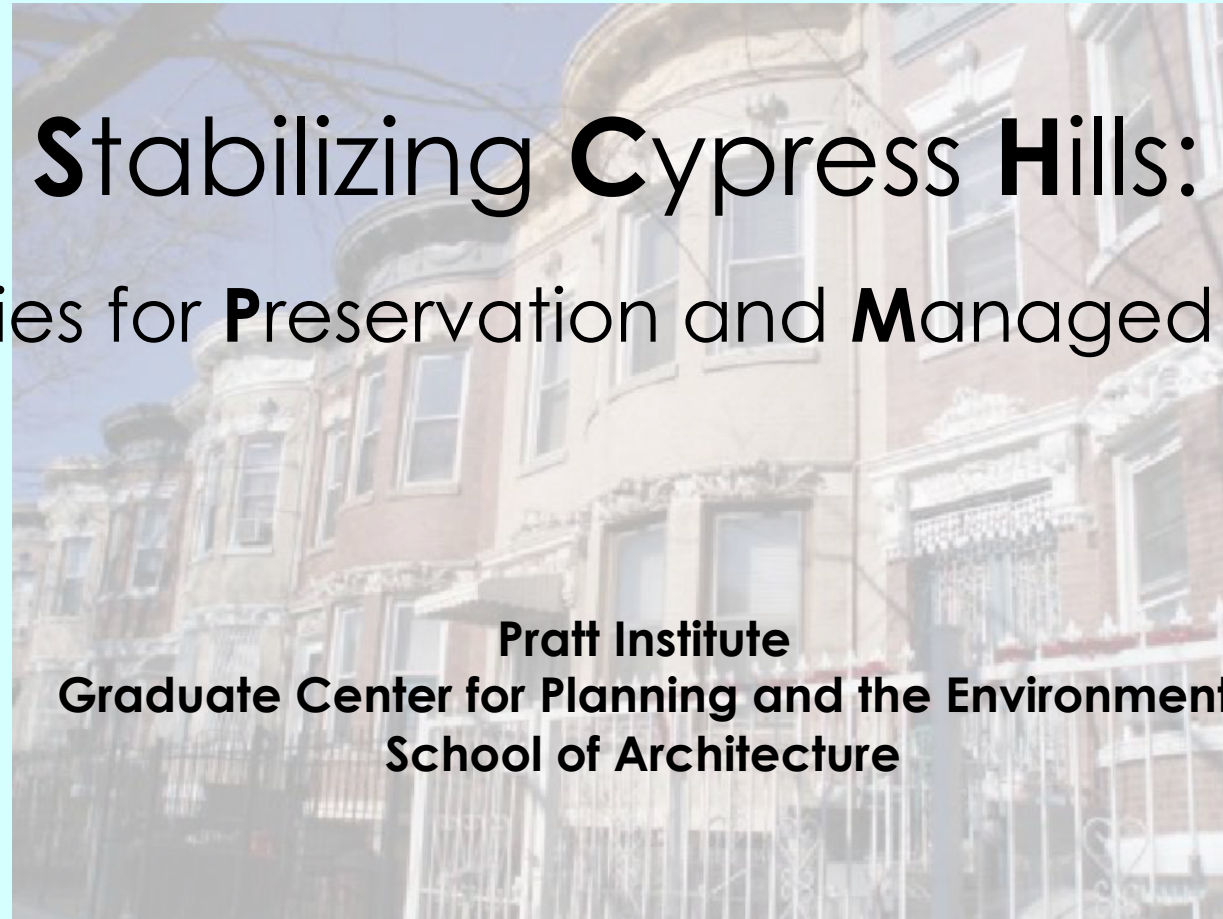




CYPRESS HILLS
LOCAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION



Stabilizing Cypress Hills: Strategies for Preservation and Managed Growth



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Project Background

Client:

Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation

Task:

Find opportunities for new development in Cypress Hills that will provide needed affordable housing while maintaining neighborhood livability and preserving historic resources.



Contents

- Project Background
- Methodology
- Existing Conditions
- Vision
- Strategies
- Conclusions

Methodology

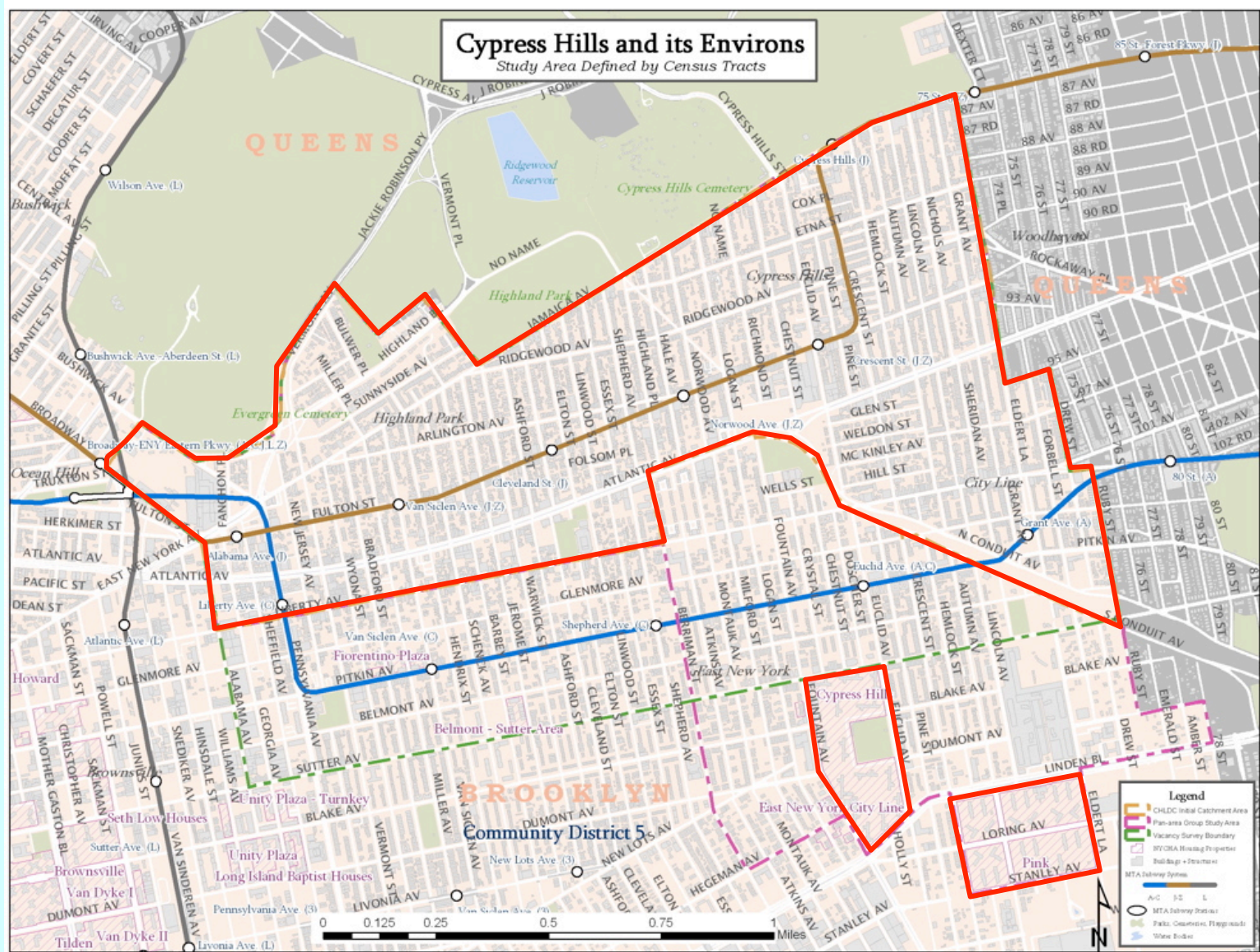
- Historical Research
- Demographic / housing analysis
- Built fabric analysis
- Resident survey
- Outreach to community leaders, stakeholders and residents
- Studio discussions, charrettes and scenario-making

