




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

STEPHEN GOLDSMITH  
DEPUTY MAYOR FOR OPERATIONS

**MEMORANDUM**

To: Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg  
From: Stephen Goldsmith   
Date: June 22, 2010  
Re: WTC Potential Human Remains Recovery Update

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The City's expanded search for potential human remains at and in the vicinity of the World Trade Center (WTC) site began in October 2006. As you know, that effort entered a new phase in April 2010 when the Office of Chief Medical Examiner (OCME) commenced a comprehensive sifting operation to evaluate approximately 800 cubic yards (cy) of material excavated from newly accessible areas. The sifting operation concluded this past Friday and resulted in the recovery of 72 potential human remains. To date, OCME's expanded search has recovered a total of 1,845 potential human remains from areas in and around the WTC site.<sup>1</sup> While OCME's presence at the WTC site will continue for the foreseeable future, the end of this sifting operation marks a significant milestone in the search and recovery effort.

I. Summary of Sifting Operation (April 5 – June 18)

The expanded search for those lost as a result of the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks began in October 2006 following the discovery of human remains in a Consolidated Edison manhole within the WTC site. As the effort expanded to additional locations, the City established a state-of-the-art hand-sifting facility at 11 Water Street in Brooklyn, along with a staging and pre-sifting facility at the 39th Street Pier. OCME excavated and evaluated approximately 15,000 cy of material from the WTC site as part of this operation, an effort that lasted until December 2007.

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<sup>1</sup> This figure includes 764 potential human remains (PHR) recovered from the roof of 130 Liberty Street prior to the expansion of the search for potential human remains at the WTC site that began in October 2006; OCME has recovered 1,081 PHR since the start of the expanded search. OCME previously reported that 766 PHR were recovered from 130 Liberty Street prior to October 2006; through subsequent analysis, OCME has revised this figure to 764 PHR.

Since then, OCME has monitored construction in and around the WTC site. As new sites became accessible, OCME conducted additional search and recovery operations, excavating 791 cy of material.<sup>2</sup> To properly evaluate the newly excavated material for potential human remains, OCME established a special sifting operation that utilized a mobile forensic sifting platform. The sifting operation began on April 5<sup>th</sup> at a secure area of Fresh Kills on Staten Island. OCME led the effort, with coordination from the Office of Emergency Management and support from the Police Department, the Fire Department, the Department of Sanitation, the Department of Design and Construction, and several other City Agencies. In addition, the City coordinated with the State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC).

Using the same hand-sifting techniques employed at the previous sifting operation in Brooklyn, anthropologists carefully and thoroughly evaluated the material recovered since December 2007. The potential human remains were sent to OCME laboratories for further testing, and personal items were documented and subsequently provided to the Police Department. Pursuant to authorization granted by the State DEC, the Department of Sanitation placed all sifted material in a covered structure at Fresh Kills, where the material continues to be stored. The cost for the sifting operation was approximately \$1.7 million.

The potential human remains discovered during the recent sifting operation were recovered from material found at multiple areas around the WTC site. A description of those areas follows below (see Appendix A and accompanying map for further information on sites within the sifting operation).

#### A. Haul Road (A Grid)

Primary search operations for the Haul Road were completed in 2007; however, 7.5 cy of material were subsequently recovered from a previously inaccessible subterranean structure at the road. OCME discovered one potential human remain from this material during the recent sifting operation.

#### B. 140 Liberty Street Parcel (B Grid)

OCME's search of the 140 Liberty Street Parcel, former site of St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church, has been largely complete since December 2007. Last month, OCME gained access to a small, previously inaccessible area under a pedestrian overpass, removing 30 cy of material. In the recent sifting operation, OCME recovered two potential human remains. OCME's search of the 140 Liberty Street parcel is now complete.

#### C. World Financial Center (C Grid)

Earlier this year, OCME recovered 31 cy of additional material from a previously inaccessible area in front of the World Financial Center. OCME evaluated this material in the recent sifting operation, and recovered ten potential human remains. While search operations on

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<sup>2</sup> An earlier projection of 844 cy of material was based on OCME estimates made during the excavation process. The recent sifting operation provided a much more precise calculation of the total volume of material.

this parcel are largely complete, several small portions will not become accessible until next year or 2012, contingent upon the progress of the West Street underpass portion of the WTC PATH Hub project and State Department of Transportation's reconstruction of West Street adjacent to the WTC site.

#### D. Cedar Street (D Grid)

Small excavations conducted by OCME since December 2007 in newly accessible areas of the Cedar Street grid between West Street and Washington Street resulted in the recovery of 22 cy of new material. Sifting of this material during the recent operation resulted in the discovery of 21 potential human remains.

#### E. Washington Street (E Grid)

The recent sifting operation evaluated 6 cy of material recovered by OCME from a small area near the corner of Cedar Street and Washington Street.<sup>3</sup> No potential human remains were found. The remainder of this area will not be accessible until the demolition of 130 Liberty Street is complete.

