



**MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD SIX**

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**Mark Thompson**  
Chair

**Toni Carlina**  
District Manager

**Charles Buchwald**  
Vice Chair

December 5, 2011

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Vice Chair

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DEP

**Beatrice Disman**  
Treasurer

New York, NY 10007

59-17 Junction Blvd

**Aaron Humphrey**  
Secretary

Flushing, NY 11373

Dear Sirs:

Mark Thompson, Board Chair, requested Mr. Fred Arcaro, Chair of the Board’s Public Safety, Environment & Transportation Committee, to produce the following comments based upon a meeting held on November 22, 2011 with representatives from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), Department of Design & Construction (DDC) and the Department of Transportation (DOT) to discuss the trunk water main route and the construction, for shaft site 33b of the Third Water Tunnel.

- DOT has placed, what the board believes to be, unreasonable restrictions and conditions on the placement of the second route, thereby unnecessarily eliminating the use of E. 61<sup>st</sup> Street between 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenues as the water main connection route.
- DOT states due to the high traffic volume during peak hours it must maintain all three traffic lanes on East 61<sup>st</sup> Street. Since only three lanes exist on East 61<sup>st</sup> Street, this would require the plating and re-plating of the one 48” water main trench that needs to be dug, thus increasing the time and cost of construction.
- DOT requires 10 feet of street space for general traffic.

At the meeting, DEP stated that the Philip Habib traffic study prepared for the NYC Department of Design & Construction is flawed. Being that the Community Board, an official New York City agency, was not involved in any of the agency planning meetings, as required by the NYC Charter, Community Board Six is requesting a thorough explanation of the basis of why DEP has claimed that the study is flawed and would like to see all data used to determine the use of E. 58<sup>th</sup> Street, and requests that a new traffic study be conducted for E. 58<sup>th</sup> Street.

- Philip Habib & Associates was chosen by DEP because it is a respected traffic consulting firm that has worked for public agencies on numerous occasions. The study states two lanes - rather than three - would suffice for general traffic use. Therefore, there would be no need for plating and re-plating of the water main trench. This would greatly reduce the time and cost for construction of the water main.
- As background information, according to DEP’s EIS (2008), Chapter 4 (Traffic and Parking) Fig. 4.9-7, traffic volume for E. 58<sup>th</sup> Street between First and Second Avenues, DEP’s preferred route at AM peak hour (no build) is 726 vehicles (see

Exhibit #1). The alternate route could be on E. 61<sup>st</sup> Street between First and Second Avenues. In 2009, Philip Habib & Associates did a traffic study for E. 61<sup>st</sup> Street between First and Second Avenues depicting weekday AM peak hours. The study found that traffic was 579 vehicles per hour between First and midblock, and between the midblock and Second Avenue the traffic volume is 819 vehicles per hour (see Exhibit #2).

- The traffic volume on E. 61<sup>st</sup> Street can be substantially reduced to approximately 300 vehicles if the following traffic mitigation measures are taken:
  - Close the northbound midblock street between E. 60<sup>th</sup> and E. 61<sup>st</sup> Street located between First and Second Avenues. That street is used primarily for traffic exiting the Edward I Koch Queensboro (aka 59<sup>th</sup> Street) Bridge. See Exhibit #13.
  - Change the DOT street sign at the northwest corner of the Midblock Street and E. 60<sup>th</sup> Street from “No Left Turn except Buses” to “Left turn for Cars and Buses”; allowing vehicles exiting the 59<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge needing to go west to use E. 60<sup>th</sup> Street instead of E. 61<sup>st</sup> Street. (See Exhibit #3).
  - Since the midblock street would be closed to traffic from the one lane bridge exit (see Exhibit #14 marked up) traffic could be directed to use E. 60<sup>th</sup> Street to go west once the sign has been changed. The traffic volume on E. 61<sup>st</sup> between midblock and Second Ave. would then be 579 during peak, and would be maintained past the midblock street. This reduced traffic volume would be less than on E. 58<sup>th</sup> Street which is 726 during AM peak periods. See Exhibit #2, #4 and #13 marked up.
  - The now closed midblock street could be used as a construction staging area, thus reducing the need to take roadbed space along E. 61<sup>st</sup> Street.
  - DOT could further mitigate traffic volume on E. 61<sup>st</sup> Street by having signage to alert traffic that E. 61<sup>st</sup> Street should be avoided and direct traffic to alternate west bound streets.
  - At the northeast corner of E. 61<sup>st</sup> Street and First Avenue, place an Alternate Route sign directing all westbound traffic to use E. 63<sup>rd</sup> Street. See Exhibit #5
  - This diversion of traffic would reduce traffic flow on E. 61<sup>st</sup> Street between First and Second Avenues to approximately 215 and between Second and Third Avenues and to approximately 389 during AM peak hours. See Exhibits #2 & #5
  - With traffic volume being reduced to a maximum of 389, only two traffic lanes (which would be for cars only) would be more than enough for general traffic
- DOT requires 10' for traffic and for surface equipment vehicles---that requirement is fine for permanent street conditions and could be relaxed to 8' on a temporary bases. If DOT further restricted traffic to cars only and puts caution signage stating “narrow lanes ahead” are in place, this would increase safety for motorist. By reducing the traffic lanes to 8', a third car lane can be accommodated to be explained later

DDC construction conditions are unnecessarily restrictive:

- NYC DDC maintains that, on E. 61<sup>st</sup> Street, they need about 20' to install the one-48" water main. This requirement seems to be unreasonable
- Due to safety concerns, DDC requires that jersey barriers be located between the surface equipment vehicles lane and traffic lane to provide storage of equipment or construction trucks; resulting in the loss of one traffic lane during off-peak hours and leaving only one lane for general traffic. This requirement seems to be inconsistent with previous DDC practices. See Exhibit #6
- The above unnecessary requirement would consume two lanes for general traffic.
  - This requirement is inconsistent with DEP's EIS chapter 5, Fig. 5.1-4 for one 48" water main, which requires a total of 16'6" of street space during off-peak hours. This space requirement would put the jersey barriers between the water main construction trench and 8' surface equipment lane. See Exhibit #6.
  - If DDC would use 1' x 1' x 10' long wooden beams (used in many road construction projects; see Exhibits #7 and 8) instead of 2'6" wide jersey barriers then 1'6" of roadway would be gained for general traffic, resulting in a total of 27' of additional street space during peak hours. Having an additional 27' would be enough for three 9' wide lanes, one foot less than required by DOT for permanent lane installation requirement. See Exhibit #8 marked up

