

TATINIA PHINISEE

ARC 5428: Advanced Design Studio 2

Spring 2013 Semester

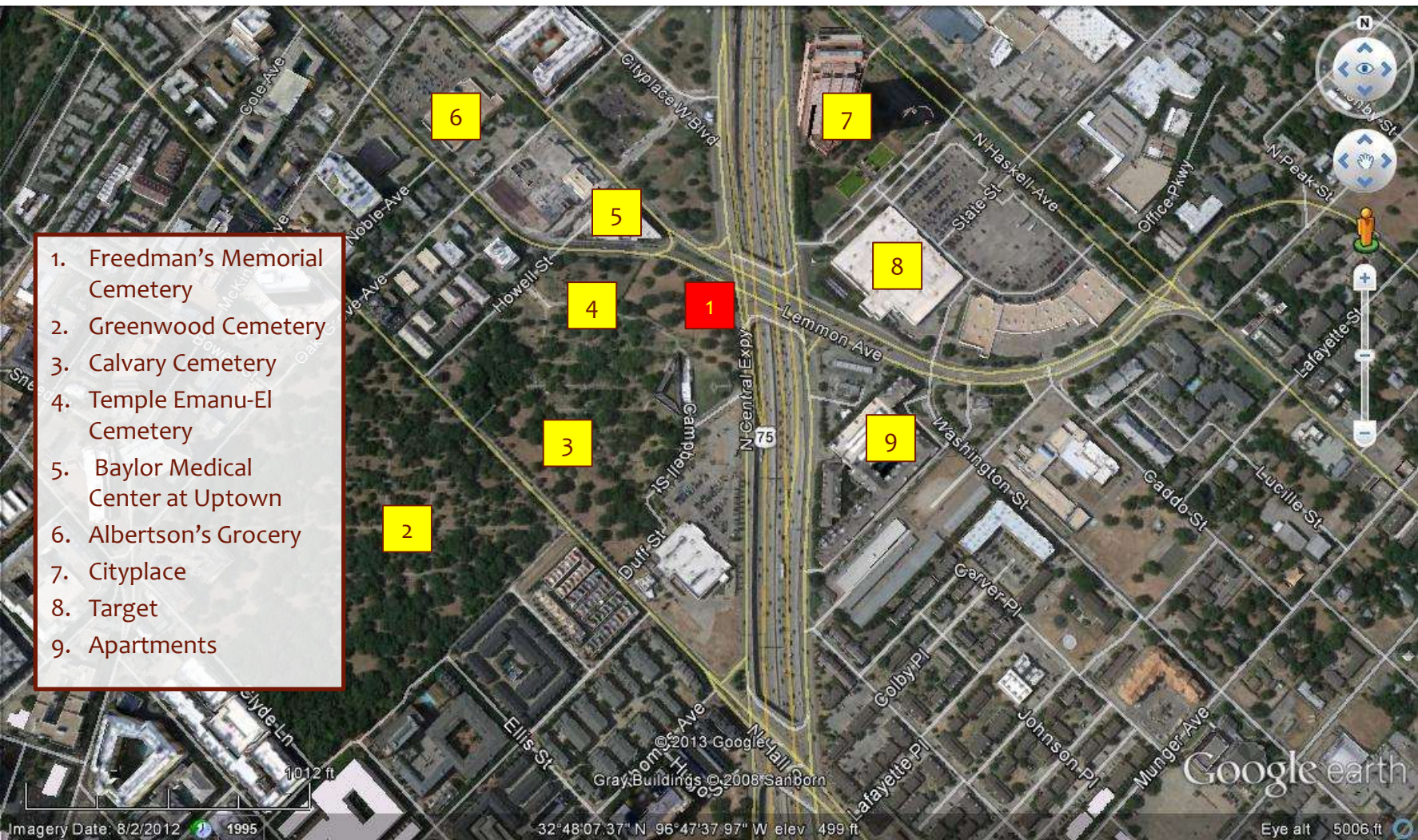
January 29, 2013

Module 03

Cemetery Case Study

Freedman's Memorial Cemetery

Location: Uptown Dallas & State-Thomas Neighborhood



Freedman's Memorial Cemetery

History & Timeline

- 1841: The village of Dallas is founded by John Neely Bryan
- Early 1840s: The Old Dallas Burial Ground is founded, containing graves of whites and slaves
- 1856: The City of Dallas is incorporated by the State of Texas
- January 1, 1863: The Emancipation Proclamation becomes effective, although news does not reach Texas until June 19, 1865
- 1865: Dallas establishes Vagrancy Ordinances targeted at blacks, to subject those without work to arrest and imprisonment. Blacks move out of the city, establishing Freedman's Town to escape the Vagrancy Ordinances. Over the next few years Congress passes several Reconstruction Acts to improve conditions for freed slaves throughout the south. States fought back with Jim Crow laws into the 1960s. Freedman's Town thrived as a middle class African-American neighborhood well into the latter half of the 20th century. Homes, restaurants, clinics, shops, clubs, tea societies, a theater and the first public library for African-Americans were a part of this thriving community.

