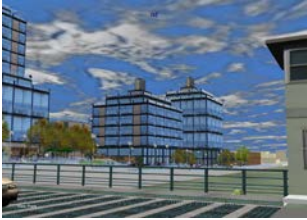


Gowanus at Carroll Gardens Mixed-Use Development

Brooklyn, NY



The Gowanus Canal, a former estuary, was created in the 19th Century to provide access to a developing and ultimately thriving industrial area. During the last decades of the 20th Century, many of the industrial uses which relied on barge transportation have waned, particularly in the upstream areas adjacent to the historic Carroll Gardens community. The site being proposed for mixed-use redevelopment is a former depot which had relied on barges for supply and distribution. City policy regarding industrial retention and subsequent Department of City Planning have deemed this site and others upstream sites appropriate for redevelopment with the remainder designated for industrial use and job retention.

Client:
Jobco

Project Director:
Michael Kwartler

Collaborators:
Matthews Nielsen (Landscape)
RKT&B Architects

Completed:
2010

The site is comprised of two blocks, bordering the canal on one side and Carroll Gardens on the other, and a 12 foot rise in elevation along the canal frontage. Given the public policy to redevelop this portion of the canal, the urban design concept is to create and identify what is unique to the Gowanus Canal, include a range of building types (eg., rowhouses, live-work lofts, elderly, affordable, and family housing), that would mediate between Carroll Gardens adjacent and upland blocks of 19th Century 3 to 5 story rowhouses, and provide generous, publicly accessible open space along the canal that could ultimately link to a continuous system of fronting open space. The public open space designed provides two types of spaces, one primarily urbane with fronting ground floor uses, such as cafes, at the higher elevation and green landscape spaces for passive recreation along the canal employing, where practical, estuary plants. The building's architectural expressions are traditional masonry adjacent to Carroll Gardens and industrial-like steel frame building blocks, representing the Canal's industrial tradition.

The entire project was designed using interactive 3D modeling, which supported real-time simulation throughout the design process to evaluate alternative configurations, maximize sunlight on public open spaces, evaluate upland connections to the canal, and design of an innovative response to flood plain constraints. The real-time simulations have been shared with the Department of City Planning and the public as part of the city's current re-zoning activities.