- DDC's safety concerns are inconsistent with a photograph indicating placement of jersey barriers next to one 48" water main trench at the Houston Street project (This was depicted with photographs of the Houston Street project at the presentation for CB6 "Reconstruction of Trunk Water Mains along East 59<sup>th</sup> Street" dated Feb. 2, 2010; see Exhibit #9 (marked up)). Also see Exhibits #10 and #11 showing the jersey barriers next to the water main trench for the installation of the first water main on E. 59<sup>th</sup> Street.
- If DDC is still concerned with safety during off-peak hours, it should consider the use of temporary plastic easily movable jersey barriers used in many road construction projects. Plastic barriers are cheaper to use than concrete. Additionally, DDC could use caution lights and other cautionary devices, which may be more appropriate for this location. See Exhibit #10 and #12 (marked up).
- Representative DDC stated that the valve in Shaft 33B for the second water main is already facing south, in preparation for a southerly water main route, making the southerly route a fait accompli.
- If DOT does not want to divert car traffic coming from First Avenue going onto E. 61<sup>st</sup> Street, then three 9' lanes should be able to handle cars only traffic. This would require the streets being restricted to non-construction truck traffic for the duration of the project.
- If DOT still requires two 10' lanes for general traffic and DOT diverts traffic east of E. 61<sup>st</sup> Street and First Ave. from going onto E. 61<sup>st</sup> Street, then 27' of roadway on E. 61<sup>st</sup> Street between First and Third Avenues would be more than enough to accommodate two 10' general traffic lanes.
- In either of these scenarios, there would be no need for DDC to plate and re-plate the water main trench. This would reduce construction and labor costs significantly; there would be no need to work during weekends and week nights reducing overtime
- According to Verizon and Empire (Cable TV), they have much more infrastructure equipment to relocate from E. 58<sup>th</sup> Street than on E. 61<sup>st</sup> Street, at their cost, that would then be passed on to New York consumers in the form of rate increases. Using E. 61<sup>st</sup> for the second water main would eliminate such additional construction cost. Verizon has also stated that it would consider contributing to the cost to locate the main on E 61<sup>st</sup> Street rather than E 58<sup>th</sup> Street, since this would be a less expensive option for them and eliminate an additional 4-year relocation project that would need to be completed before any water main work could start on 58<sup>th</sup> Street.

Yours truly,



Mark Thompson  
Chair

*Fred Arcaro*

Fred Arcaro  
Chair  
Public Safety, Environment  
& Transportation Cmte.

cc: Hon. Bill de Blasio  
Hon. John Lui  
Hon. Scott Stringer  
Hon. Carolyn Maloney  
Hon. Tom Duane  
Hon. Liz Krueger  
Hon. Richard Gottfried  
Hon. Brian Kavanagh  
Hon. Dan Quart  
Hon. Dan Garodnick  
Hon. Jessica Lappin

Hon. Rosie Mendez  
David J. Burney – DDC Commsr  
Janette Sadik Khan – DOT Commsr.  
Margaret Forgione – DOT Boro Commsr.  
John Marton – DOT  
Matthew Mahoney – DEP  
Mark Lanagan – DEP  
Jim Garin – DEP  
Florence Kelly - -SAC  
Gail Haft – SAC  
Linda Saputelli – E50's\CC

(encl #)

Please scroll down for second Letter with additional information and exhibits.



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December 29, 2011

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Carter H. Strickland Jr.  
Commissioner  
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59-17 Junction Blvd  
Flushing, NY 11373

Dear Sirs:

Mark Thompson, Chair of Manhattan Community Board Six (“CB6”), requested that Fred Arcaro, Chair of the CB6 Public Safety, Environment & Transportation Committee, summarize CB6’s conclusions regarding the second water main construction route. The attached report was issued earlier, but this cover memo recaps that report’s conclusions and includes additional information.

- The New York City Department of Transportation (“DOT”) has placed what CB6 and local residents believe to be unreasonable traffic restrictions and conditions on the installation of the water main on East 61<sup>st</sup> St between 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenues, thereby unnecessarily eliminating that route as a viable option. CB6 has demonstrated that with minimal traffic mitigation efforts and associated signage, 61<sup>st</sup> St is a viable route for the second water main.
- New York City Department of Design and Construction (“DDC”) has placed unnecessary construction conditions for the water main installation that would exacerbate traffic conditions. CB6 developed a construction plan what would eliminate the construction trench plating and re-plating, significantly reducing time and cost. In addition, the plan would create three 9-foot-wide/cars-only traffic lanes (as required by DOT; these would be one foot less than DOT’s standard width).
- New York City Department of Environmental Protection (“DEP”) cites East 58<sup>th</sup> St as the preferred water main route versus East 61<sup>st</sup> St for the following reasons:
  - East 61<sup>st</sup> St has more traffic volume and it cannot be mitigated; *close analysis has proven otherwise.*
  - Moving utilities from East 58<sup>th</sup> St would cost less than 61<sup>st</sup> St; *per Verizon and Empire City Subway representatives this is false.*
  - DEP would use similar traffic mitigation efforts as on 59<sup>th</sup> St, as follows:
    - East 59<sup>th</sup> St was made one-way westbound between 1<sup>st</sup> – 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenues. Eastbound traffic was detoured to East 58<sup>th</sup> St.

- East 59<sup>th</sup> St was closed to through-traffic on weekends. According to DEP (10/11 presentation to CB6) East 58<sup>th</sup> St must be closed during “weekends and possibly overnight within specific phases of the overall construction.”  
**This requirement is the main cause of construction cost.**
- Midblock on 58<sup>th</sup> St between 1st and 2nd Avenues is an entrance to the Queensboro Bridge. *This major entrance would have to be closed during construction for the water main installation.*

All of the obstacles cited above would not happen if DEP returned to its original plan, as accepted by the community, and uses 61<sup>st</sup> St as the route for the second water main.

