 (1888) Apartment house/storefront by architect Carl F. Eisenach.
- #247-249 (1837).
- #245 (1836).
- #243 (c.1800). Built by Peter Schermerhorn, Sr. Originally a chandlery. Facade remains; interior is part of Seamen's Church Institute (1991).
- #229 (1801). Ship chandlery.

Between Beekman and Fulton Streets

- Fulton & Water Streets: Titanic Memorial Lighthouse (1913)
- #213-215 (1868). Now houses the South Street Seaport Museum's Herman Melville Library on the second and third floors and the Melville gallery on the first.
- #207 - 211 Row of Greek Revival storefronts, rare survivors in New York. South Street Seaport Museum's Bowne & Co., Stationers, occupies #211. Two museum galleries, the Walter Lord Gallery and the Port Gallery, occupy #209.

FULTON STREET

- #21-25 (1845-46).
- #2-18 (1810-1812). Schermerhorn Row. Late Georgian-Federal style row, one of the only surviving intact blocks from the era, built to house merchants' offices and warehouses under a single roof. Now restored and occupied by the South Street Seaport Museum galleries, shop and visitor's center.

JOHN STREET

- #267-271 (1849-50) Warehouse, store, and office of A.A. Low & Brothers, China trade merchants. Now museum gallery, office, and archival storage space.
- #170-176 Only completely granite-faced structure in the Seaport.
- #159, 163 & 165 (1811).

FRONT STREET

Between Peck Slip and Dover Street, west side

- #259 (c. 1808).
- #242-244 (Early 19th century) Rebuilt after an 1853 fire destroyed the original buildings on this site.

Between Peck Slip and Beekman Street

- #235 (1828-29) For flour merchants; remodeled in 1892.
- #229-231 (1839).
- #227-225 (1822).
- #212 (1824). Renovated and raised to four stories in 1890; site of Carmine's Bar.
- # 211 Front/142 Beekman (1885) by architect George B. Post.

Between Beekman and Fulton Streets

- #207-211 Row of Greek Revival stores built in 1836.
- #206-207 (c. 1797), 207 Boarding house run by Benjamin Stratton, Jr., 1803-1806; 206 run by Matthew Howell as a grocery, then as a military/gunpowder store.
- #204 (1799) Occupied by merchant Thomas Carpenter; extensively remodeled as a hotel during 1880s.
- #203 (1815-16). Occupied by grocer Peter G. Hart; remodeled as hotel, 1882-83.

Between John and Fulton Streets

- 197 & 195 (1811) Schermerhorn Row buildings (see Fulton Street)
- #191 & 193 (late 18th century) rebuilt in 1860.
- #189 and 181 (1835-36). Occupied by merchant Josiah Macy.

SOUTH STREET

Between Peck Slip and Fulton Streets

- #151 (1807) Built for merchant Jasper Ward. Now a private residence.
- #116-119 Built by architect John B. Snook for lawyer William H. Onderdonk; becomes Henry L. Meyer's Hotel in 1883.
- #108-113 (1818-19) For merchants Ebenezer Stevens and Peter Schermerhorn.
- #114-115 (1840). 1907 New (fourth) Fish Market building – extant "Tin Building."
- #91, 92 & 93 (1811) Comprise eastern end of Schermerhorn Row (see Fulton Street). Originally occupied by counting houses and warehouses, the buildings were later converted into a hotel. Now part of museum exhibit space.

WATERFRONT



From the collection of Norman Brouwer

In 1886, the Frederick Billings, described as “the largest ship ever built on this continent,” docked at South Street.

New York is a city that emerged from the sea. Our commerce, culture, and unique blend of people all stem from the coincidence of geography and inventive human enterprise that made New York the greatest seaport in North America. Of the city’s more than 500 miles of waterfront, no area better represents its maritime roots than South Street. Many of the early 19th-century buildings have been physically preserved, but the working waterfront, which gave them life, is again in flux. The Fulton Fish Market, long an anchor of the neighborhood, has moved away. From Burling Slip to Brooklyn Bridge, the waterfront is being studied by planners in hopes that a changing community can be more closely related to the river. By drawing on history, ideas from many sources, and awareness that we are part of a larger harbor district, we hope to stimulate a lively discussion of how to build boldly and creatively on the opportunity presented by changing circumstances, including the City’s East River Waterfront study.

“Broadway, Wall Street, and Fifth Avenue would not be what they are today had it not been for the activity on the waterfront a century ago.”

- Robert Albion, 1938

“It is the waterfront of a metropolis in the world’s greatest republic, and it is ours.”

- Stuart Frank, maritime historian, 2006

NEW YORK HARBOR DISTRICT

Maritime Milestones

c.1638–42 First ferry service from Peck Slip to Brooklyn shore.

1776 George Washington evacuates 9,000 Continental Army soldiers from Brooklyn to Peck Slip, allowing the Revolutionary War to continue.

1784 *Empress of China* sails to Canton from New York, opening the American China trade.

1807 Robert Fulton's steamboat, *North River*, makes first trip up Hudson to Albany.

1814 First East River steam ferry, Fulton's *Nassau*, begins service, from Beekman Slip.

1818 Black Ball line, first regular transatlantic packet, begins service between NY and Liverpool from near present Pier 17.

1844 Ship *Houqua*, launched by A.A. Low of Burling Slip, inaugurates clipper ship era.

1870 Board of Docks reports busiest port activity has shifted to the Hudson River.

1872 An estimated 50,000 seamen arrive in New York every year.

1954 Violent longshoremen's strike brings waterfront trade to a standstill.

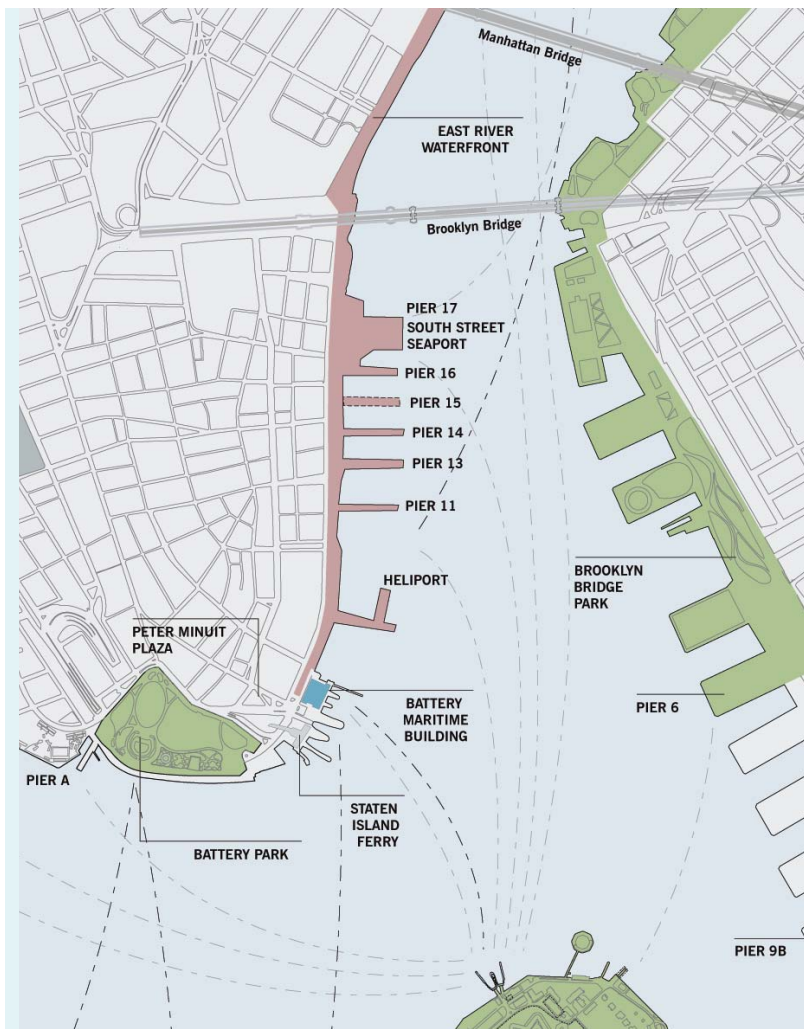
1964: First Operation Sail held on July 4.