Existing Conditions

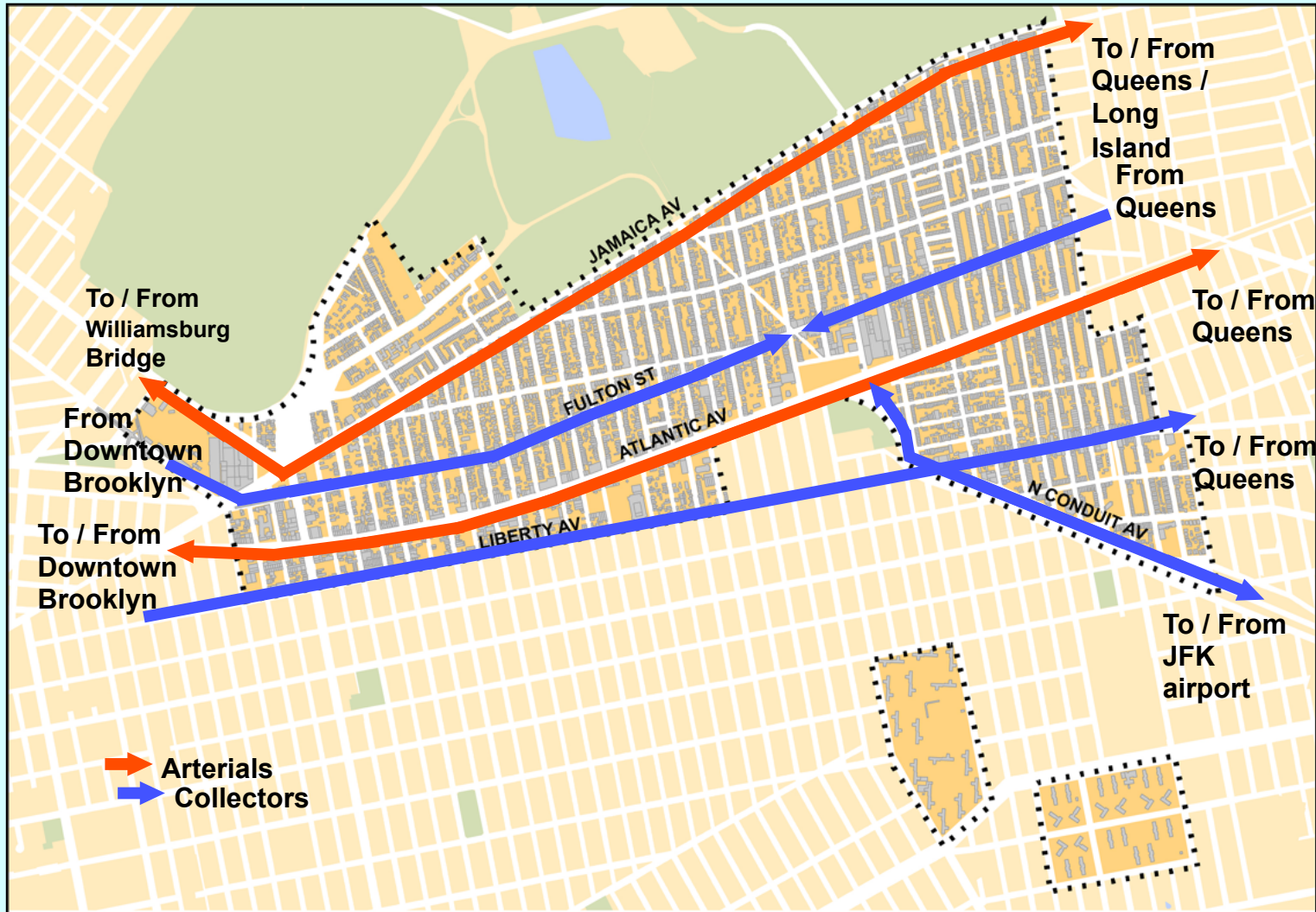
City-wide Context



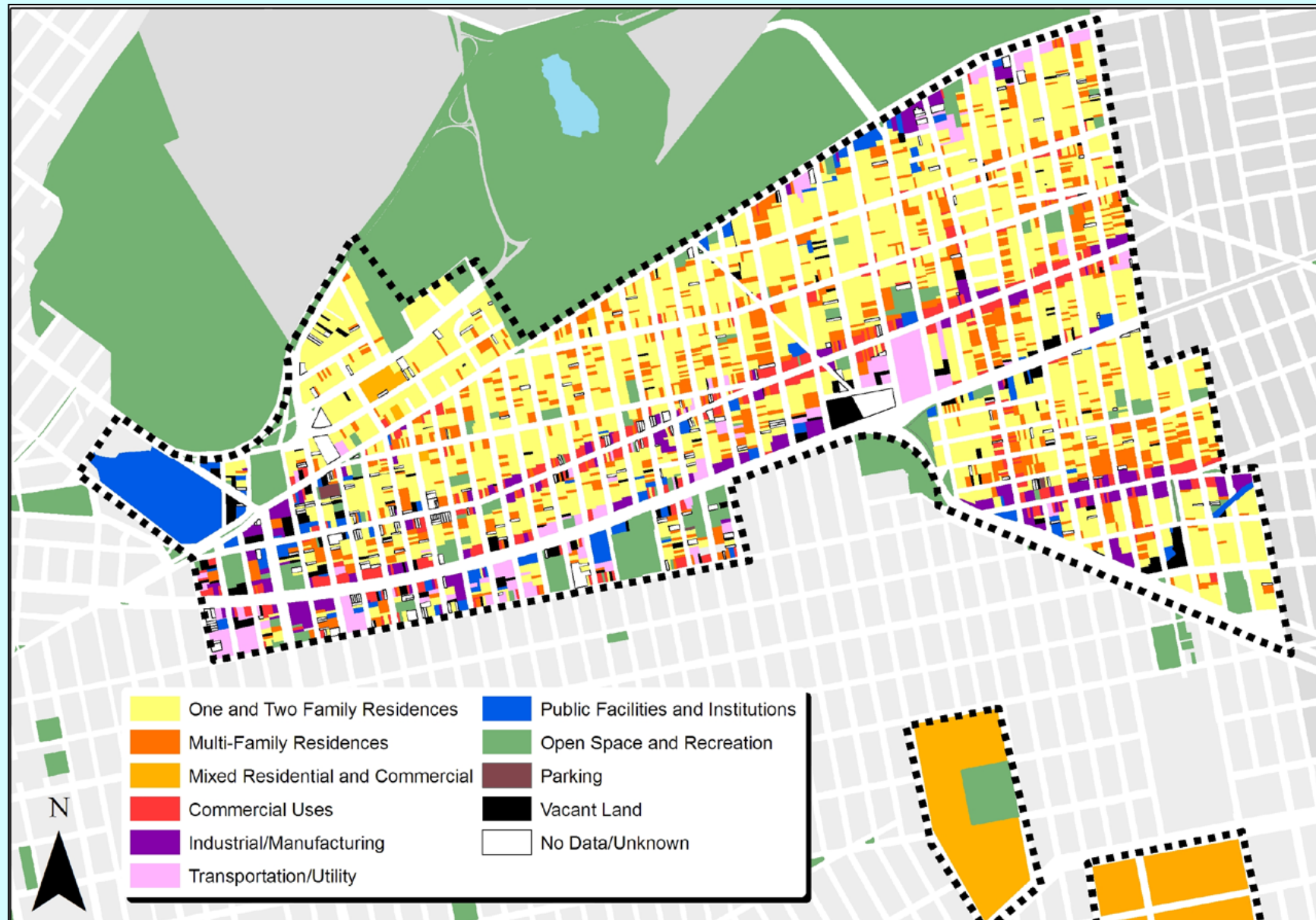
Study Area



East-West Transportation Connections



Land Use



Residential Architectural Styles



Tudor Style, Highland Park



Italianate Style



Greek Revival



Spanish Mission Revival



Neoclassical Italianate



Neoclassical

Commercial, Industrial, & Institutional Architectural Styles



Neo-Classical Baroque



Art Deco



Greek Revival



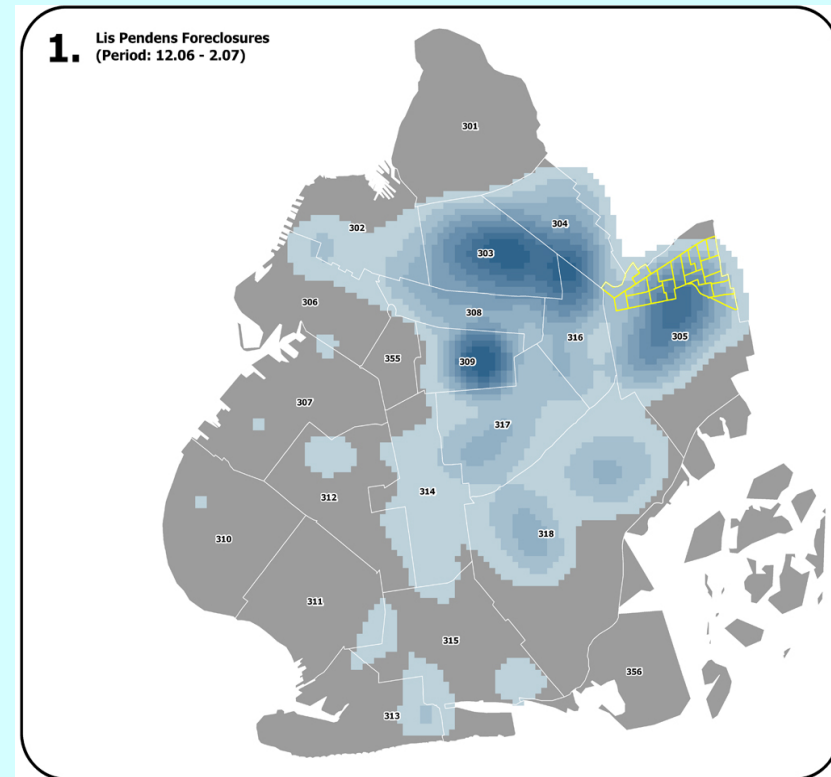
Romanesque Revival

Growing affordability crisis weakens social fabric

Good housing stock – 1/3
owner occupied

BUT older (72% built before
1939) and home ownership
rate is slowly declining

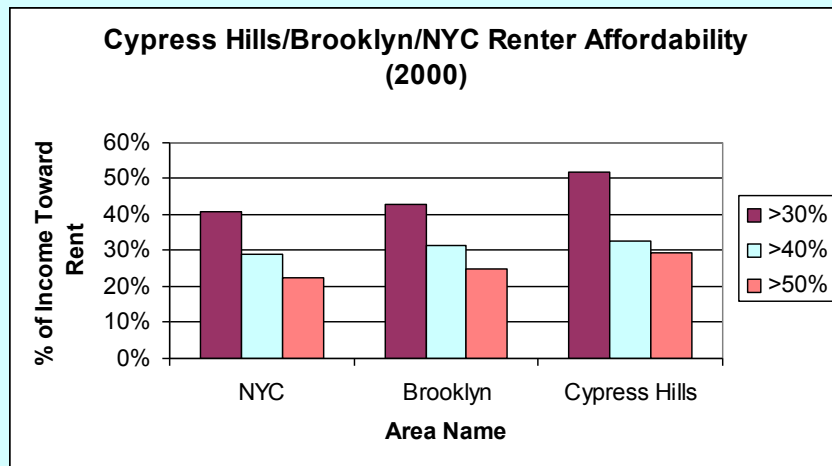
209 lis pendens actions in
study area between
December of 2006 and
February of 2007