Yours truly,

*Mark Thompson*

Mark Thompson  
Chair

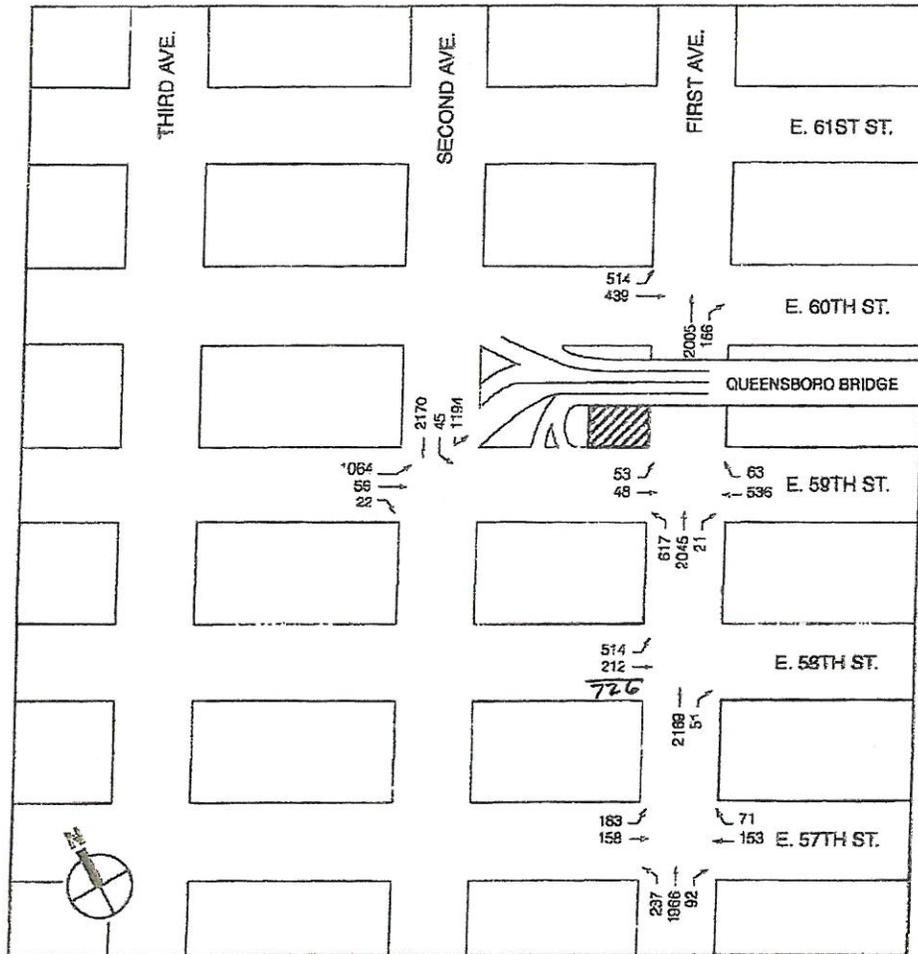
*Fred Arcaro*

Fred Arcaro  
Chair  
Public Safety, Environment  
& Transportation Cmte.

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Hon. Carolyn Maloney  
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Jim Garin – DEP  
Florence Kelly - -SAC  
Gail Haft – SAC  
Linda Saputelli – E50’s\CC

(encl #)



NOT TO SCALE

Legend:

 Preferred Shaft 338 Site



NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION  
 PROPOSED SHAFT 338 TO CITY WATER TUNNEL NO. 3  
 STAGE 2-MANHATTAN LEG  
 PREFERRED SHAFT SITE  
 2038 NO BUILD TRAFFIC VOLUME NETWORK, SHAFT STUDY AREA  
 AM PEAK HOUR