1985: 18-year-old Tania Aebi embarks from South Street Seaport in a 26-foot sloop to begin a 27,000-mile cruise around the world.

The Wider Picture

Across the East River from Brooklyn, within sight of Governors Island and New York Harbor, the South Street Seaport Historic District waterfront stretches from the Brooklyn Bridge to Pier 15 near John Street. Historically the city's commercial maritime hub, the Seaport waterfront is being celebrated anew with several related civic improvement projects in addition to the East River Waterfront Plan.

Mayor Michael Bloomberg's campaign to revitalize the parks and esplanades of the entire Harbor District includes the Brooklyn Bridge Park on the Brooklyn waterfront and the vast potential of Governors Island. State and federal agencies are also focusing attention on the harbor: the State Parks and Recreation Heritage Area celebrates the legacy of Historic Battery Park and New York Harbor as centers of immigration and maritime trade, and the National Park Service recently formed the National Parks of New York Harbor program to open up its 22 national parks to millions.



As part of the East River Waterfront, the Seaport District is linked to Brooklyn, the west side of Manhattan, Governors Island, Ellis Island and Liberty Island.

— · — actual ferry routes
- - - potential ferry routes

Courtesy Governors Island Education and Preservation Corporation

WATERFRONT NOW

Waterfront Revenue

General Growth

Properties receives rent from New York Water Taxi and VIP Cruises for dock space at Pier 17. The company also rents space on Pier 17 to companies for commercial events. Revenue from these activities is shared with the City.

South Street Seaport Museum Revenue and Rights

Part of the Museum's leasehold with the City allows it to negotiate program space on Piers 15 and 16. A percentage of revenue from programs and events here is passed on to the City.

The Museum receives a portion of ticket sales from Circle Line cruises and the Beast speed-boat in exchange for dock space at Pier 16.

East River Waterfront Study

The goal of the City's East River Waterfront study is to reconnect the Lower Manhattan community with its waterfront by enhancing east-west connections and revitalizing open spaces. According to the city, the most important component of this \$150-million plan – which stretches two miles from the Battery Maritime Building to the East River Park – is a redesigned esplanade that will include new seating and plantings. New cladding and lighting are proposed for the underside of the FDR Drive, with pavilions envisioned for commercial, cultural and community uses. Piers will be rebuilt for public use.

In the Seaport District, Pier 15 is proposed to be rebuilt as a park superimposed over a docking pier. The north side of Pier 17 is envisioned as a new marina linked to a rebuilt New Market Building. Moving inland, two slips in the District are affected by the City's plan. Burling Slip, part of the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation's Fulton Corridor Plan, is funded to be rebuilt as a playground/park. Peck Slip is proposed as a public plaza with vehicular access.

- Please see pages 27-30 for more information on "Transforming the East River Waterfront," a study from the Department of City Planning published in 2005.



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The future Pier 15, shown above in a rendering from the Department of City Planning study entitled "Transforming the East River Waterfront," is mandated for maritime and educational use. According to president Paula Mayo, the South Street Seaport Museum is ready to advise planners on design requirements for historic vessels.

South Street Seaport Museum's Historic Fleet

Ships open for visitation

Peking (377-foot, four-masted barque, 1911)
Wavertree (279-foot iron sailing ship, 1885)
Ambrose (112-foot lightship, 1908)

Vessels offering sail training and public sails

Pioneer (102-foot schooner, 1885)
Lettie G. Howard (125-foot schooner, 1893)
W.O. Decker (52-foot tug, 1930)

Working vessels

Marion M. (61-foot chandlery lighter, 1932)
Progress work barge
Helen McAllister tug (112 feet, 1900)

Annual maintenance cost of this fleet is upwards of \$500,000, not including insurance.

OPPORTUNITIES

Talking Points

- What is the revenue potential for the piers?
- How will the Museum pay for its ships?
- Who will maintain and program the piers?
- What are future ferry needs?
- How to make the piers an essential part of the community?
- Why berms, concrete, and two stories for Pier 15?
- What is it about the natural elements that will make this waterfront successful again?

Reinforce the Working Waterfront

South Street's waterfront was historically busy, with vessels constantly arriving, unloading, loading, and departing. Its timbered piers allowed for quick tie-ups and ready access, accommodating a steady flow of people and goods regardless of the tides or weather. From the Brooklyn Bridge to the Battery, it was known as the Street of Ships. Piers 15, 16, and 17 now lie within the South Street Seaport Historic District.

Today, vessels traveling up and down the East Coast often bypass New York because of the lack of hospitable places to berth. International tall ships, historic vessels, and replicas would readily visit if affordable, safe dockage were available. A rebuilt Pier 15, a new marina near the New Market Building, continued access to Pier 17, and adaptation of Piers 13 and 14 could bring the Street of Ships back to life. The design and programming of the piers must take into account all kinds of vessels – historic, commercial, recreational and military, and most especially the Seaport Museum's irreplaceable fleet.

By reinforcing a working waterfront, the Seaport District will retain its authenticity. The District will support a maritime culture of those who sail, maintain, preserve, and appreciate boats while transforming the waterfront into a center of commerce, recreation, history, education, and community life that will be the focal point of the entire neighborhood and unique in the city. A revitalized waterfront would draw people to watch the river traffic, step aboard museum or excursion vessels, imagine history, gather for community activities, or just touch the water. By drawing from South Street's dynamic waterfront origins we will help ensure the success of its future.

Inspiration



On the Hudson River, North Cove is a successful example of waterfront stewardship, welcoming commercial operators, historic/educational ships, recreational sailors, adventurers and athletes from around the world, and local residents. "We try to engage the residential and corporate communities," says Commodore Michael Fortenbaugh, who has produced harbor-wide events like Sail for America, a September 2002 commemoration of 9/11.