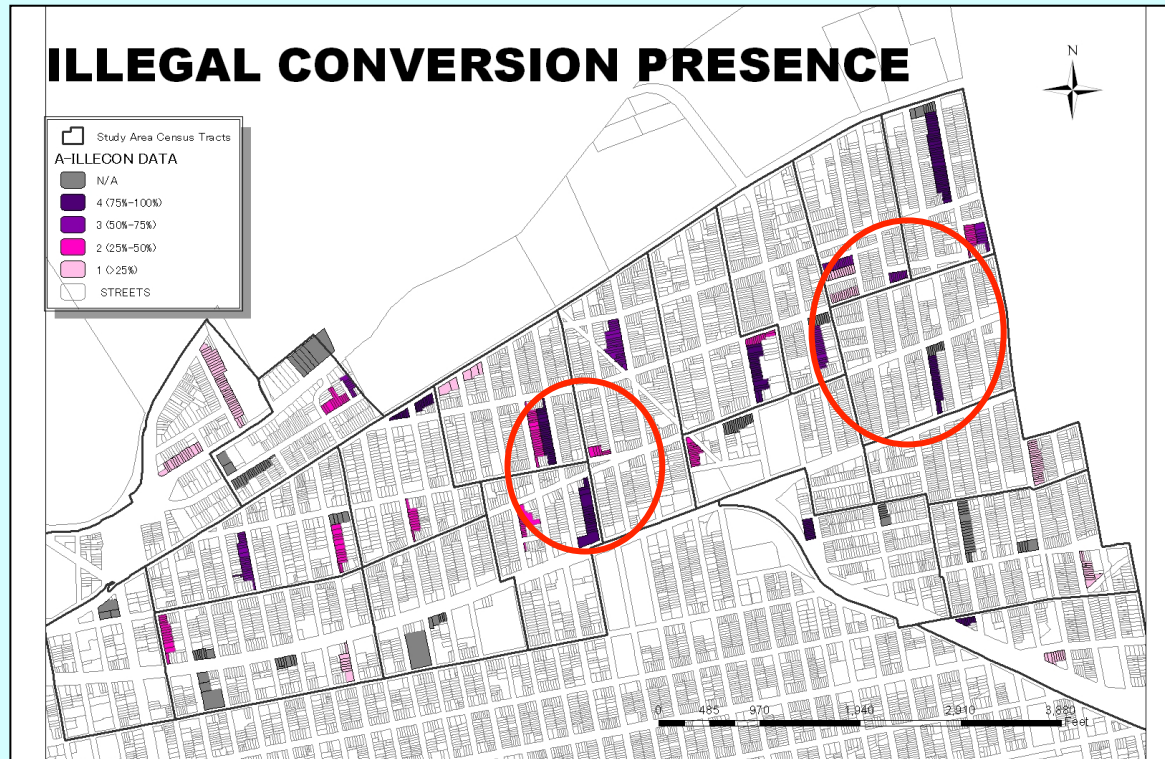
Crisis in both ownership and rental markets



- ½ of the renter households in CH, or 5,594, earned \$22,731 or less in 2000.
- “Affordable” rent for someone at that income is \$625; only 5,223 units renting for under \$700 in 2000.
- More than half of all renter households in Cypress Hills spent more than 30% of their income on rent in 2000 and nearly a third spent over 50%.
- Situation has almost certainly worsened between 2000 and today.



Illegal Conversions



Affordability Issue

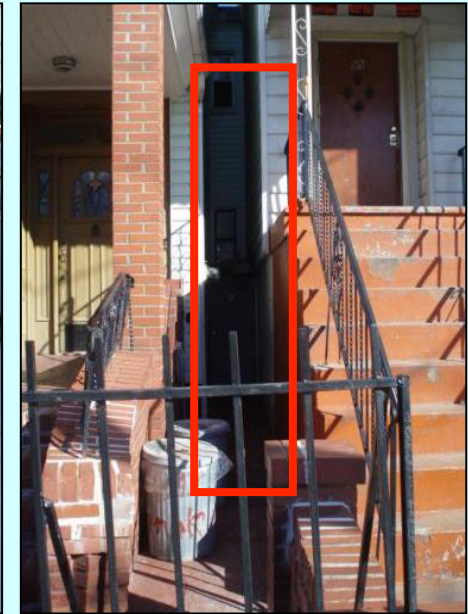
- Property owners need income because house costs are higher
- Low income tenants have few other options

Unintended Consequences

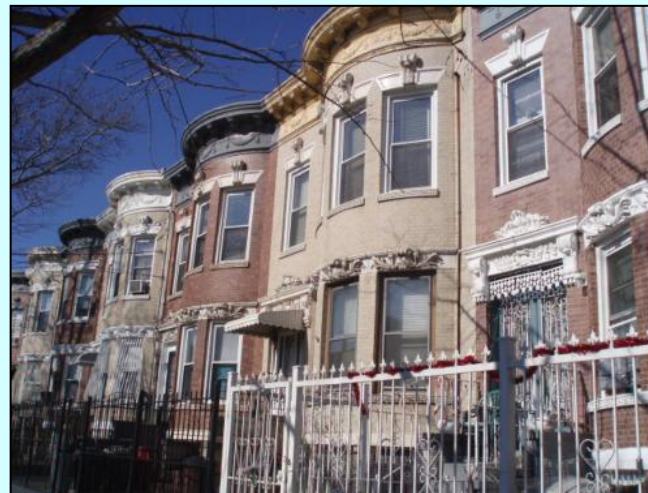
- Overburdened schools, fire, police, and sanitation
- Unsafe living conditions in buildings that do not meet code