FIGURE 4.9-7

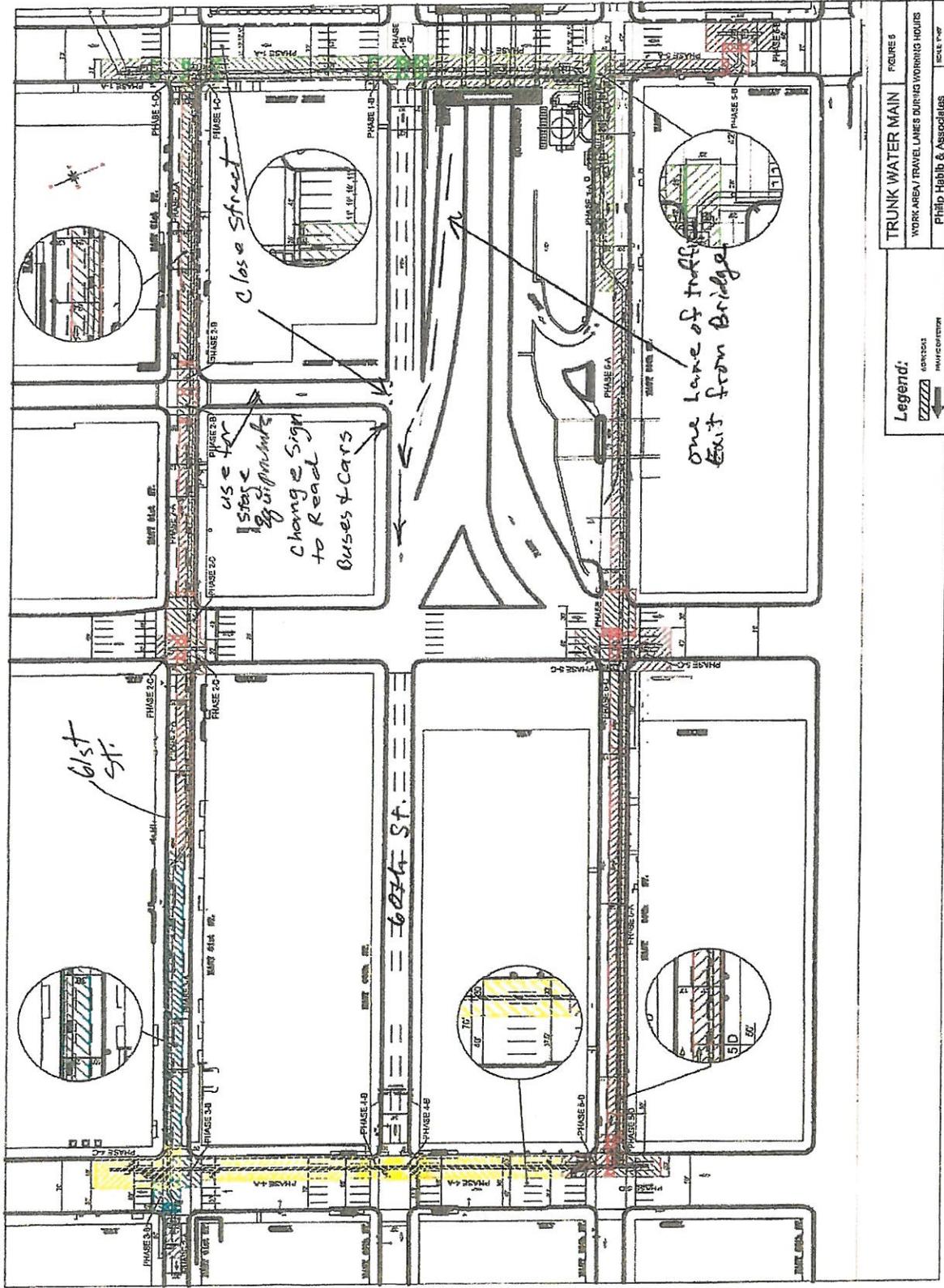
Ex. #1



Ex #3

*change sign*

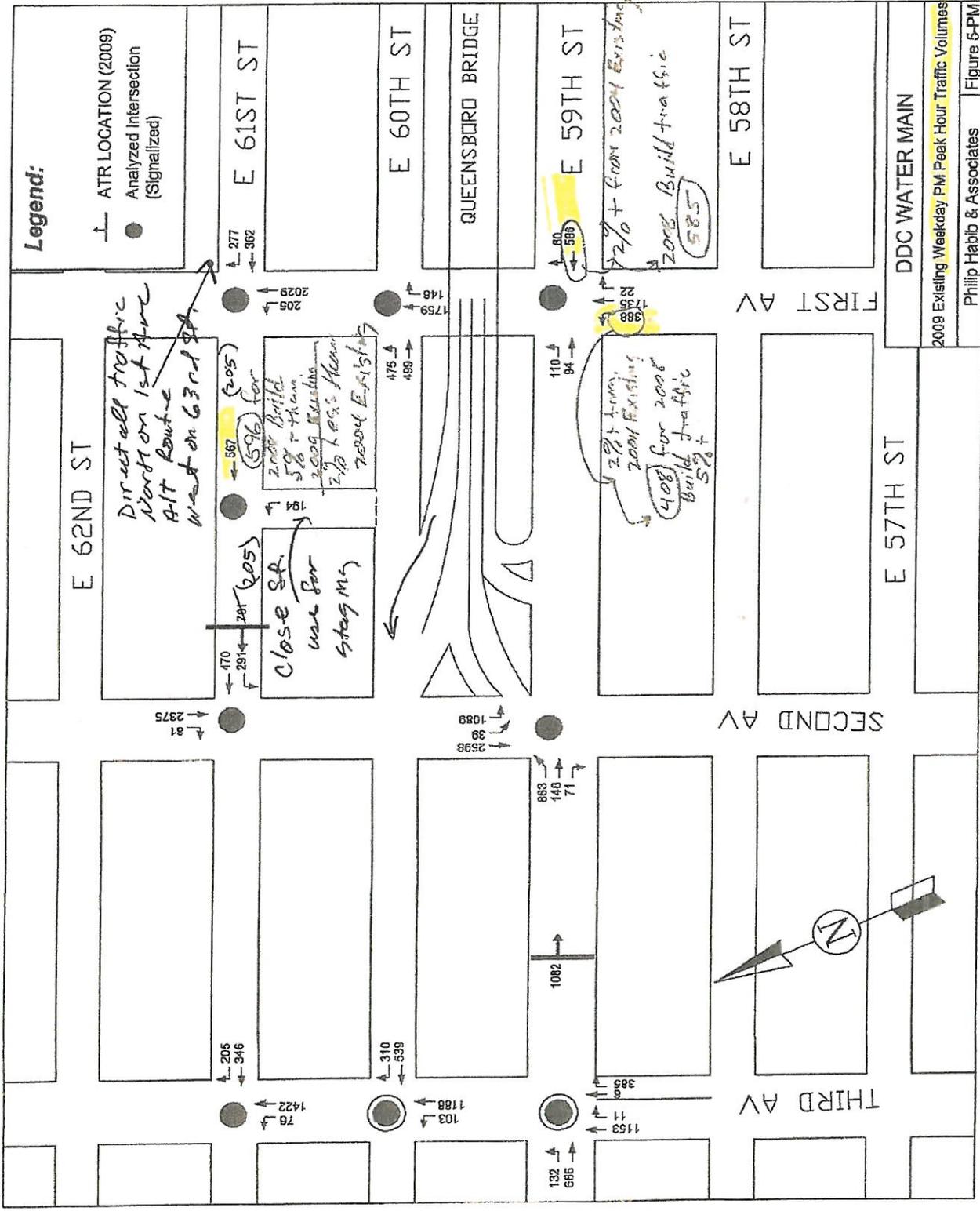




TRUNK WATER MAIN  
 WORK AREA / TRAVEL LANES DURING WORKING HOURS  
 Philip Habib & Associates  
 SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"