Ed Fluss

URBAN SPACE



From the collection of Norman Brouwer

“The smoky river-bank dawn, the racket the fishmongers make, the seaweedy smell, and the sight of this plentifulness always give me a feeling of well-being, and sometimes they elate me.”

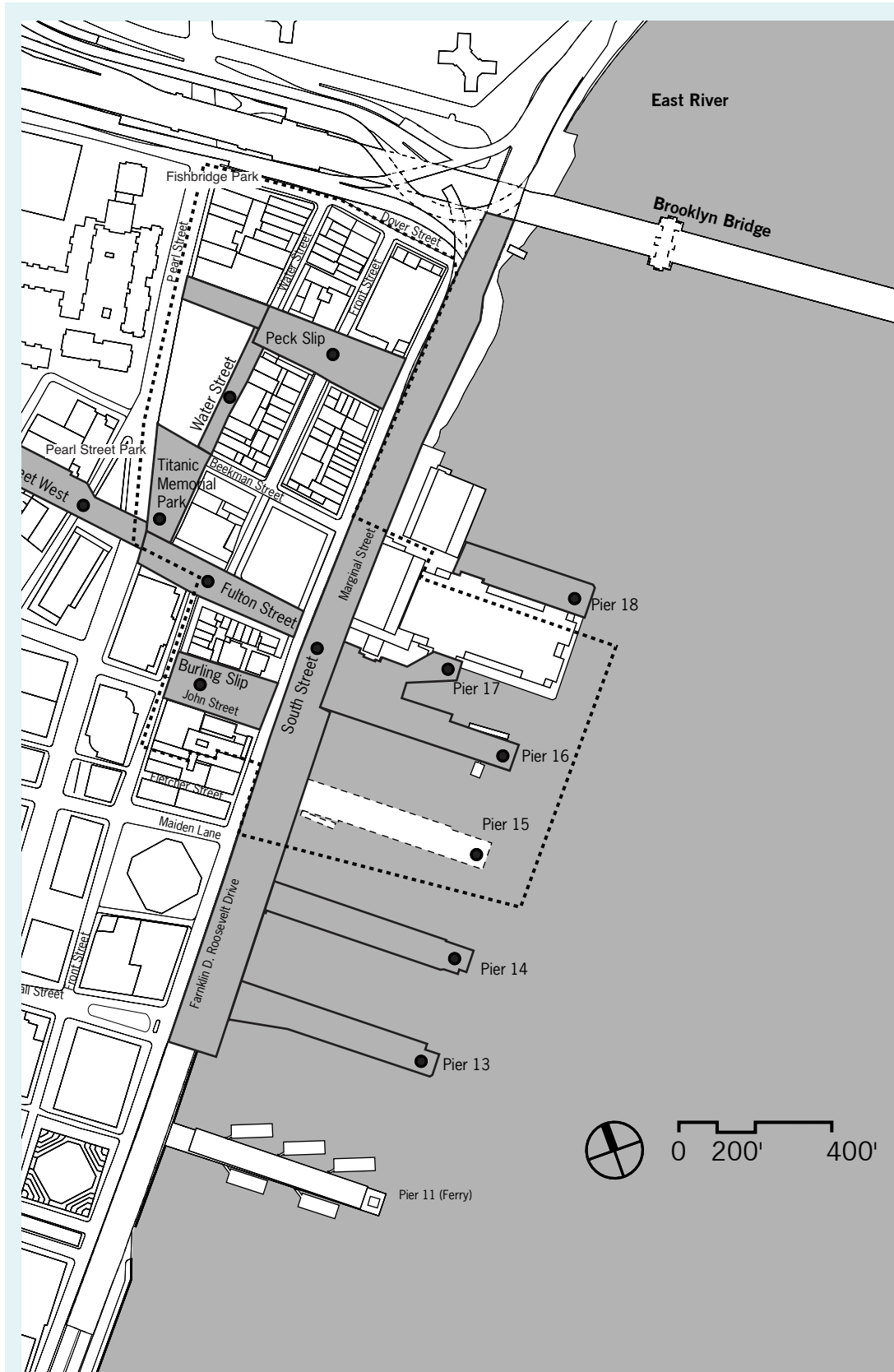
- Joseph Mitchell, “Up in the Old Hotel,” 1952



Top photo, from the turn of the century, shows the comings and goings at Peck Slip. New Haven Line steamboats landed daily, filled with people and goods. Small photo above shows empty space today.

The great cities of the world are often remembered more for their outdoor spaces than for their buildings. The South Street Seaport Historic District has several well shaped and defined spaces that are not designed or utilized in a manner to make them successful. At this moment of transition – as the Seaport is transformed from a wholly commercial to a largely residential community – these spaces offer the flexibility for use at different times of the day. Similar to the great piazzas and promenades of Rome, which change activity from morning into night, these spaces can be unique in New York’s urban plan. We hope to explore this potential and come forward with ideas to help inform the New York City agencies of their potential before they are changed forever.

SEAPORT URBAN SPACE



Building heights in the South Street Seaport Historic District are limited to 120 feet by zoning regulations passed in 2003.

Maximum building height on a pier is 40 feet. Maximum length or width of any building on a pier is 200 feet. Minimum distance between buildings is 100 feet.

URBAN SPACE NOW

Peck Slip Now a rutted streetscape and parking lot. Redesign, coordinated by Parks Department, is included in City's East River Waterfront study. Department of Transportation will rebuild the street. Community Board 1 and the Downtown Alliance call for a park, playground, and fountain, plus restoration of Belgian blocks.

Burling Slip Currently a parking lot. New 22,000 square foot park and playground to be created, coordinated by City's Parks Department. Funded by the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation as part of its \$38-million Fulton Corridor Revitalization plan.

Underside of FDR Drive Now dark and in some places blocked by fences and/or parked vehicles. Redesign, funded in the city's plan, calls for new cladding, lighting, and the creation of "pavilions" for commercial, cultural, and community uses.

Esplanade The City proposes enhanced and consistent seating and plantings. The bicycle path would also be improved.

Fulton Street Pedestrian Area

Cobblestone area used as public space. No changes planned by the city.

Streetscape Controlled by DOT. As part of the East River Waterfront Study, city planners are studying safer crossings at South Street.

Titanic Memorial Park 3,500 square foot park to be refurbished with improved seating and restoration of lighthouse. Funded as part of the LMDC's Fulton Corridor plan.

Fishbridge Park .08 acre with greenery, seating, and a dog run. Operated by the South-Water-Front Neighborhood Association, which reclaimed the derelict lot 12 years ago.

Pier 15 Currently replaced with a barge that provides dock space for Seaport Museum vessels. To be rebuilt to provide public space and docks; included in the City's East River Waterfront study. Next steps include engineering and environmental approvals, and design.



Jordan Gruzen

Burling Slip, 2006.