Illegal Conversion Impact

Identifying
Illegal Units

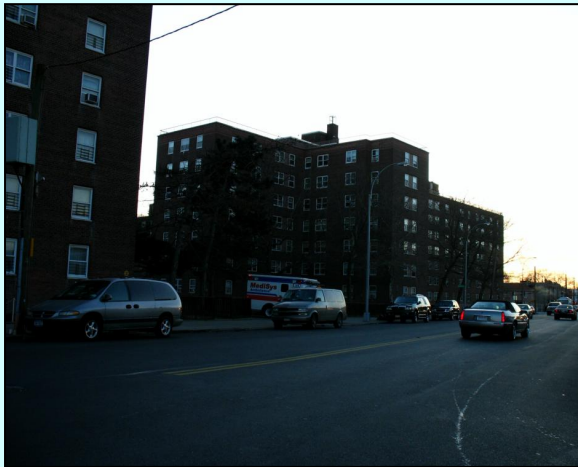


Minimal
effects on Historic
Building Fabric

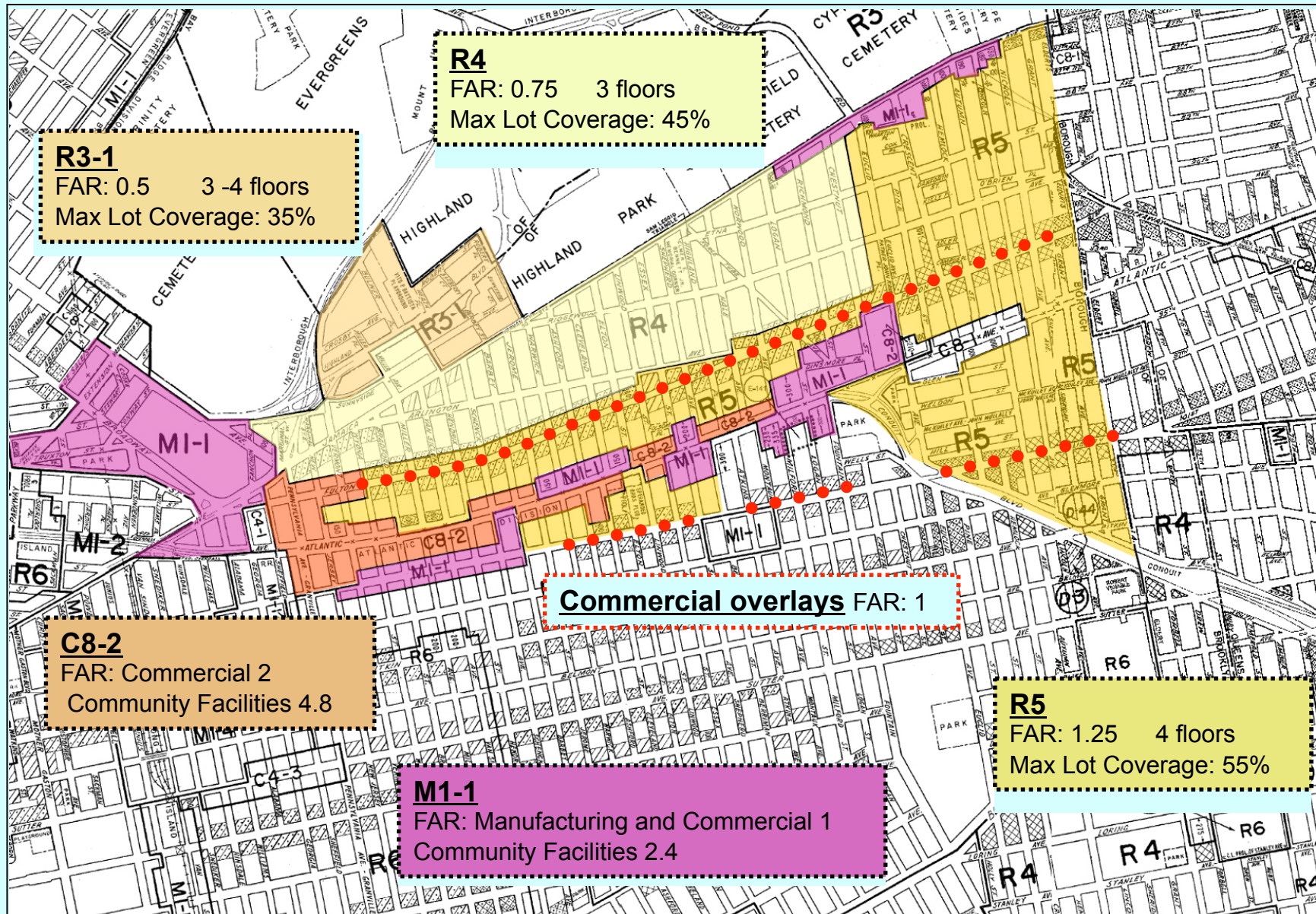


Public Housing

- Public housing represents an important source of affordable housing in the neighborhood
- The quality and livability of NYCHA sites are important to the future of the community



Regulatory Framework – Current Zoning



Historic Districts & Buildings

- Historic areas and buildings are largely intact and are complemented by other historic and cultural resources using revised criteria.



Summary: Key Findings

- Unique, low-scale character, quiet, pleasant blocks, generally good building conditions;
- Proximity to East New York on the south, Queens border on the north and east, Cypress Hills cemetery creates “enclave” feel but is also isolating;
- East-west transportation axes define the area, not necessarily in a positive way (encourage “passing through” feeling)
- Acute affordable housing crisis;
- Prevalence of illegal housing units, mostly third units in 2-family homes;
- Public housing as an important but disconnected resource
- Intact historic fabric -- many places of architectural and cultural significance.



Preservation versus Development

Vision

“We envision a neighborhood that maintains its physical fabric and strengthens its social fabric, while also providing new opportunities for affordable housing and economic growth.”

Strategies

Strategy Overview

Reclaiming Atlantic Avenue



Place Making

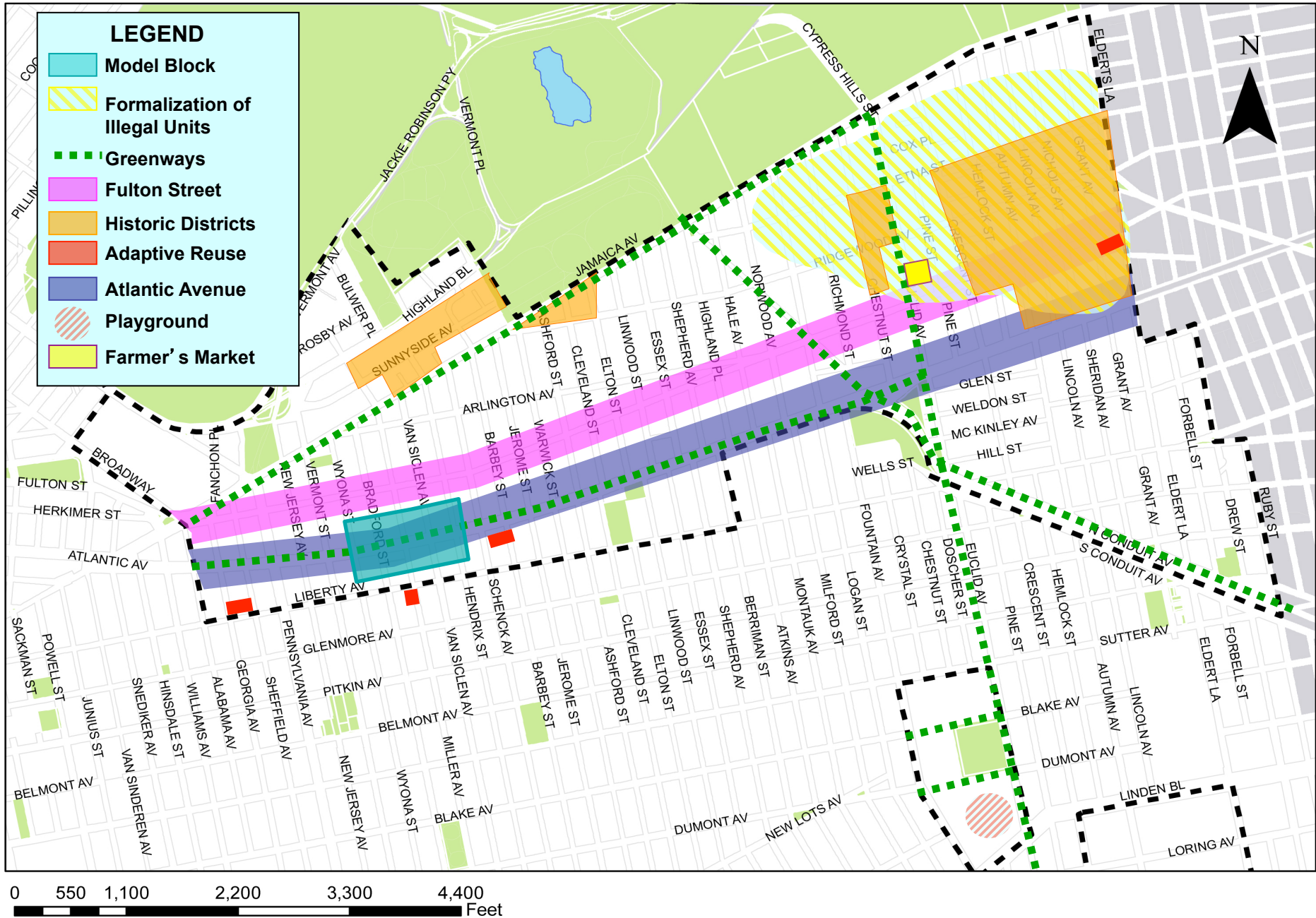


Enhancing Public Housing



Formalizing Illegal Units

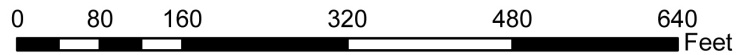




Strategy 1:
Claiming Atlantic Avenue
Integrating it into Cypress Hills

Atlantic Avenue Interventions

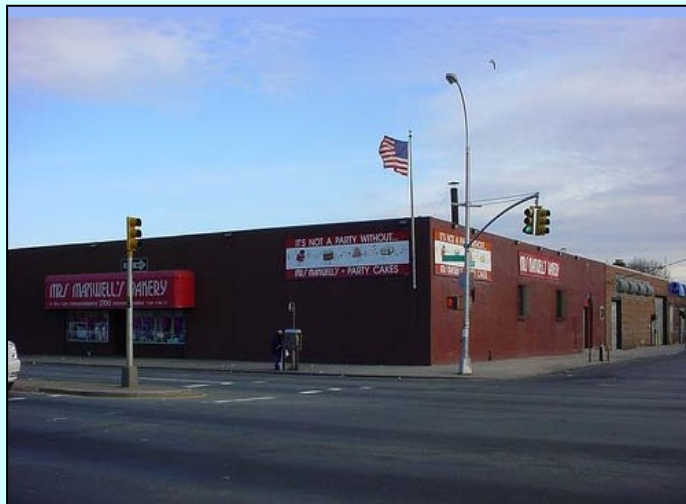
- **Change zoning** along Atlantic Avenue (between Milford Street and Pennsylvania Avenue) to a C2 Commercial Overlay District with an underlying R7A Residential District and an inclusionary bonus – mandate ground-floor commercial uses
- Rezoning should exempt blocks where integrity of existing fabric argues for **selective infill** development
- Implement greening and traffic-calming measures; create **energetic streetscape**



Phase III: Cypress Hills Model Block Proposal



1: Zoning Changes for Affordable Housing and Commercial Expansion



- South side of Atlantic between Wyona and Vermont
- Streets – a new & improved Mrs. Maxwell's

2: Selective Infill



- Between Wyona St. and Bradford St.