Legend:  
 ADVANCE  
 IN/OUT/STAY

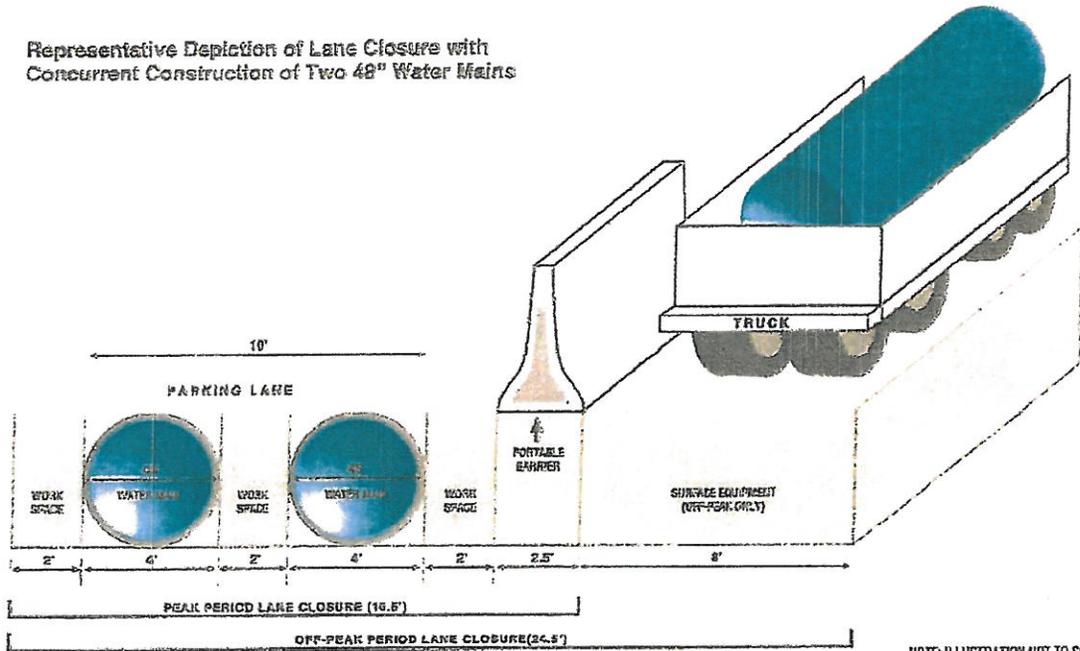
Ex # 4



Ex # 5

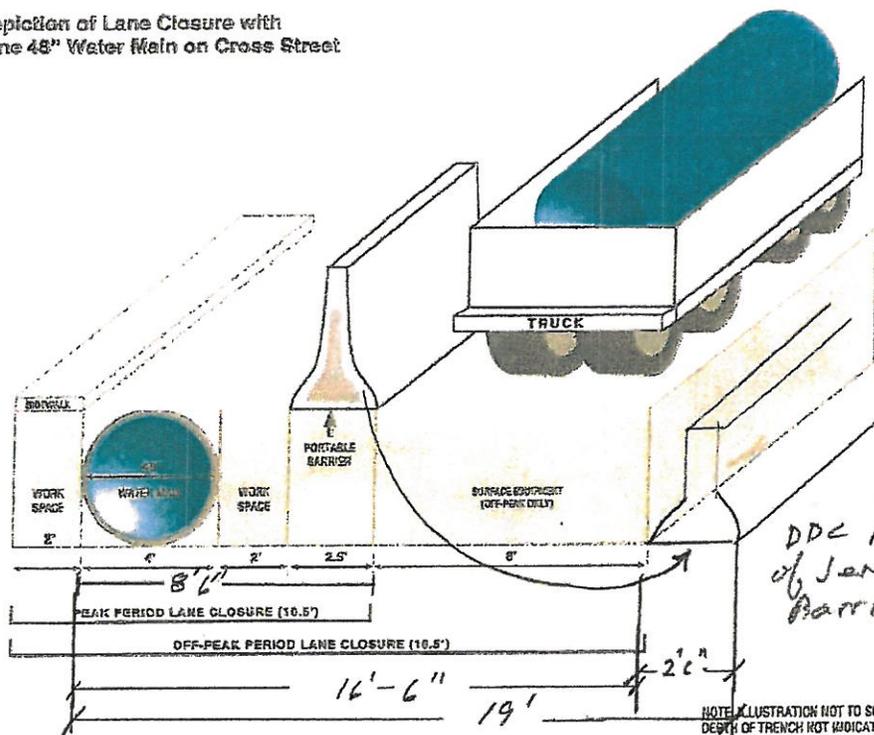
2009 Existing Weekday PM Peak Hour Traffic Volumes  
Philip Habib & Associates | Figure 6-PM

Representative Depiction of Lane Closure with Concurrent Construction of Two 48" Water Mains



NOTE: ILLUSTRATION NOT TO SCALE  
DEPTH OF TRENCH NOT INDICATED

Representative Depiction of Lane Closure with Construction of One 48" Water Main on Cross Street



*DDC placing of Jersey Barriers*

NOTE: ILLUSTRATION NOT TO SCALE  
DEPTH OF TRENCH NOT INDICATED



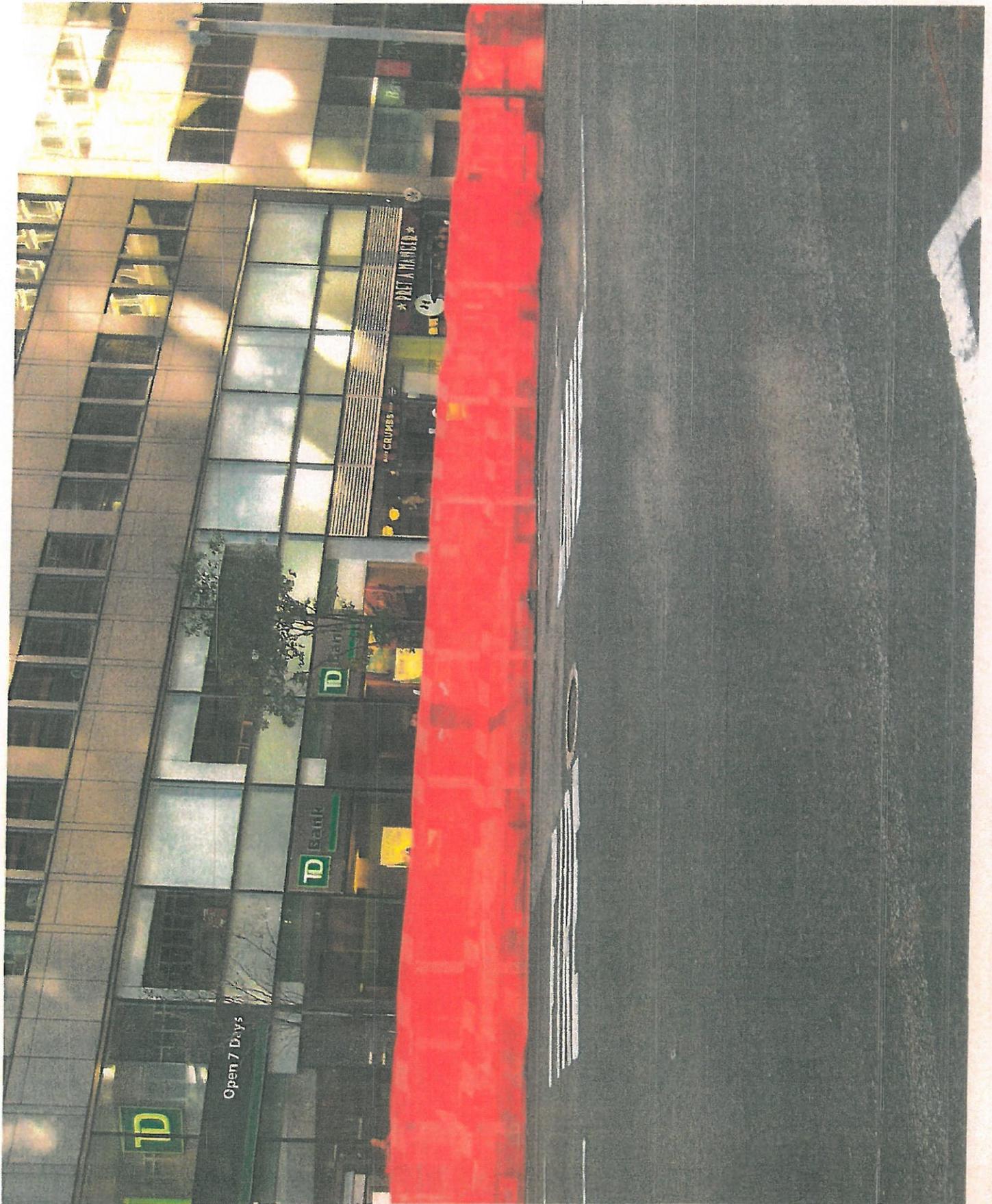
NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION  
PROPOSED SHAFT 33B TO CITY WATER TUNNEL NO. 3  
STAGE 2-MANHATTAN LEG  
WATER MAIN CONNECTIONS