Pier 16 Controlled by South Street Seaport Museum. Provides dock space for Circle Line and the Beast speedboat, as well as historic vessels owned by the Museum. Wide planked area used for educational and entertainment programs.

Pier 17 Controlled by General Growth Properties. Included in new GGP master plan, which the city asks to be compatible with the East River Waterfront study. Provides dock space for New York Water Taxi and VIP Cruises. Wide planked area that joins with Pier 16 on south side is used for free concerts, non-profit events (such as walkathons), and for-profit events (such as corporate promotions). North side, at Pier 18, is used by pedestrians. Occasional visiting vessels dock here. As part of the City's East River Waterfront study, the area north of the Pier 17 building is funded to be transformed into a marina for community and commercial activities. The New Market Building, on the north side of the Pier 17 building and proposed as the new location of the Drawing Center, will be part of GGP's master plan.

OPPORTUNITIES

Talking Points

- What is the most successful programming of open space? Consider multiple uses within a single day.
- How should vehicular traffic be separated from pedestrian space? Bollards and chains? A curb? A fence? A row of trees?
- Is double-decking (multiple levels) of Pier 15 a good idea?

Recognize the Great Potential

Of the open spaces in the Seaport District, the three proposed for the greatest change are Peck Slip, Burling Slip, and the underside of the FDR Drive, all three poorly utilized or dark or blocked by parked vehicles. Design and reconstruction of all three, for which funding has been approved, should reverse decades of neglect.

The most successful use of urban spaces like these is dependent upon flexibility of purpose. These should not be viewed as having a fixed, unitary purpose, or simply as a convenient place for trees and benches, important as those can be. Rather, these spaces should be used for their potential to invigorate and enrich the daily life of the District's active and growing residential community. For such a community to truly thrive it must have playgrounds, dog runs, open space for active recreation, and outdoor infrastructure supporting markets, musicians, food carts and festivals, as well as quieter places for rest and relaxation. Sometimes a single urban space can embrace many such activities. Rome's lively Campo dei Fiore is a flower market in the morning, an open piazza for play in the afternoon, and an area for eating and drinking in the evening. It is an indispensable urban space, contributing enormous vitality to the life swirling within and around it. It is one of many stages upon which the daily life of the city is played out. The Seaport District's urban spaces should become no less than this.

Inspiration



At times an open-air market, at times a popular venue for entertainment, Rome's Campo dei Fiore is a good example of a multi-use plaza.

COMMERCE & RETAIL

Commerce has been the heart and soul of the South Street area since the 17th century, when piers and warehouses were first built along the East River shoreline. By the 19th century, global maritime business connections controlled by South Street merchants made New York the country's most important commercial hub. Now, with new funds approved for revitalization of the waterfront and the commitment of a major developer to sensitively diversify retail activity to suit 21st-century needs, we have been presented with an opportunity to consider thoughtfully how retail development can be made to perfectly complement the waterfront development project while promoting the growth of the neighborhood both economically and socially. The Commerce & Retail Committee intends to offer ideas that could guide retail and commercial development in the Seaport District that is consistent with its unique character; attractive for residents, workers, and tourists; and economically viable.

"But those large arms of the sea which embrace Manhattan island render its situation, in regard to health and pleasure as well as to the convenience of commerce, peculiarly felicitous."

-Commissioners for Streets and Roads, 1807

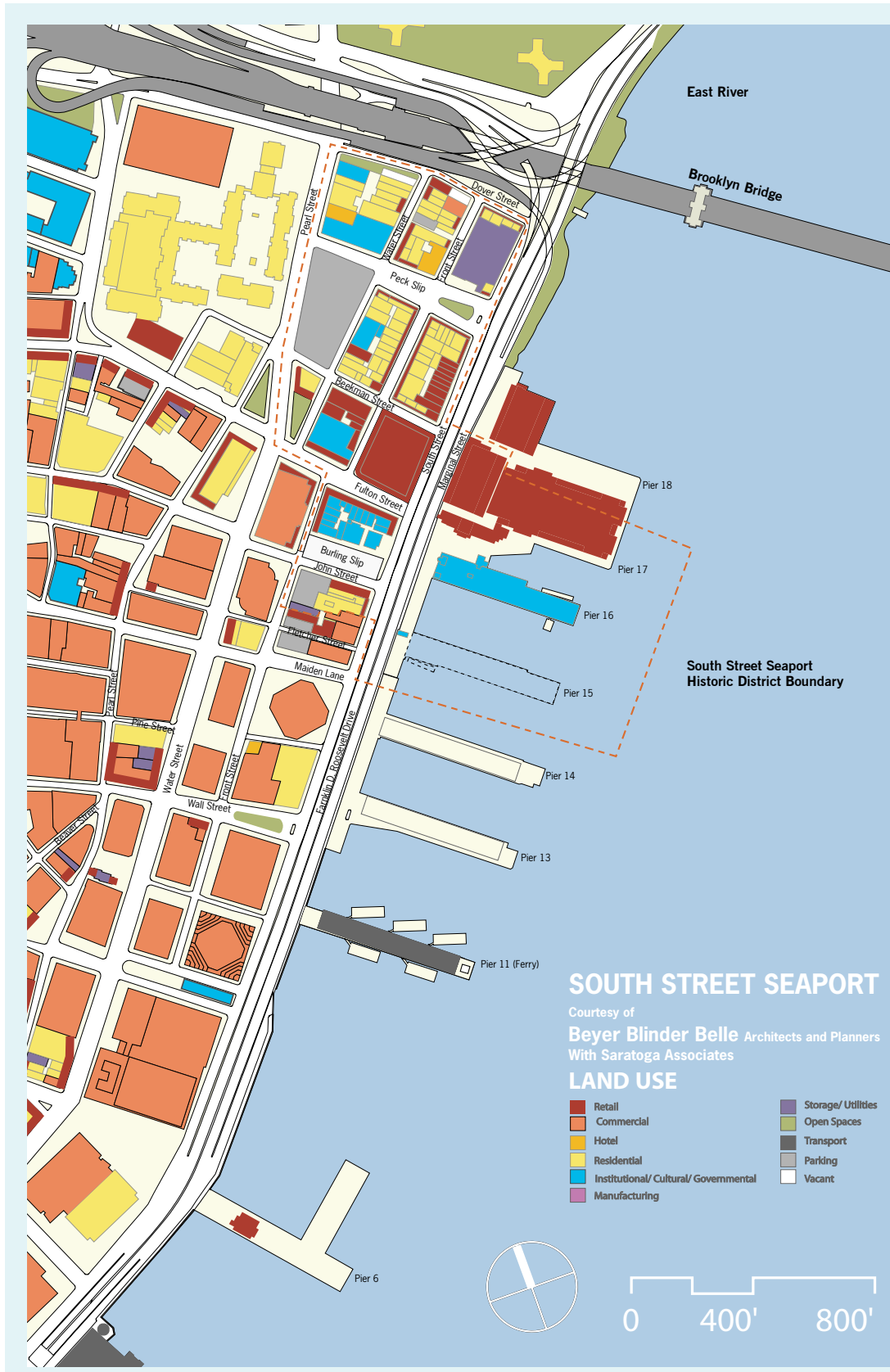
"The story of a general seaport like New York cannot be limited to mere local history. The economic activity of the whole world passed in review along the wharves and in the countinghouses of South Street nearly a century ago."