#### F. West Street (Route 9A)

The majority of the WTC material sifted in the recent operation came from newly accessible areas within NY State Route 9A (West Street) between Albany Street and Vesey Street. Since December 2007, OCME recovered a total of 592.5 cy of material from beneath West Street itself and from structures within West Street. Sifting of material from this area resulted in the discovery of 37 potential human remains. OCME will continue monitoring construction work in West Street and remove any potential WTC material.

#### G. Subterranean Structures

Since December 2007, 20.5 cy of new material have been removed from pre-9/11 subterranean structures in and around the WTC site. The recent sifting operation recovered one potential human remain from this material.

#### H. Building Interiors and Rooftops

Since 2006, OCME has conducted thorough evaluations of building interiors and rooftops in the vicinity of the WTC site as they became accessible. As part of the recent sifting operation, OCME examined 76 cy of ballast removed last summer from the rooftop of Fiterman Hall. No potential human remains were found.

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<sup>3</sup> OCME previously determined that all of Washington Street from the Liberty Street curb line to south of the Cedar Street curb line required close monitoring. Initially, that area was inaccessible, but as excavation has progressed, OCME has gained new access to and evaluated approximately half of Washington Street.

As demolition continues at 130 Liberty Street, OCME will closely monitor the excavation of the north plaza area, which is expected to occur once the building deconstruction reaches approximately the fifth floor. OCME has and will continue to examine any potential WTC material found until the deconstruction is complete.

## I. World Trade Center Site

OCME's recent sifting operation also examined 5.5 cy of material discovered last summer beneath the pavement on Vesey Street near the southwest corner of Vesey Street and Washington Street. No potential human remains were found.

OCME, working with the Lower Manhattan Construction Command Center, will continue to monitor work at the WTC site for the foreseeable future, and will conduct further searches and excavations as it gains access to new areas.

## II. Ongoing Efforts

Since 2006, OCME has recovered a total 1,845 potential human remains from areas in and around the WTC site. Although the recent sifting operation has concluded, OCME will continue monitoring ongoing construction in the WTC area, conducting excavation and sifting operations as necessary and as it gains access.

Moreover, OCME continues to work to identify as many victims of the WTC attacks as possible. Since 2006, OCME has made 25 new victim identifications and hundreds of potential human remains identified during the renewed search have been linked to previously identified victims. OCME's ability to identify those lost on 9/11 continues to improve, and DNA testing will continue until all recovered remains that can be matched with a victim are identified.

The City has not wavered in its dedication to finding and identifying those lost on September 11<sup>th</sup>. And while the end of this recent sifting operation marks a significant milestone, OCME's search for the remains of victims of the WTC attacks will continue for the foreseeable future. Led by a team of capable and caring scientific staff and operations personnel, the City remains well-prepared for and strongly committed to this important effort.

I will continue to keep you updated.

cc: Linda I. Gibbs, Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services  
Dr. Charles S. Hirsch, Chief Medical Examiner  
Joseph F. Bruno, Commissioner, Office of Emergency Management  
David J. Burney, Commissioner, Department of Design and Construction  
Salvatore J. Cassano, Fire Commissioner  
John J. Doherty, Commissioner, Department of Sanitation  
Robert N. Harvey, Acting Executive Director, LMCCC  
Martha K. Hirst, Commissioner, Department of Citywide Administrative Services  
Caswell F. Holloway, Commissioner, Department of Environmental Protection  
Raymond W. Kelly, Police Commissioner  
Nazli Parvizi, Commissioner, Community Affairs Unit