REPRESENTATIVE LANE CLOSURES  
CONSTRUCTION OF WATER MAINS

FIGURE S.1-4

*Ex # 6*

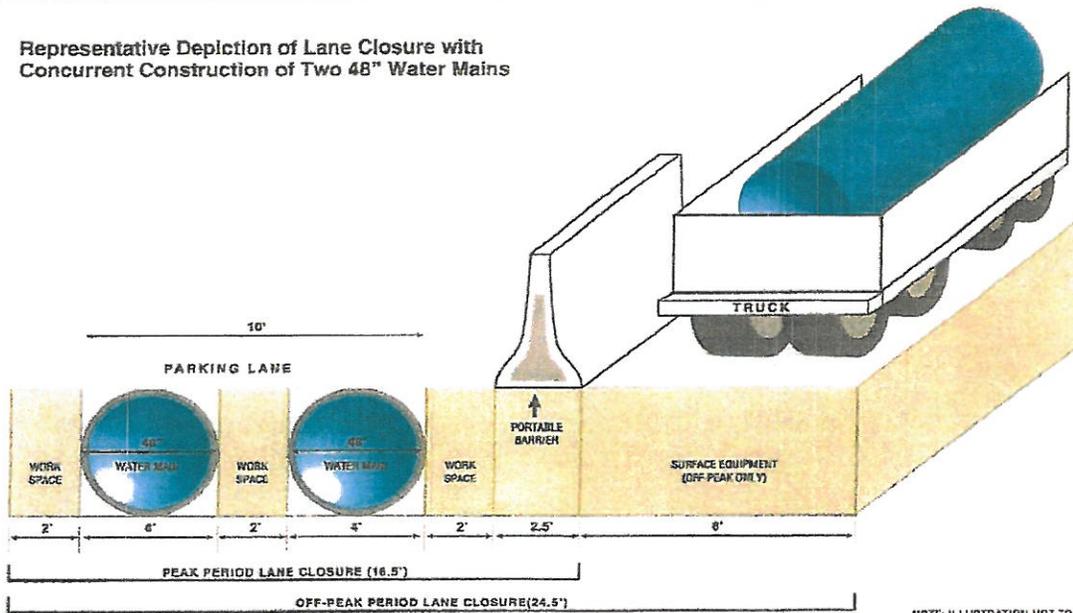
Ex #7



Ex #8

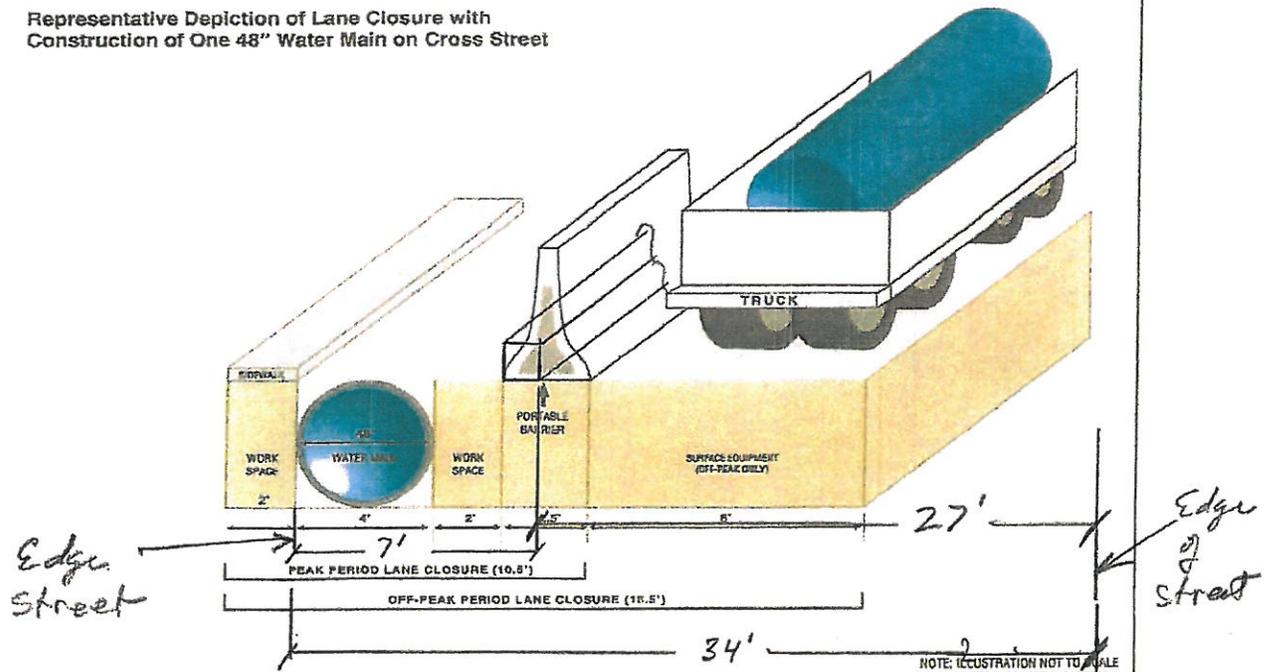


Representative Depiction of Lane Closure with Concurrent Construction of Two 48" Water Mains