- Robert Albion, 1938



Seafood buyers peruse the offerings at the Fulton Fish Market in the early 20th century.

LAND USE



Lower Manhattan Commerce in Context

Where else can one shop downtown?

Wall Street - A booming residential population is under-served by neighborhood-friendly amenities.

Chinatown - Asian food, gifts, art; discounted home and fashion items.

Nassau Street - Pedestrian mall maintained by the Downtown Alliance

Fulton Street - Lower Manhattan Development Corp. approved grants for facade enhancements and tenant attraction. New retail space will open with the Fulton Street Transit Hub in summer 2009.

World Trade Center Site - Plans for up to 550,000 square feet of retail space, much of it along Church St., are in development by the Port Authority. Stores would begin to open in 2010.

Battery Park City - Upscale clothing stores and restaurants are in the World Financial Center. Neighborhood shops such as pharmacies and delis are on local streets.

Tribeca - Home to boutiques and great restaurants. Old-timers lament the demise of mom and pop stores.

Commerce Through History

1711: A building at Wall Street Slip is designated for buying, selling, and hiring black and Indian slaves.

1728: The Walton shipyard opens near Peck Slip.

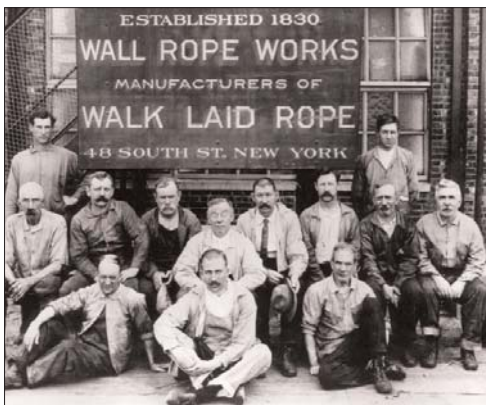
1763: William Walton and others petition for a public market at Water Street and Peck Slip.

1810-12: Schermerhorn Row ushers in a new era of purpose-built countinghouses.

1815: South Street's golden age begins, lasting to the 1860s. Shippers send American cotton, grain, flour, and lumber around the world in exchange for European products, Chinese teas, Latin American and Caribbean sugar and coffee, and other cargoes. Hardware, coffee, leather, and textile dealers cluster nearby. South Street profits help make Wall Street the nation's financial center.

1822: Fulton Market opens.

1825: The Erie Canal stimulates the District's role as a major commercial center.



1883: A redesigned Fulton Market building and the Brooklyn Bridge are opened.

1914: City abandons Fulton Market as a municipal marketplace, but building is used until 1950.

1950: The 1883 Fulton Market building is razed, replaced by a third building in 1952. South Street's maritime role now much diminished.

1982: Half of Fulton Market building razed as the Rouse Co. redevelops commercial area.

1983: Seaport project opens with shops and restaurants, a new Fulton Market pavilion, and expanded museum programs.

2004: Rouse is bought by General Growth Properties

2005: GGP begins to work on new master plan to reposition retail at the Seaport.

RETAIL NOW

General Growth Properties

The Rouse Company built and opened dozens of stores on Fulton and Front Streets in 1983 and in 1985 opened the three-floor mall at Pier 17. In late 2004, General Growth Properties took over Rouse's Seaport properties. Last year, GGP hired Beyer Blinder Belle to create a master plan to redevelop its Seaport holdings, including adjacent property not leased by the company. According to published reports, the company may add cultural attractions and more restaurants to the retail mix. GGP's senior general manager of the Seaport Marketplace, Michael Piazzola, says the company is looking for "the right balance of uses to make it economically feasible and also responsible to the city and the community."

The Pier 17 Pavilion will be repositioned. "We as a developer want to make better use of the location," said Mr. Piazzola, adding that the new building will have "better common areas that the public can access and utilize."

Small Business

Mom-and-pop stores dot the 12 blocks of the Seaport District, some operated by residents. Randy Polumbo, for example, has two businesses here – 3-D Laboratory, Inc. on Water Street and Dodo Cafe on Peck Slip. Marco Pasanella recently opened Pasanella & Son Vintners on South Street. Quartino and Mark Joseph Steakhouse are recent additions to the restaurant scene, anchored by Carmine's Italian Seafood and by the Bridge Cafe, "the city's oldest drinking establishment" located in a historic structure dating from 1794.



Pasanella & Son Vintners, an elegant addition to the neighborhood opened recently.

OPPORTUNITIES

Talking Points

- What roles should the private and the public sectors take?
- How important is a maritime flavor to future retail?
- How do retailers tap into the authentic traditions of the Seaport and translate them to modern uses?
- What lessons can be learned from the Rouse Co.'s experience?
- Is better signage needed?

The Real Authenticity

When we discuss “authenticity” as it pertains to the business and economic issues of a historic district, we are not necessarily promoting the recreation of 19th-century-type businesses at the Seaport, although, as we see with Bowne & Co. Stationers, this can be part of the mix. Authenticity of another type is more appropriate – i.e. local retailers offering real goods for real people: food markets and hardware stores for a growing residential population. Tourists will come as well, perhaps in even larger numbers – particularly if the retail offerings are unique. An attractive restaurant scene, for example, would strengthen the neighborhood’s reputation as both an eminently livable place and a destination. In the absence of the Fulton Fish Market, would not a world-class seafood retail store and restaurant go far toward filling the void that has been left behind?

Pockets of retail space in the Seaport District, some landmarked, are distinctive elements of the streetscape and offer attractive opportunities for small businesses. But while history and architecture are crucially important, they must be balanced with the practical requirements of business and commerce. For example, the arrival of a “big box” anchor tenant should not be dismissed. The overall success of revitalization will depend to a very large extent on the mix of commercial activity that might also include non-retail, service-oriented businesses such as small architecture-design firms or money managers.

Inspiration



Founded in 1328, Rotterdam, Netherlands, was largely rebuilt after World War II. Its Oude Haven (Old Harbor) district is a thriving combination of commercial and residential elements.

GOVERNANCE



South Street in 1857.

With the LMDC award of \$150 million for revitalizing the East River waterfront below Houston Street, the City is poised at a critical moment in the evolution of the South Street Seaport area as a mixed-use neighborhood with a historic, maritime flavor. Mechanisms must be found, however, for funding, programming, overseeing, and maintaining the neighborhood's incomparable resources into the future. The many constituents involved in waterfront development and management face a great challenge in coordinating the construction, operations, and maintenance of this historic and beloved area. Often, these tasks are discretely segmented from one another, and the result can make the whole less than the sum of its parts – not to mention more expensive. Mayor Bloomberg has made waterfront renewal a priority in his administration, but funding for only the first phase of the East River Waterfront study has been identified. Looking ahead, how can this administration put in place a governance structure that will fulfill this legacy?