Freedman's Memorial Cemetery

History & Timeline

- 1869: The Old Dallas Burial Ground is closed to further internments. Over time the whites are moved to City Cemetery. The blacks remain interred.
- April 29, 1869: Freedman's Cemetery is founded (one acre)
- 1874: Freedman's Town is incorporated in the City of Dallas but remains a separate, self-contained town.
- 1879: Freedman's Cemetery expands to four acres
- 1890: The Dallas Brewing Company builds over a portion of the Old Dallas Burial Ground
- July 26, 1907: Freedman's Cemetery is closed to further internments.
- 1940s: Almost a third (over one acre) of Freedman's Cemetery is paved over by highway construction (US Highway 75). Over 1500 residents of Freedman's Town are displaced by the construction.
- 1965: Descendants of persons buried at Freedman's Cemetery reach an agreement with the City of Dallas to establish the Freedman's Memorial Park and Cemetery at the site.
- 1970s: Woodall Rogers Freeway is constructed over the remaining area of the Old Dallas Burial Ground

Freedman's Memorial Cemetery

History & Timeline

- 1976: The original Freedman's Town area is renamed the State Thomas Neighborhood
- 1986 The State Thomas Neighborhood is designated a Historic Landmark District. Intense restoration of the historic Victorian homes is undertaken.
- 1989: Planned expansion of US Highway 75 triggers a survey of the area by the Texas Department of Transportation (TXDOT). The remaining intact portion of Freedman's Cemetery is classified as a threatened cultural resource.
- 1991: The City of Dallas Cultural Affairs Commission appointed the Freedman's Art Council, a citizen advisory committee, to realize the vision of Freedman's Memorial Cemetery. Freedman's Foundation, a non-profit organization, was formed to raise funds and manage the memorial.

