



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
NEW YORK, N. Y. 10007

EDWARD SKYLER
DEPUTY MAYOR FOR ADMINISTRATION

To: Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg

From: Edward Skyler *ES*

Date: June 1, 2007

Re: WTC Human Remains Recovery Update

We continue to make steady progress in the expanded search for human remains that has been under way at the World Trade Center (WTC) site and surrounding area since October 2006. Most notably, we have nearly completed excavations at the WTC site and the Office of Chief Medical Examiner (OCME) has completed the search of 130 Liberty Street (Deutsche Bank). We have removed approximately 12,000 cubic yards of material from the WTC site and surrounding area for sifting at 39th Street Pier and 11 Water Street in Brooklyn. Of that amount, approximately 8,400 cubic yards (70%) have been sifted and OCME has recovered 646 potential human remains (PHR) in addition to the 766 PHR that were recovered from the roof of the Deutsche Bank building last spring.

This memo reviews the status of the four principal components of the search: (1) excavation and sifting of material from the Haul Road and the surrounding area; (2) excavation and sifting of material from the 140 Liberty Street parcel at the southern end of the WTC site; (3) searches and sifting of material from buildings and rooftops in the vicinity of the WTC site; and (4) evacuation and sifting of material from manholes and other subterranean structures in the vicinity of the WTC site.

1. Haul Road

The excavation of the Haul Road itself is complete and the road is once again in use by the Port Authority to support construction operations. We removed approximately 6,300 cubic yards of material from this location, which OCME finished sifting as of May 25. A total of 616 PHR were recovered from the Haul Road and surrounding area, which includes 209 PHR recovered from the Con Edison manholes where PHR were first discovered last October.

As I reported in March, the Haul Road excavation uncovered the remnants of four WTC access ramps. Three of the ramps extended into West Street and OCME had reason to believe that they could contain potential human remains. Consistent with our commitment to let the forensic evidence determine which areas are searched, we planned to close the eastern-most lane of Route 9A for one month to excavate the access ramps. That excavation commenced on April 9 and the road was re-opened two weeks ahead of schedule on April 30. Approximately 1,600 cubic yards of backfill was visually inspected during the excavation and 1,100 cubic yards of material was removed for sifting. To date, two PHR have been recovered from this location and OCME expects to complete sifting 9A material by the end of June.

In addition, as of my last report, OCME had not yet determined whether it would be necessary to evacuate three subterranean structures in the vicinity of the Haul Road: two Port Authority river-water lines and a sewer line maintained by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) that runs parallel to and beneath the Haul Road. OCME evacuated several cubic yards of material from the river-water lines and is executing a plan with the Department of Design and Construction to evacuate the remaining contents of the DEP sewer line. OCME has recovered 8 PHR from the sewer line to date, and once the rest of the line is evacuated, search operations in the vicinity of the Haul Road will be complete.

2. 140 Liberty Street Parcel

Excavation of this 0.80 acre parcel, which includes the site of the St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church, was expected to take until at least mid-July due to the presence of Port Authority trailers to support WTC operations, numerous utilities, a pedestrian footbridge and the entrance to an access ramp into the WTC bathtub. Despite these complications, the excavation was completed ahead of schedule on May 25 and the pedestrian bridge remained open for the duration of the operation. OCME recovered eight PHR during the excavation and we removed approximately 4,600 cubic yards of material for sifting, of which approximately 2,800 cubic yards remain to be examined.

3. Buildings and Rooftops

As of my last report, the rooftops of 130 Cedar Street and Fiterman Hall and the first five floors of 130 Liberty Street (Deutsche Bank) remained to be searched. The searches of the first five floors of Deutsche Bank commenced on March 15 and were completed as of Tuesday, May 29. With the exception of any additional material that could be found during deconstruction—which is covered by existing protocols—the search operation at Deutsche Bank is complete. OCME recovered 19 PHR from material found on a ledge on an upper floor, which is in addition to the 766 PHR recovered from the rooftop of Deutsche Bank last spring.

Full searches of the rooftops of 130 Cedar Street and Fiterman Hall await final regulatory approval, though two PHR were recovered from the rooftop of 130 Cedar

Street during an initial inspection. In addition, OCME has determined that an approximately 8-inch gap between 130 Cedar Street and 90 West Street should be searched for potential human remains. OCME is developing a search plan with DEP and working with building owners and residents to get the necessary approvals. We anticipate that these remaining searches will be completed quickly once they begin.

4. Subterranean Structures

As of my last report, Con Edison, Verizon and DEP had identified a total of 649 subterranean structures outside the WTC site to be searched and we had evacuated material from 53 (8%). Since that time, the total number of structures to be searched has been revised to 637 due to the continual refinement of the inventory of existing structures by Con Edison, Verizon and DEP. To date we have evacuated approximately 85 cubic yards of material from 506 (79%) structures and one PHR has been recovered.

Of the 131 subterranean structures that remain, the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) estimates that as many as 50 may have been removed during prior reconstruction work; and we are working with Con Edison and Verizon to verify which of these structures are still in place. In addition, access to many of the remaining structures is obstructed due to ongoing construction in lower Manhattan. Inaccessible structures cannot be searched immediately, but we expect to complete the evacuation of all accessible structures by the end of June, and OEM will continue to track structures that are currently inaccessible to ensure that they are searched as soon as possible.

5. Conclusion

While much work remains to be done, the near-conclusion of operations at the World Trade Center site and the completion of the search at Deutsche Bank are significant milestones, and we remain on schedule to complete this effort by November. The initial \$30 million budget estimate for this operation has increased to approximately \$32 million, due almost entirely to the unanticipated cost of the excavation of the access ramps under Route 9A. The following table provides a summary of PHR recovered to date:

PHR Recoveries (as of June 1, 2007)	
Location	PHR Recovered
Haul Road (proper)	397
Haul Road (9A)	2
Haul Road (Con Edison Structures)	209
Haul Road (DEP Structures)	8
140 Liberty Street Parcel	8
Deutsche Bank	785 ¹
130 Cedar Street	2
Subterranean Structures	1
Totals	1412

All PHR recovered to date are in various stages of analysis, including DNA testing for identification. While PHR recovered since October 2006 have not yet yielded any new identifications, OCME will continue to report testing and identification results as they become available. I will continue to keep you up-to-date on the progress of this search and recovery effort.

¹ Includes 766 PHR recovered from the rooftop of Deutsche Bank prior to the discovery of PHR in the Con Edison manholes beneath the Haul Road last October.