“We must conceive of our cities... not merely as centers of population, but as the workshops of civilization, and, at the same time, as the natural habitat of civilized man.”

- John A. Kouwenhoven, 1953

SEAPORTSPEAKS AREAS OF FOCUS



CRUCIAL NEEDS



Those approaching the Seaport from the south find the passage narrow and the view blocked.

Control of real estate in this area is many-layered, emerging from the interaction of commercial interests with public agencies and private organizations. Property owners, developers, and cultural institutions work within limits set by government agencies and quasi-governmental commissions, among them the LMDC, EDC, DOT, DEC, SBS, and Parks Department. They also work with civic advocacy groups and organizations such as Community Board 1. The interaction of these entities and constituencies must be streamlined in order to effectively address the following crucial needs:

Maintain waterfront infrastructure

The various government agencies responsible for waterfront development and management have not been able to operate and maintain the waterfront of the South Street Seaport District in a state of good repair. Piers 13, 14, and 15 have been condemned in the last five years. Vessels docking at Pier 16 must spend an inordinate effort on protection from damaging East River wakes, given the lack of fendering.

Ensure an interesting, maritime mix of activities and opportunities

Economic development needs to be balanced with public use and an interesting mix of recreation and cultural activities on the waterfront. At the South Street Seaport we

must find a way to ensure a viable land use program that serves residents, tourists, and daytime workers, while ensuring that the piers and the ships of the Museum can be revitalized and secured as a permanent part of the cityscape.

Create a governance structure for the whole development cycle

Waterfront development needs a comprehensive framework that will facilitate progress, starting with conceptualization and initial planning, continuing with the development and redevelopment construction projects that will comprise the heart of the revitalization, and on to future operations, programming, and long-term maintenance.

But once visitors get to the Seaport, its maritime treasures and iconic views are thrilling.



Robert Simko

OPPORTUNITIES

Talking Points

- What structure can be implemented that will ensure future programming and phasing of waterfront development?
- Where will funding come from: Incentives? Real estate taxes? PILOT fees? Profits from retail?
- What are examples of appropriate public/private models of development?
- What deals need to be struck?

Create a Governance Structure

The \$150 million allocated by the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation for the revitalization of the East River Waterfront creates a welcome opportunity, but it also presents a significant challenge to create planning and governance mechanisms that will ensure the success of that revitalization. Because responsibility for New York's waterfront management is fragmented among many disparate city agencies and private organizations, the challenge is to create a governance structure that will effectively coordinate the planning, funding, construction, and future maintenance of each phase of revitalization.

Mechanisms must be devised that will encourage and expedite the most appropriate commercial and residential development in the Seaport neighborhood, particularly the waterfront, while at the same time preserving and strengthening the cherished mix of cultural, social, and economic qualities that have so long defined it. What has worked – or not – in other models of operating entities such as those for Queens West, Hudson River Park, Brooklyn Bridge Park, and Governors Island? What lessons do these operating entities offer for an area such as the South Street Seaport neighborhood? Once built, how can we ensure that all structures and facilities on this waterfront are properly maintained and upgraded for the benefit of future generations?

Inspiration

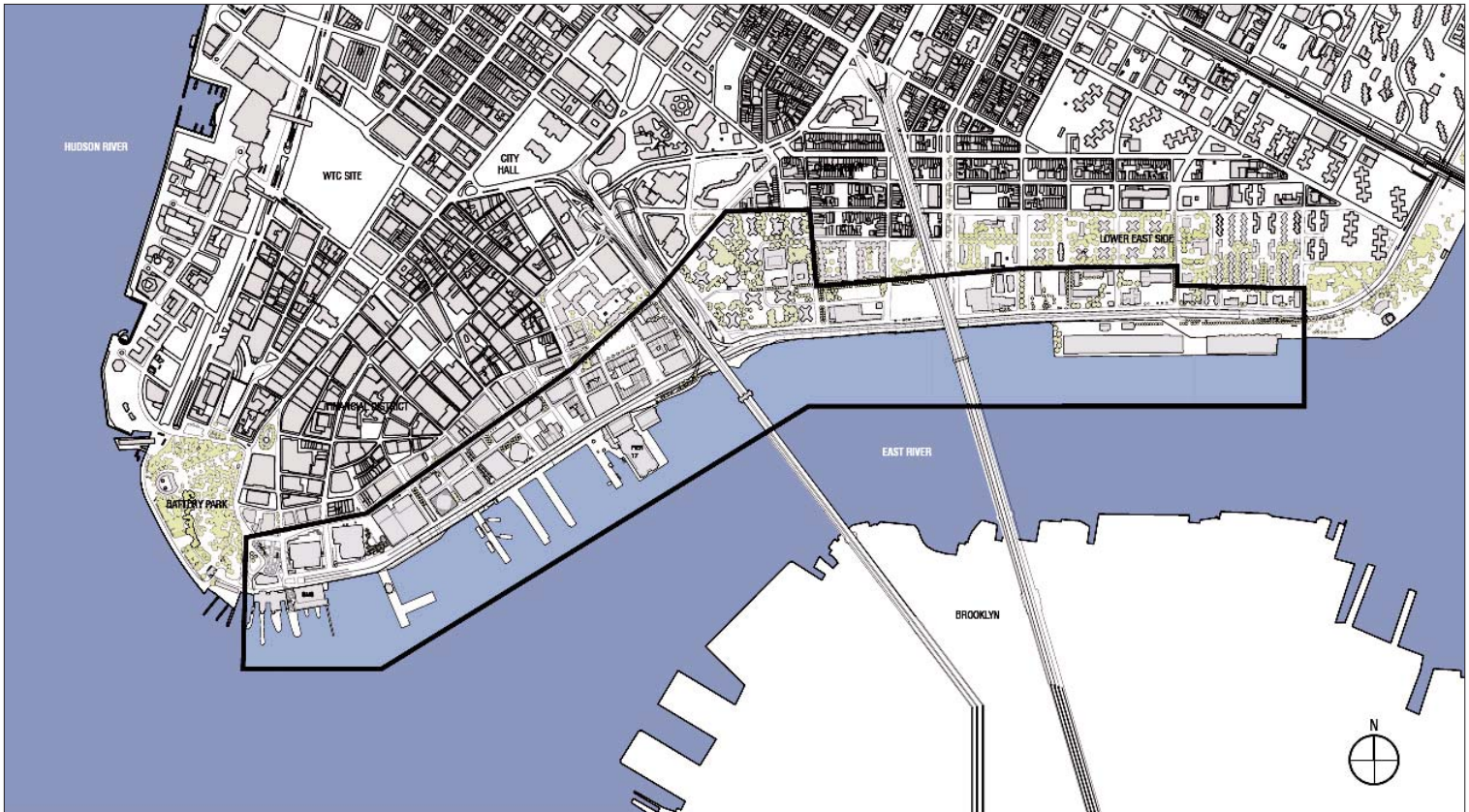


Robert Simko

The Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority was created in 1999 to manage the historic waterfronts of Sydney, Australia. It restores, manages, and promotes heritage areas and real estate properties, and runs community and education programs funded by revenue from its holdings. The SHFA bears responsibility for balancing commercial, cultural, tourism, heritage, and community objectives.