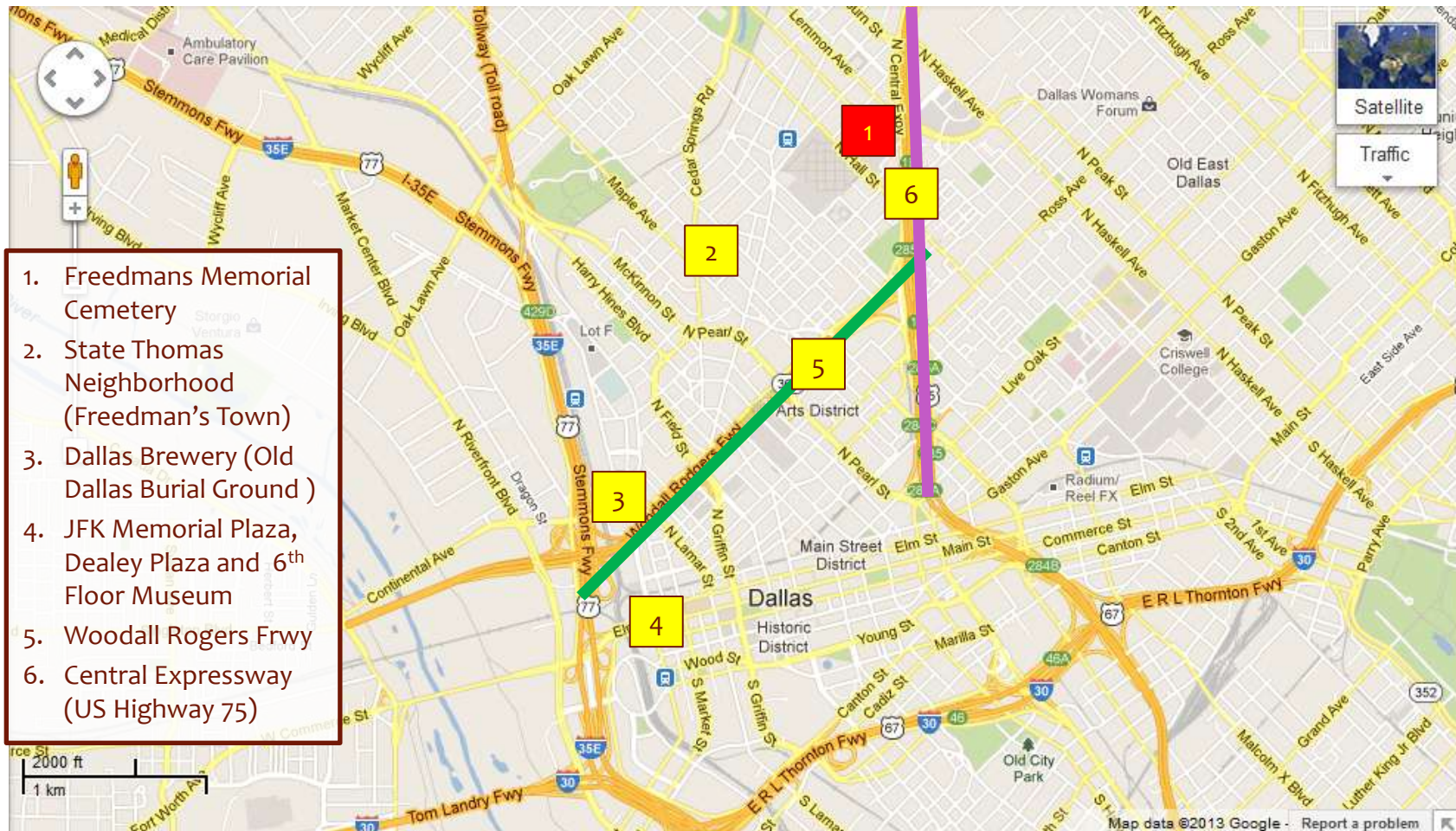
Freedman's Memorial Cemetery

History & Timeline

- November 1991-August 1, 1994: TXDOT undertakes the Freedman's Cemetery Archaeological Project. This project was the largest archaeological historic cemetery removal project in the United States. Over 1,150 burials were discovered, exhumed, documented, analyzed and reinterred. During the majority of the cemetery's active time period, it served as the only public burial ground for African Americans residing within Dallas. It is estimated that originally over 7,000 people were buried at the cemetery.
- 1999: The final chronology is documented from the archaeological project. Artifacts excavated during the process were compiled into an exhibit at the Museum of African-American Life and Culture at Fair Park. Freedman's Memorial is dedicated.

Freedman's Memorial Cemetery is one of the city's oldest burial grounds. Four cemeteries are located in this vicinity, housing prominent figures in Dallas history. Outside these historic cemeteries is the bustling Uptown Dallas area, which includes modern art galleries, offices, medical facilities, retail, and up-scale housing. There are plans to expand the cemetery's legacy through guided tours and incorporation in adjacent parks and trails.

Site Context: Historic References



Freedman's Memorial Cemetery

Project Info

Designer: David Newton is a classically trained sculptor who was born and raised in Detroit Michigan. Newton was awarded the commission by winning in a competition against 72 other entrants.



Image Credit: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/texasmarkers/4737662570/lightbox/>

Freedman's Memorial Cemetery

Project Description

The memorial is built at the cemetery site and includes an arched ceremonial entrance, flanked by figures representing free Africans (pre-slavery) on the outside.



Image Credits: http://www.tripadvisor.com/Attraction_Review-g55711-d559968-Reviews-Freedman_s_Memorial-Dallas_Texas.html and <http://www.davidsnewtonsculptor.com/monuments--commissions.html>

Freedman's Memorial Cemetery

Project Description

Inside are figures depicting African-Americans struggling with slavery.



Image Credits: <http://www.dfwandme.com/350/the-freedmans-memorial-dallas-part-ii/>
<http://www.davidsnewtonsculptor.com/monuments--commissions.html>

Freedman's Memorial Cemetery

Project Description

At the center is a statue of a man and woman grieving for those who have died. Behind this central figure is a polished granite slab containing a poem.



Image Credits: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/texashistoricalcommission/5081814924/>
<http://dfwarttour.com/lee-ann-torrans-dfw-art-tour/>

Freedman's Memorial Cemetery

Project Description

The memorial is surrounded by a false moat, lined with black stones. This moat symbolizes the “river” between life and death. The entire cemetery is enclosed by a wrought iron fence supported by cast stone columns. Attached to 10 of these columns are bronze plaques which contain poems about Freedman's Cemetery which were written by Dallas school children.



Freedman's Memorial Cemetery

Project Description

When the bodies were reinterred they were placed according to the prevailing custom at the time of their burial – with their heads facing East towards the rising sun.



Freedman's Memorial Cemetery

Design Vision

- Newton was inspired by visions of unsung heroes and heroines of everyday people, who had made significant contributions to the United States.
- He depicted African-Americans in bronze with the hope that its uniform color and timeless appearance would convey the purity, distilled beauty, strength, grace, and form of his sculptures.
- The theme of the memorial is the spirit of triumph over adversity, a sentiment that is universal.
- Symbolism: The female African at the entry is a *griot*, or oral historian. The male is an African warrior.

Freedman's Memorial Cemetery

Features of Note

Similarities to the JFK Memorial include the following:

- Cardinal Orientation: North|South at JFK and East|West at Freedman's
- Gated Entrance: Slits at JFK and Entryway flanked with sculptures at Freedman's
- Central Feature including Granite (permanence???): Stone containing JFK's name and polished granite slab w/ poem at Freedman's
- Perimeter Columns

Freedman's Memorial Cemetery

Sources

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Freedman's Memorial Cemetery

Project The End – Thanks!