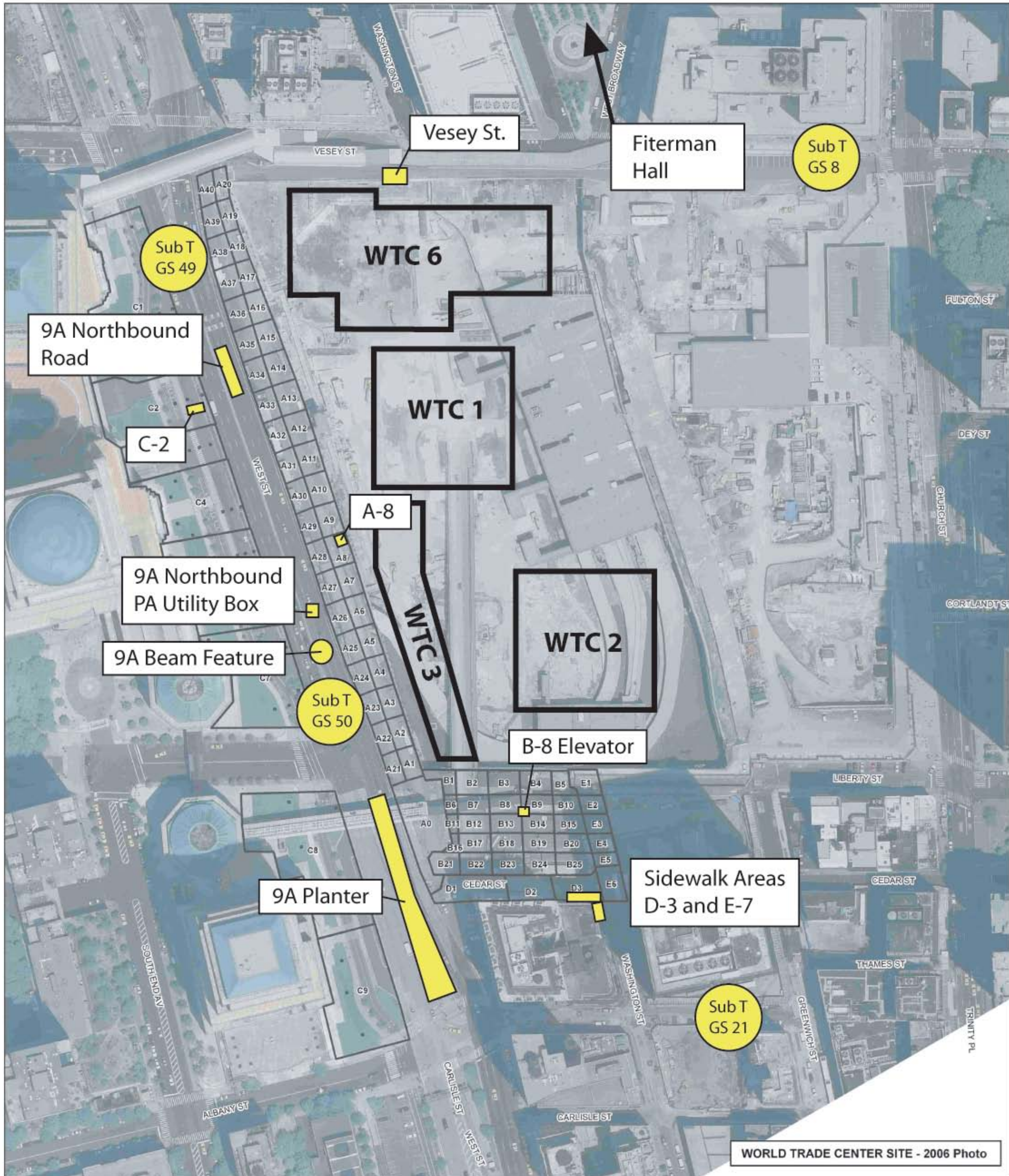
## Appendix A—Summary of Excavations and Recoveries

Expanded Search for Human Remains Excavation and Recoveries Summary <i>(as of June 18, 2010)</i>			
Search Area	Parameters	Vol. Excavated and Sifted (cy)	Potential Human Remains Recovered
Haul Road (A Grid)	Construction artery bounded by Vesey Street to the North, Cedar Street to the South, the slurry wall to the East, and West Street to the West; WTC access ramps partially under West Street; and the DEP Chimney Structure and DEP Sewer Line beneath the Haul Road.	7,416.5	603
140 Liberty Street Parcel (B Grid)	Former site of the St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church, this 0.8-acre plot is bounded by Cedar Street, Washington Street, Liberty Street, and West Street.	4,649	272
World Financial Center (C Grid)	Frontage of the World Financial Center bounded by Vesey Street to the North, Albany Street to the South, and West Street to the East.	2,341	90
Cedar Street (D Grid)	Entirety of Cedar Street from the Washington Street curb line to West Street.	427	35
Washington Street (E Grid)	Entirety of Washington Street from Liberty Street curb line to immediately south of the Cedar Street curb line.	6	0
Subterranean Structures	Subterranean structures in the area bounded by Barclay Street, Broadway, Albany Street and the Hudson River, inclusive.	247.5	22
Building Interiors and Rooftops	Includes the rooftops of 55 Church Street (Millenium Hotel) and 1 Liberty Plaza; the rooftops and interiors of Fiterman Hall and 130 Cedar Street; and the rooftops, exteriors, and interiors of 130 Liberty Street.	76 <sup>4</sup>	786 <sup>5</sup>
World Trade Center site	Includes East Bathtub area of the World Trade Center site, and sections of Vesey Street.	25.5 <sup>6</sup>	0
West Street (Route 9A)	NY State Route 9A (West Street) between Albany Street and Vesey Street.	592.5	37
<b>Totals</b>		<b>15,781</b>	<b>1,845</b>

<sup>4</sup> Only the 76 cy recovered from the Fiterman Hall rooftop are reflected in the table above of material excavated and retained. With the exception of Fiterman Hall, all building rooftop material was sifted on site.

<sup>5</sup> This figure includes 783 PHR recovered from 130 Liberty Street, and three PHR recovered from 130 Cedar Street.

<sup>6</sup> This total comprises 5.5 cy of material excavated in 2009 from beneath the pavement on Vesey Street and 20 cy of material recovered from the East Bathtub and hand-sifted in 2007 (no PHR were recovered from either location).



WORLD TRADE CENTER SITE - 2006 Photo