CURRENT PROPOSALS

EAST RIVER WATERFRONT STUDY

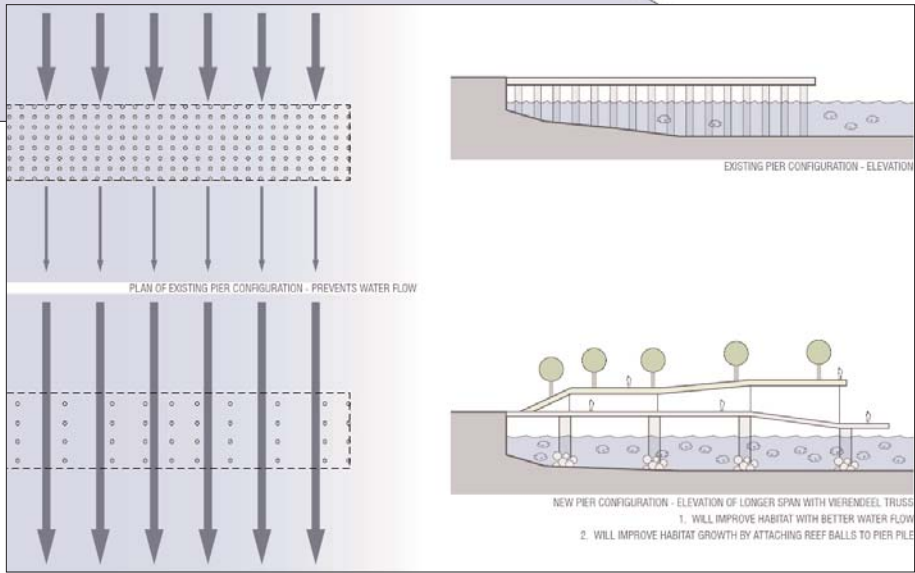
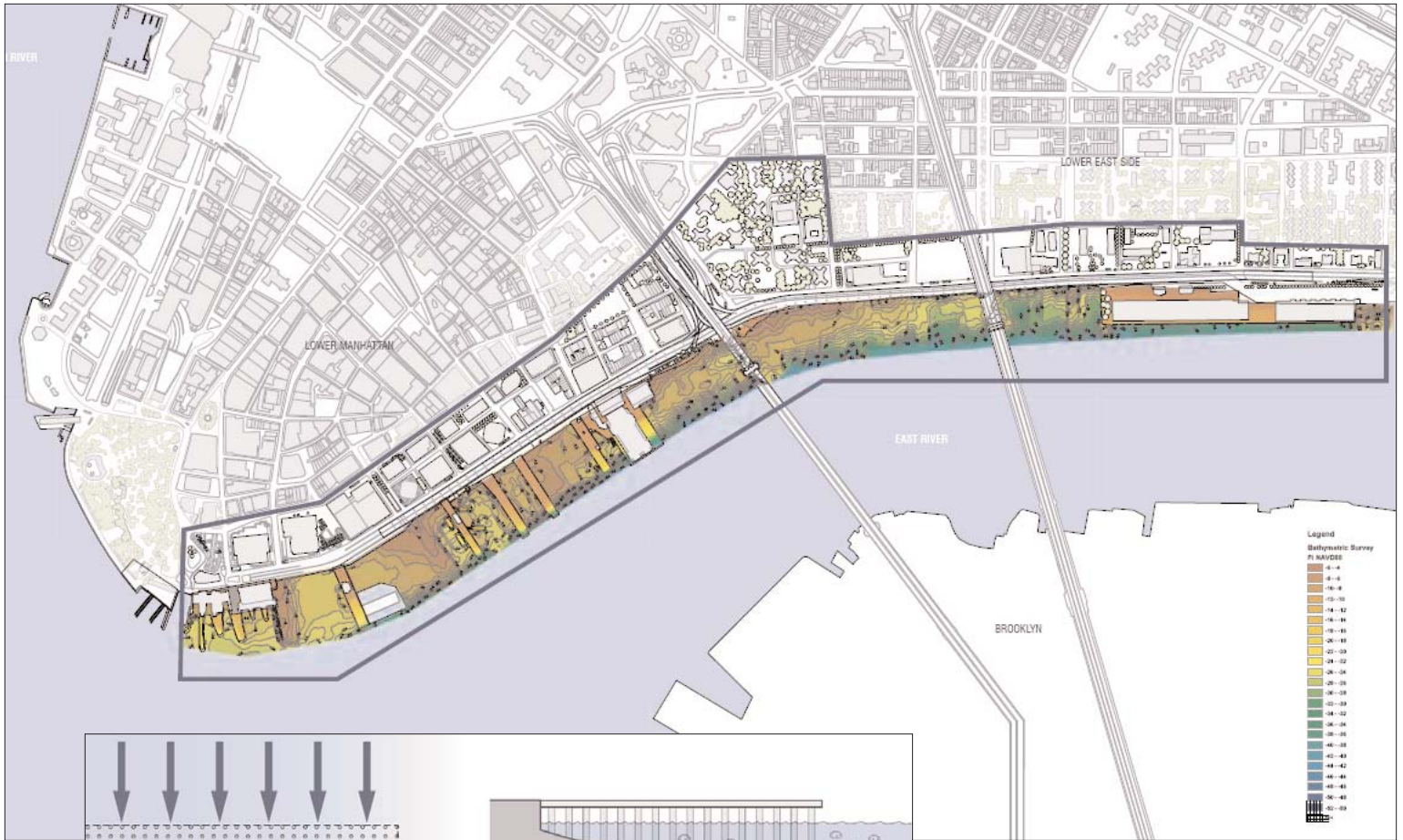


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Transforming the East River Waterfront

Working with local communities, civic associations, elected officials, and city and state agencies, the Economic Development Corporation and the Department of City Planning produced a concept study of the East River Waterfront from the Battery Maritime Building to Pier 42 at Montgomery Street. As seen in the example at left of a re-envisioned esplanade and underside of the FDR Drive, restoring east-west connections to the waterfront is the primary goal of the study.

EAST RIVER WATERFRONT STUDY



Property of the New York City Economic Development Corporation. All rights reserved.

The bathymetric survey at top shows riverbed depth. Above, tidal flow around two types of piers is shown.