NOTE: ILLUSTRATION NOT TO SCALE  
DEPTH OF TRENCH NOT INDICATED

Representative Depiction of Lane Closure with Construction of One 48" Water Main on Cross Street



NOTE: ILLUSTRATION NOT TO SCALE  
DEPTH OF TRENCH NOT INDICATED



NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION  
PROPOSED SHAFT 33B TO CITY WATER TUNNEL NO. 3  
STAGE 2-MANHATTAN LEG  
WATER MAIN CONNECTIONS  
REPRESENTATIVE LANE CLOSURES  
CONSTRUCTION OF WATER MAINS

FIGURE 5.1-4

Ex #8

# WHAT TO EXPECT

NEW 48" TRUNK WATER MAIN – HOUSTON STREET

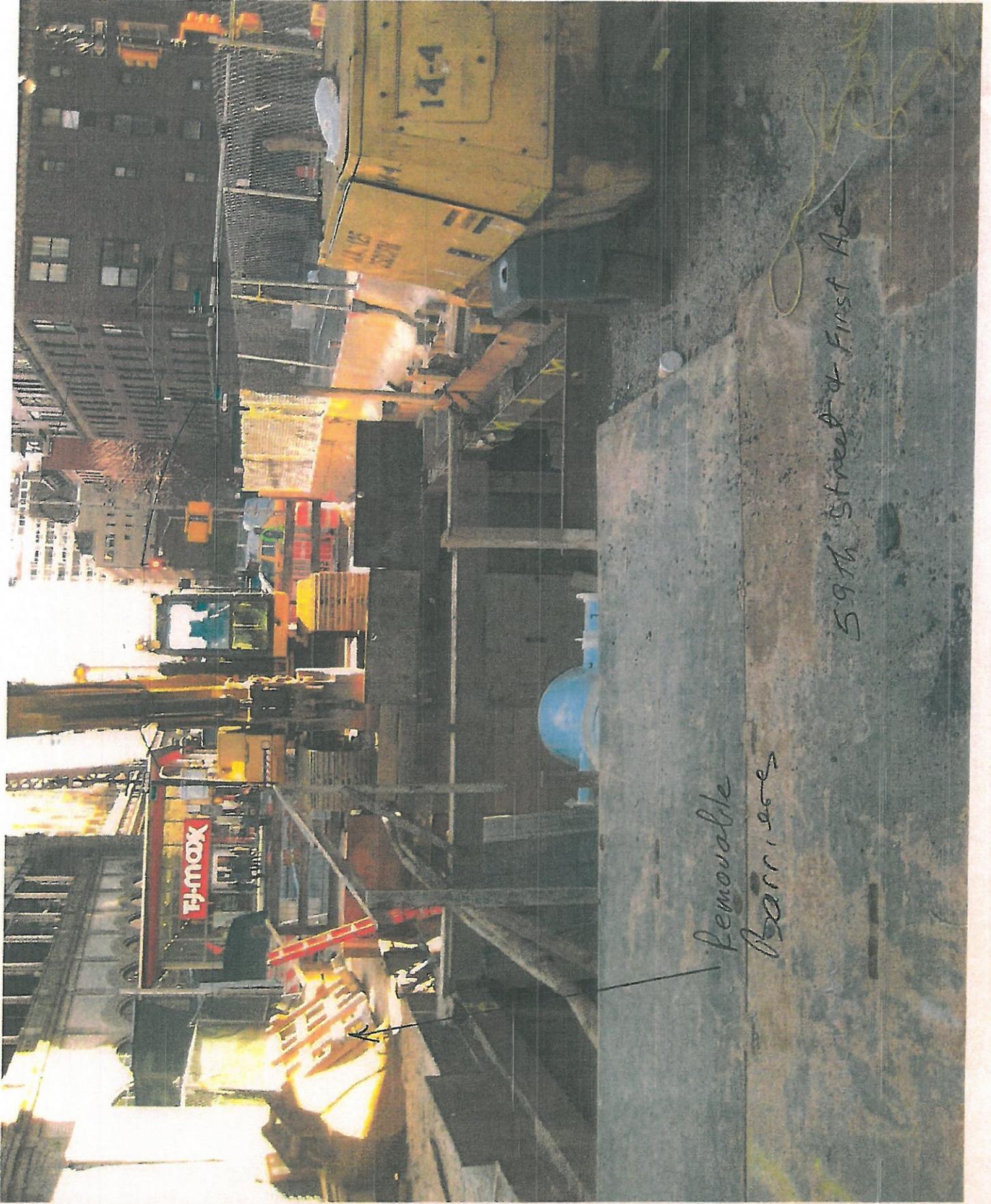
*Jersey  
Barriers*



RECONSTRUCTION OF TRUNK WATER MAINS ON EAST 59TH STREET  
Project ID: MED600

*Ex #9*

Box #10



Removable  
Barriers

59th Street & First Ave

Ex  
#11

590th Street  
near 2nd Ave.