3. Energized Streetscape



- Traffic calming and streetscape improvements located within existing concrete median

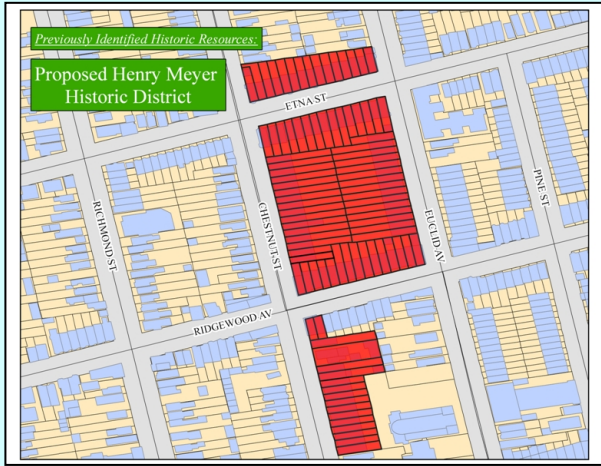
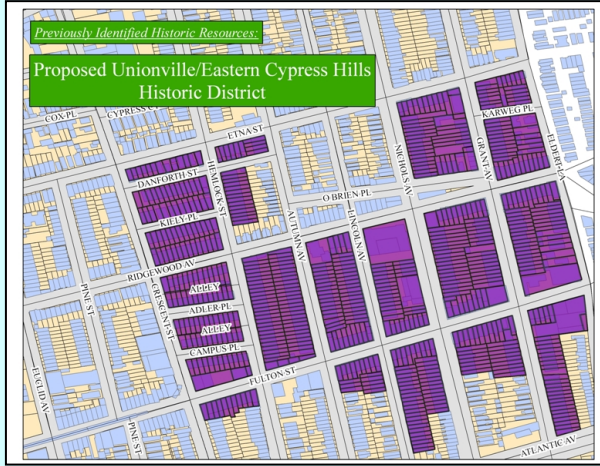
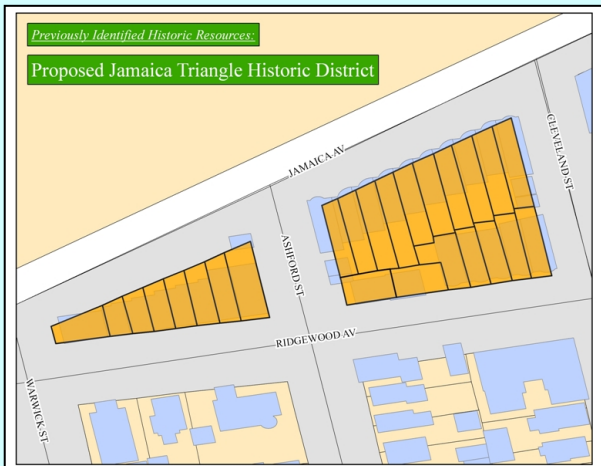
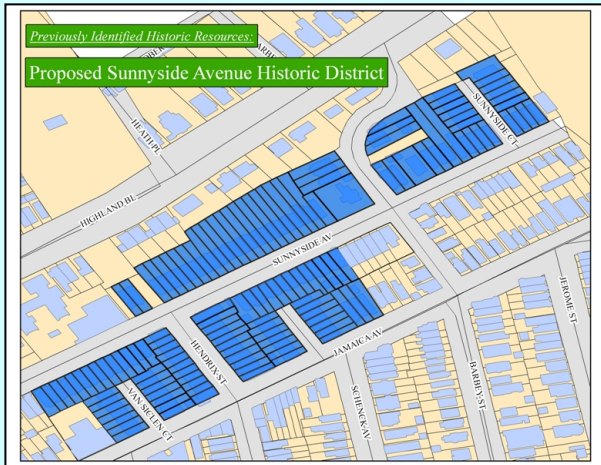
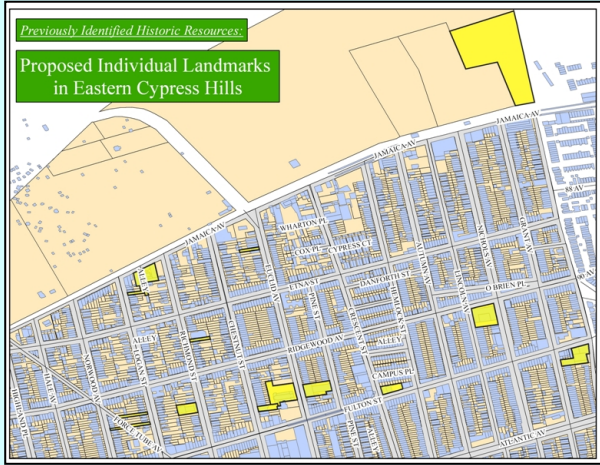
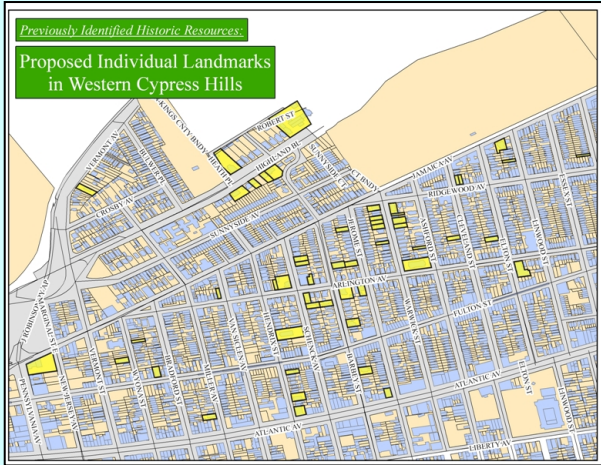
Strategy 2: Placemaking

Placemaking

- Community engagement for protecting historic and cultural resources



Placemaking Initiative 1: National Register of Historic Places



Potential NYC Individual Landmarks

- Old New Lots town hall
- Vienna Flats apartments
- Former Borden's Dairy Plant
- 279 Highland Blvd.
- 149 Jerome St.
- Multiple religious buildings, including Blessed Sacrament, Glorious Church of God, Andrews Methodist, and St. Michael's



Placemaking Initiative 2: Adaptive Reuse Opportunities



Former Borden's
Dairy Plant



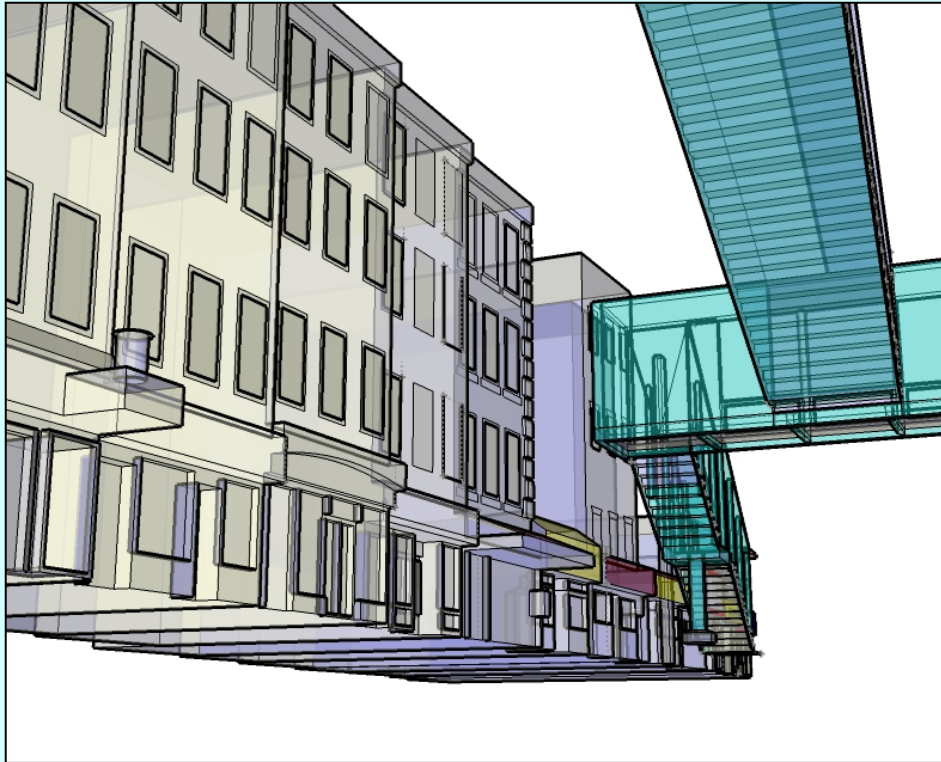
53rd/75th Precinct/
People's First
Baptist Church
at Liberty Avenue
and Miller Avenue



Tools for Adaptive Reuse: Paying for Rehabilitation

- Federal Historic Tax Credits
- New York State Historic Tax Credit
- Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC)
- New York Green Tax Credits
- Grants from New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation
- Grants from the City Ventures Fund of the New York Landmarks Conservancy

Placemaking Initiative 3: Fulton Street Revitalizing Plans



Priorities:

1: Economic Development 2: Historic Preservation

- Facade Preservation Project
- Sanitation, Graffiti Removal
- Business Attraction & Retention
- Design Funds & Storefront Improvement
- Improve Street Lighting