Environment

When restoring piers in this section of the East River, environmental studies by the City make three main suggestions:

- no increase of “overwater” structures
- widely spaced support piles to permit tidal flow and minimal sediment build-up
- habitat elements added where appropriate (e.g., artificial “reef balls” help restore marine habitats by providing new retreats for fish and attachment areas for invertebrates)

EAST RIVER WATERFRONT STUDY

Peck Slip and Burling Slip

As proposed by City Planning, Peck Slip (images at right and below) is proposed to be redesigned with a pool of water in its center. Later this year, the Department of Transportation will begin rebuilding the streets.

City Planning offers a new look for Burling Slip (bottom of page).



Proposed concepts for Peck Slip at right and top right.



Concept for Burling Slip proposed by City Planning

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EAST RIVER WATERFRONT STUDY



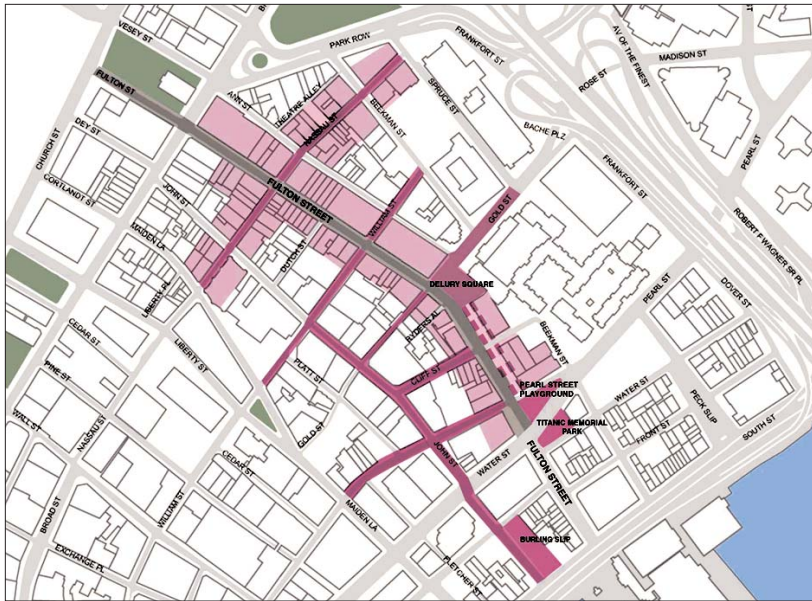
The Pier Projects

Within the Seaport District, two piers are proposed to be redesigned. Pier 15, seen in a rendering at right, is envisioned as a two level park/dock/educational facility over new widely spaced piles. On the north side of Pier 17, above, a new marina is proposed.



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FULTON CORRIDOR PLAN

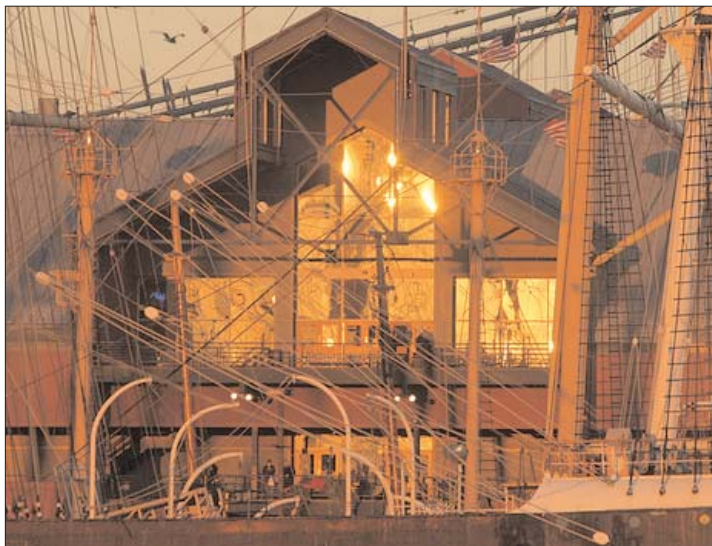


Courtesy Lower Manhattan Development Corporation

Fulton Street Revitalization Study

As proposed by the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation and the Department of City Planning, the revitalization of Fulton Street stretches from the World Trade Center site to South Street. Within the Seaport District, Burling Slip and Titanic Park are funded for redesign and reconstruction.

GENERAL GROWTH PROPERTIES



Stephanie Hollyman/www.blazingcontent.com

Planning and programming principles for the South Street Seaport revitalization

Mission: to meet business and public policy objectives by

- Creating a major amenity for Lower Manhattan's residential and office populations with a critical mass of retail, entertainment, and hotel
- Establishing visual, programmatic, and transit linkages to key waterfront destinations, such as Governors Island and Brooklyn Bridge Park
- Blending the design and activity nodes in a complementary manner to East River Park and the Historic District
- Using public open spaces and extensions of the street system to create a public realm of permanent value

BIBLIOGRAPHY



From the collection of Norman Brouwer

Stevedores unload a ship in 1820.

SeaportSpeaks Steering Committee

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

SeaportSpeaks

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Bowne & Company, South
Street Seaport Museum
Letterpress Printing

Table Tales
Catering



"Pier 17" by Claude Samton

SeaportSpeaks Charrette Schedule of Events

Thursday, March 30, 2006

Seamen's Church Institute, 241 Water Street

5:15 P.M. Orientation - grog - a guided experiential tour of the Seaport with your working group - food and mingling - a presentation of history and the context for the charrette.

8:00 P.M. Close.

Friday, March 31, 2006

South Street Seaport Museum, 12 Fulton Street

8:00 A.M. Coffee/gathering.

8:30 A.M. Welcome. The work begins.

11:45 A.M. Lunch as work continues

5:15 P.M. Close.

5:30 P.M. Celebratory Reception, Melville Gallery, 213 Water Street.

Thank you to those who provided invaluable encouragement and help

AVHQ New York, Robert Balder, Nicholas Baute, Georgette Bennett, John Beyer, Norman Brouwer, Cafe Dodo Staff, Joseph Cammarato, Jody Clark, Barbara Cohen, Kate Daurich, Joan K. Davidson, Donald Elliott, Stuart Frank, Porter-Ann Gaines, Will Gallin, Alexander Garvin, Alan Gentile, Hon. Alan J. Gerson, Rachel Gruzen, Carla Hall, Stephenie Hollyman, Steven Jaffe, Anna Kleppert, Kimberly Long, Carolyn Lukensmeyer, Paula Mayo, Julie Menin, Roger Meyer, Deepa Mehta, Howard Milstein, Richard Mooney, Joseph Moreno, Kathy O'Callaghan, Marco Pasanella, Mark Peckham, Michael Piazzola, Robert Pirani, Harry Poulakakos, Peter Poulakakos, Ruthann Prange, Jack Putnam, Naima Rauam, Jeffrey Remling, Brian Rogers, Megan Root, Lisa Severin, John Shapiro, Robert Simko, Reverend Jean Smith, Norma Stanford, Peter Stanford, The Battery Conservancy, Steven Turtell, David Valentin, Robert Warner, Kathryn Watterson



1885 Wavertree, East River, New York. Oct. 8, 2003