Old of 200  
270 1304

14#

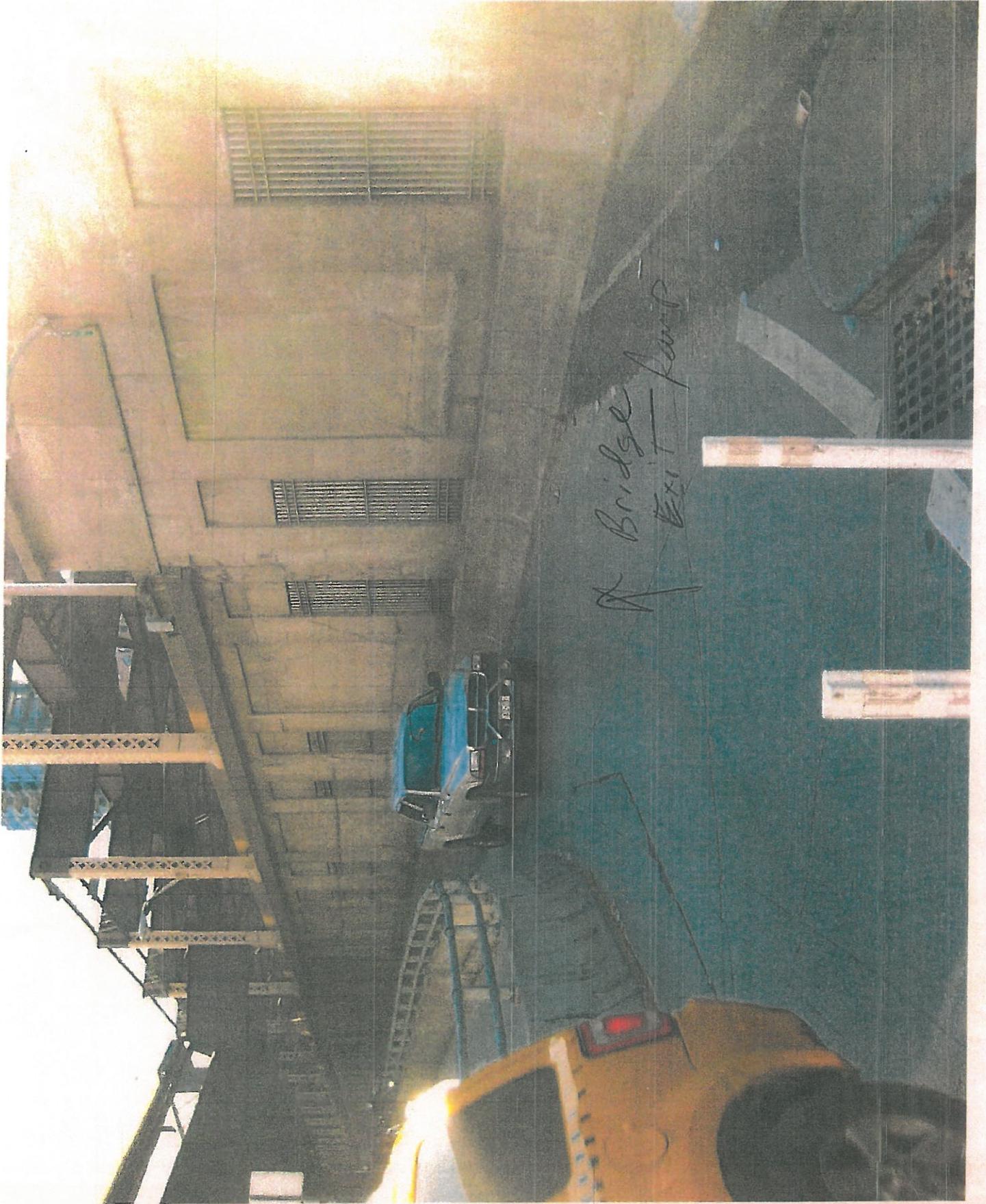


54 #13



Street to  
close

Ex July 605



Bridge  
Exit ramp

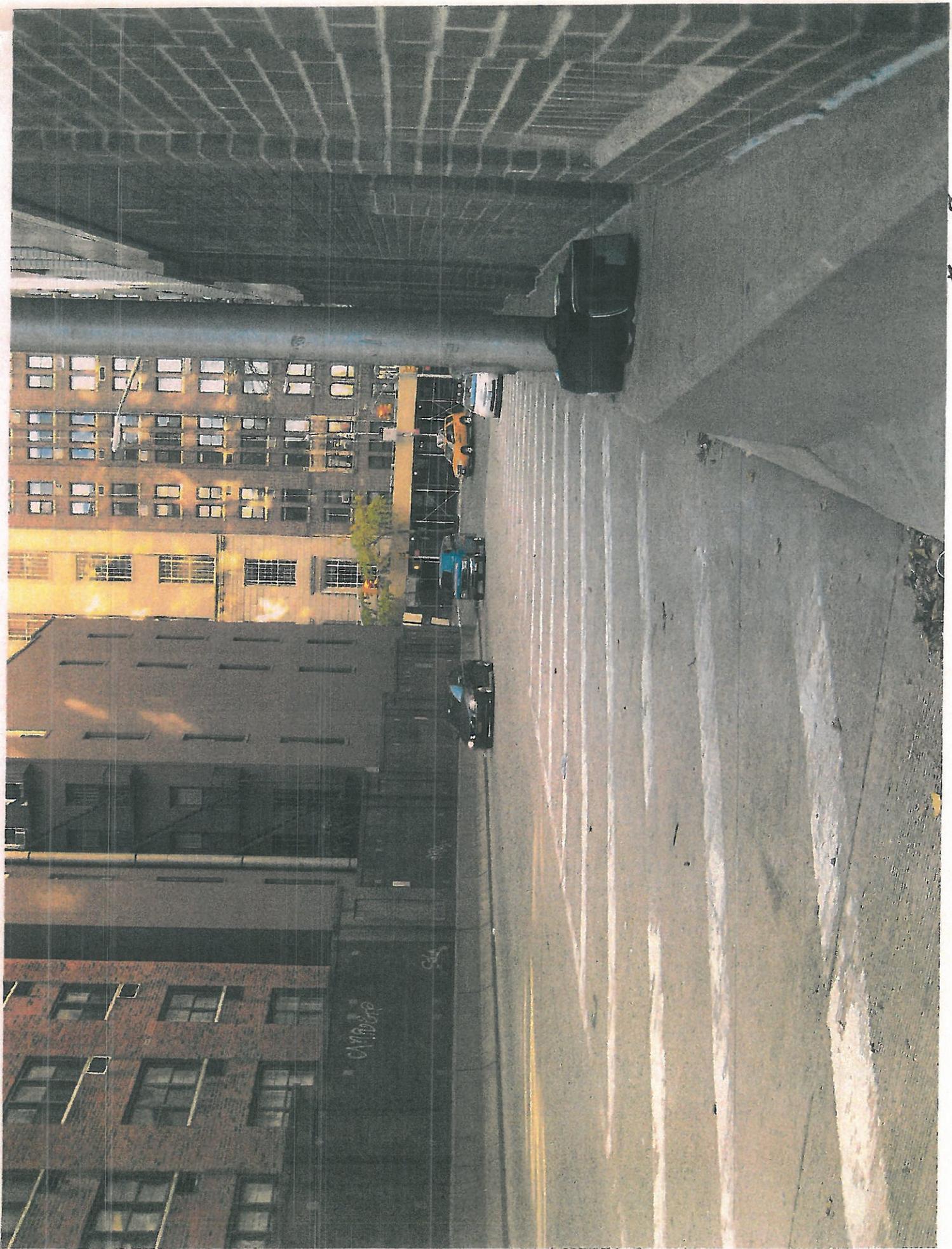


Ex #15





117



2-18