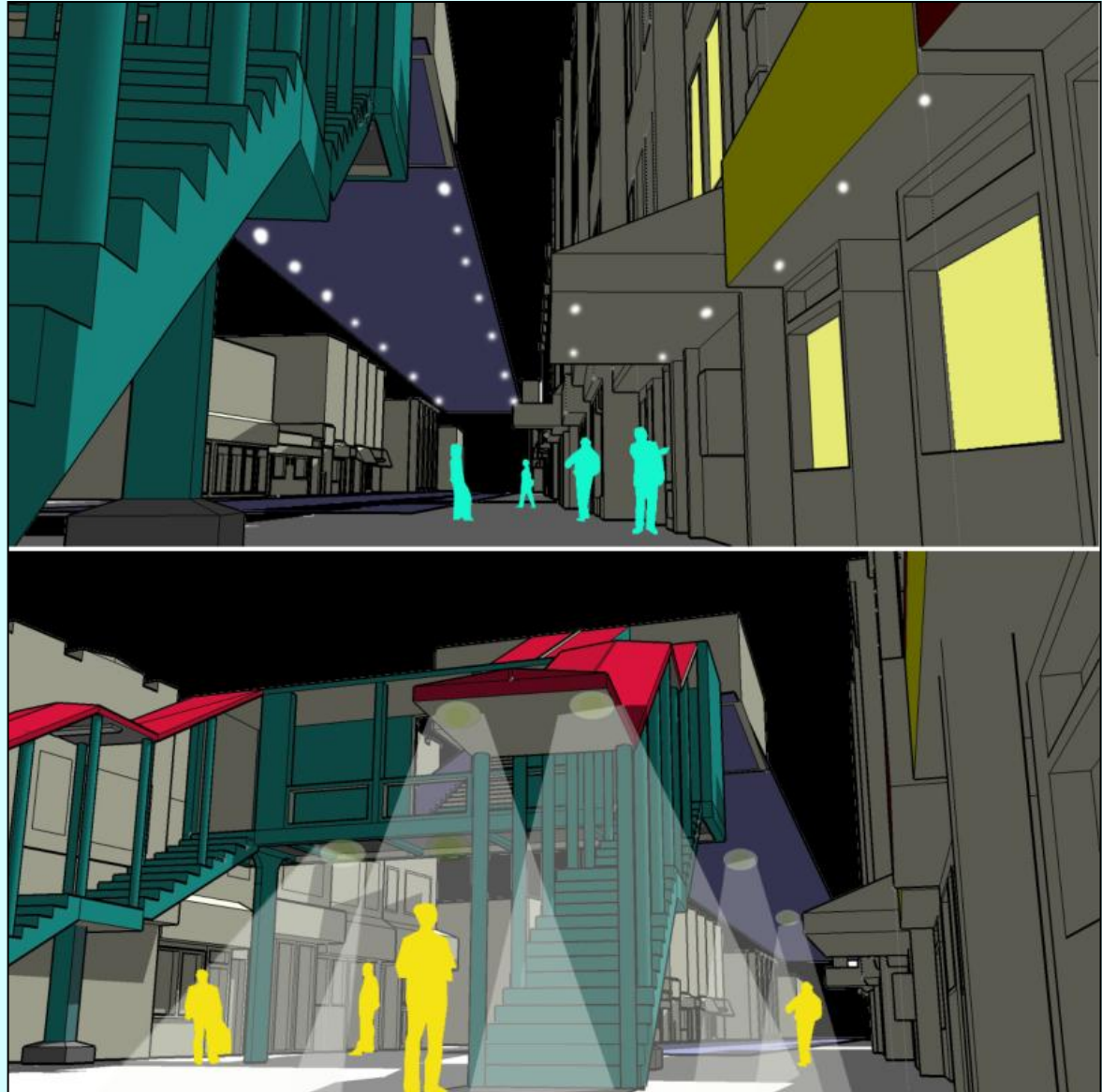
Storefront Improvement



- Use allowable FAR
- Change solid shutters into open/interior gate
- Get rid of canopy awnings
- More light
- Original windows
- Simple signs
- Plant trees

Street Lighting Plan

- Increase street lighting
- Use elevated railroad
- Use storefronts
- Make shops more attractive



Placemaking Initiative 4: Maximizing Open Space

- Provide community gathering space, beautify the neighborhood, and contribute to residents' health
- Farmer's Market
- Community Gardens

Farmers Markets



Blessed Sacrament
Parking lot, possible
site for farmer's
market

- Available government and private grants
- WIC/Farmer's Market Nutrition Program makes farmer's market shopping accessible to low-income families
- Blessed Sacrament's Church parking lot offers a perfect space for a market.



Community Gardens

- Control noise, pollution, and temperature
- Contribute to a positive community image of the neighborhood
- Create opportunities for community members to work together
- Create tangible economic and social benefits: reduced crime, higher property values, nutritious food, increased business activity



Locations for Community Gardens

- Many vacant lots on Fulton Street offer development opportunities
- Potential for them to become community gardens



Possible location opportunity

Placemaking Initiative 5: Interpretative Neighborhood Center

- A place where people can explore and connect to history of their neighborhood, and form the bonds of place-attachment
- Share and celebrate the unique cultures and peoples that have called Cypress Hills home
- Generate a greater sense of place, ownership, and pride in a neighborhood of many different groups and cultures
- Lead to a greater sense of ownership and pride in the community



Possible Activities of Interpretive Centers / Projects

- Identify traditional values and beliefs of neighborhood residents
- Record the important stories and histories of the immigrant populations

Examples

1: Story Corps conducts oral history interviews with everyday Americans in places like Grand Central or their traveling bus.

2: Photo Project provides young people with cameras and organizes them to create and present their own view of the neighborhood

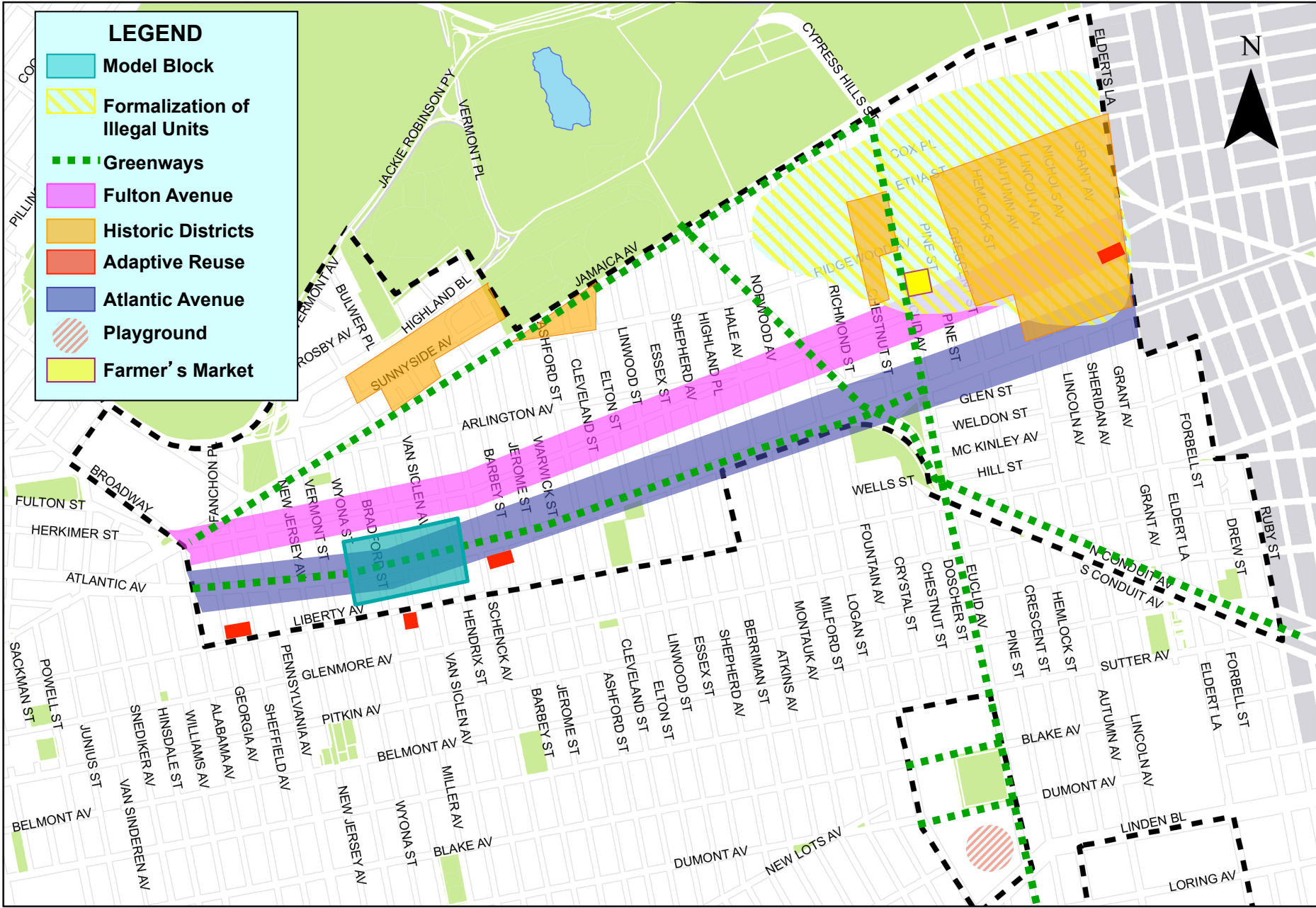
3: Cypress Hills Foodways shares traditions from different groups



Strategy 3: Public Housing

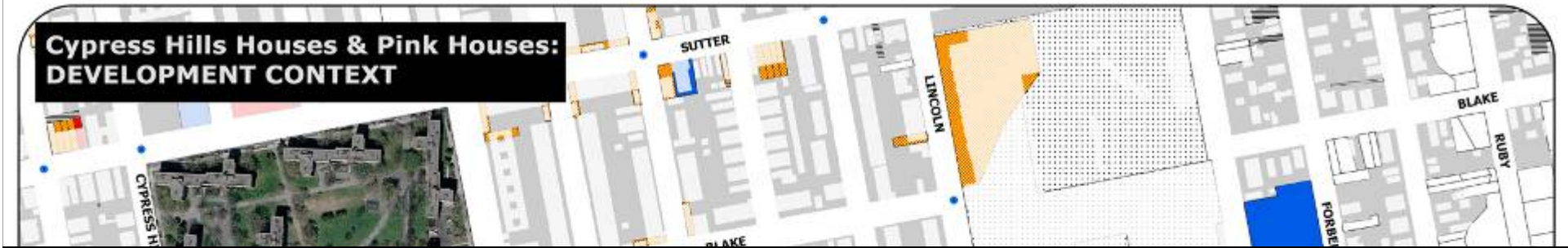
LEGEND

-  Model Block
-  Formalization of Illegal Units
-  Greenways
-  Fulton Avenue
-  Historic Districts
-  Adaptive Reuse
-  Atlantic Avenue
-  Playground
-  Farmer's Market









0 550 1,100 2,200 3,300 4,400 Feet

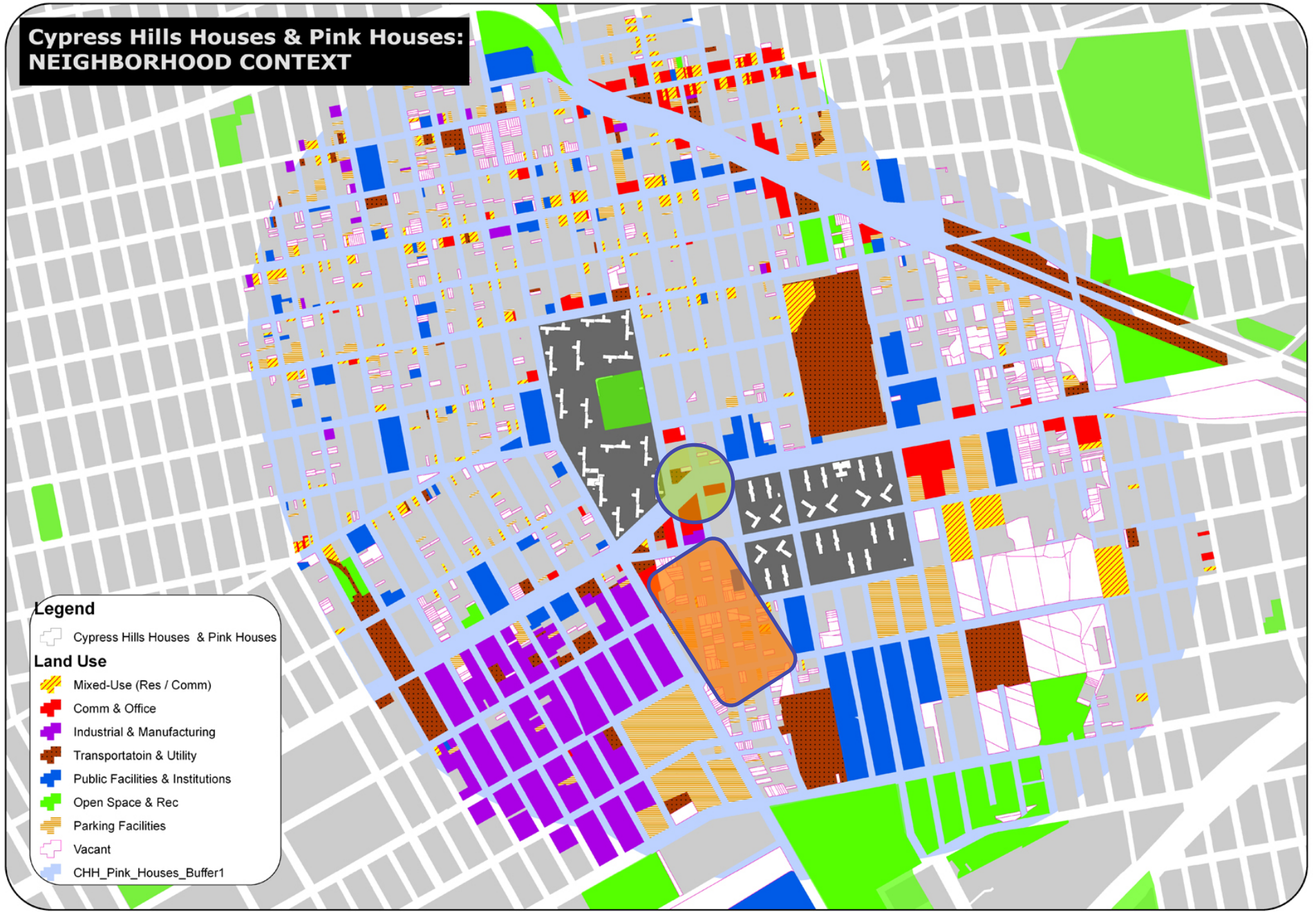
Cypress Hills Houses & Pink Houses: DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT



Cypress Hills Houses & Pink Houses: NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXT

Legend

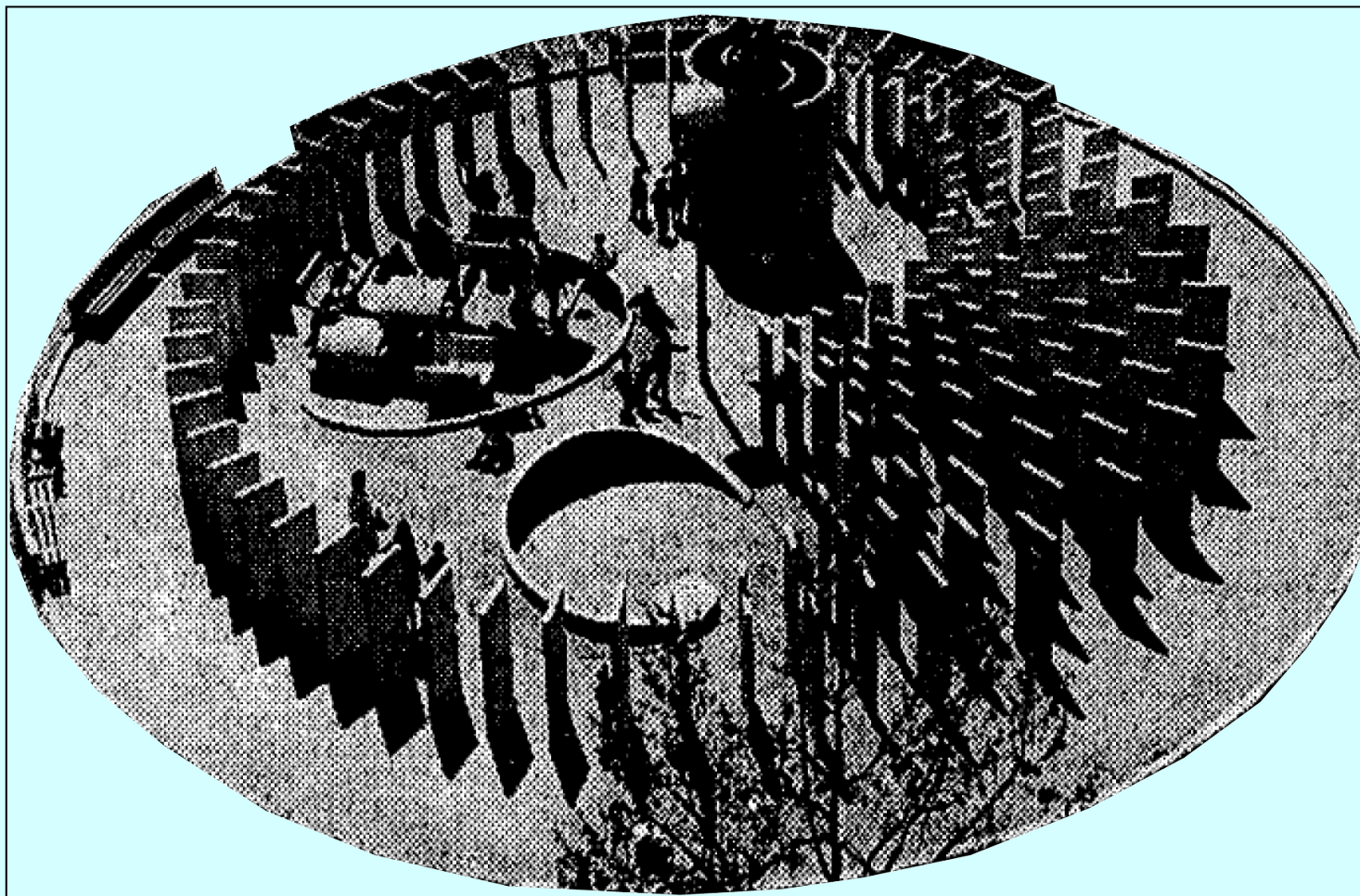
-  Cypress Hills Houses & Pink Houses
- Land Use**
-  Mixed-Use (Res / Comm)
-  Comm & Office
-  Industrial & Manufacturing
-  Transportoin & Utility
-  Public Facilities & Institutions
-  Open Space & Rec
-  Parking Facilities
-  Vacant
-  CHH_Pink_Houses_Buffer1

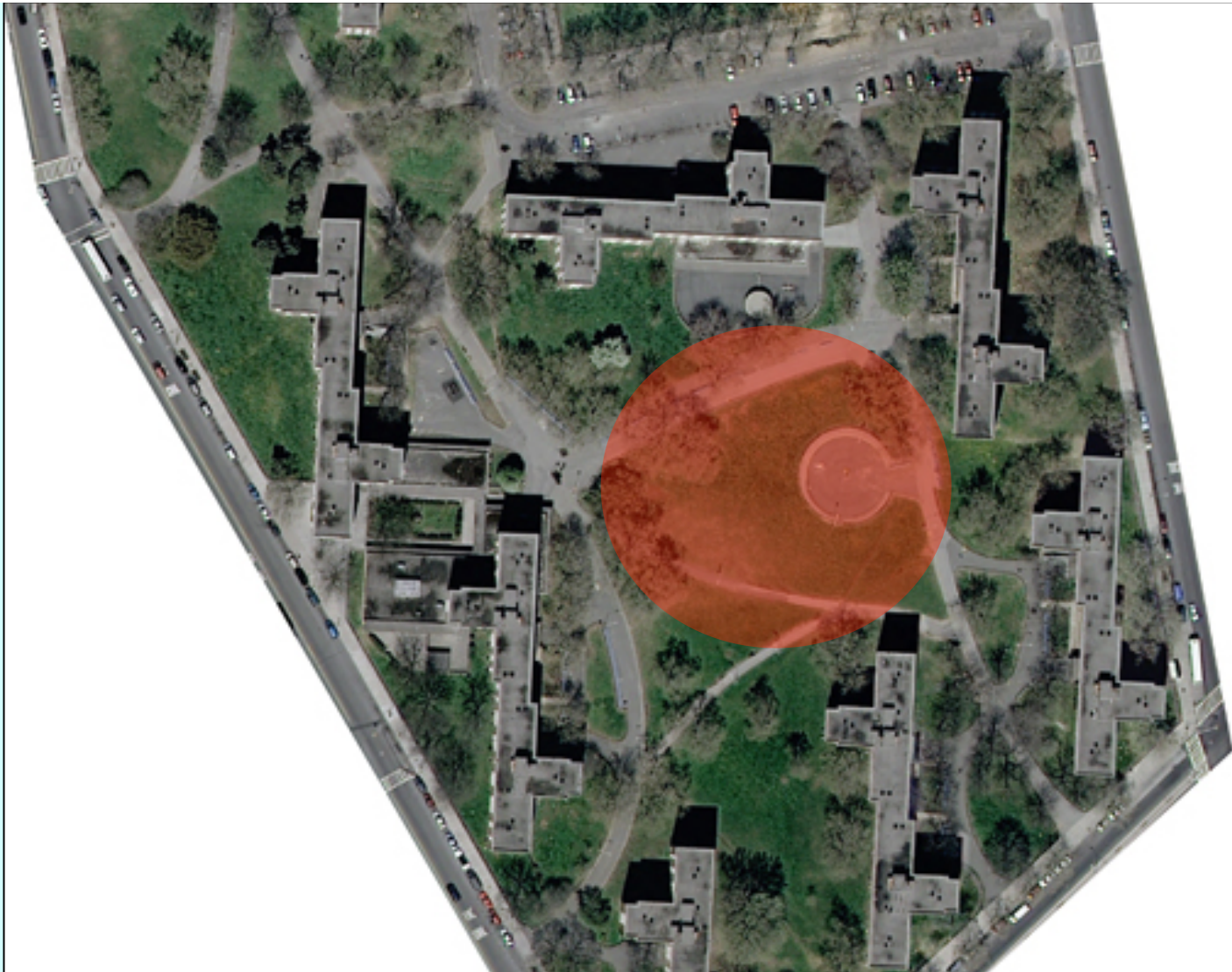




Physical Programming

Former Playground created in partnership with MoMa





Restore the former playground or introduce a programmed recreation area

Physical interventions that address the social needs of the residents:



- Greenway corridor
 - + Linden Blvd. footbridge
 - + Playground
 - + Grocery store
-

= Improved Quality of life

***Strategy 4:
Formalizing Illegal Units***

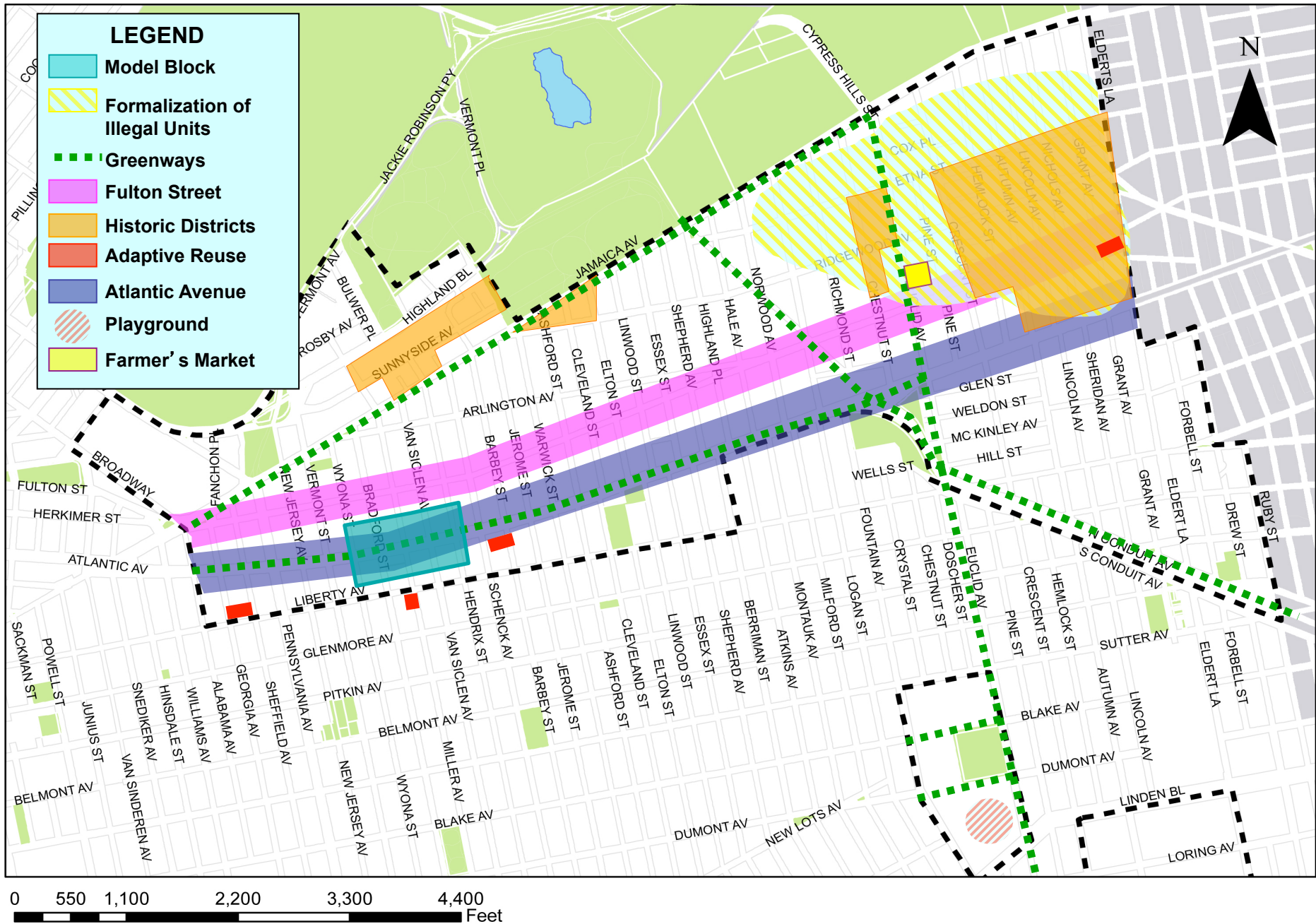
Conditions ripe for “accessory dwelling unit” experiment



- Row houses
built 1900 – 1920
- handful of architects
 - handful of builders



- Despite significant variations
- standard sets of plans
 - used over and over
 - block after block



Conclusions



- A balanced and comprehensive vision for the entire neighborhood
- CHLDC's critical role
- Neighborhood stability and growth for the current and future residents of Cypress Hills