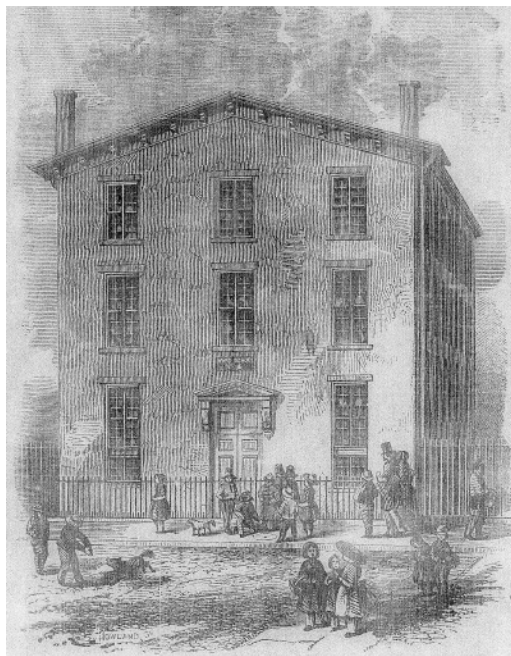


# EAST 125<sup>th</sup> STREET REZONING PROJECT

Harlem, New York City

As part of the New York City Economic Development Corporation's East 125<sup>th</sup> Street Development project, Historical Perspectives, Inc. (HPI) conducted an archaeological assessment of two parcels in East Harlem fronting East 125<sup>th</sup> Street through East 127<sup>th</sup> Street, between Second and Third Avenues, which were slated for rezoning. These parcels were developed in the 1840s and 1850s, with some of the first buildings erected after the new city street grid was implemented in Harlem.



One of the parcels, fronting East 125<sup>th</sup> Street at Second Avenue, contained a small 1849 public school that was expanded in the 1870s, and again in the 1880s and the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The school was first known as Ward School 24 and later known as Grammar School 39, the Harlem School, and P.S. 39. Ward School 24 had three departments: a male department, a female department, and a primary department, with two teachers for the males, and three teachers each for the females and the primary students. This early school building adhered to a standardized Board of Education building template, which separated the structure into boys and girls halves, for both instruction and play. Privies, or outhouses, were segregated by gender as well, and are clearly shown on building plans for the period. These privies may still exist under the current paved parking area on the property.

HPI recommended that archaeological excavations be undertaken in the former locations of these privies, in order to study refuse that had been deposited in them by students and teachers attending the school. Sites like the East 125<sup>th</sup> Street former school property allow archaeologists to explore important issues related to diet, activities, and customs of school populations, which typically are underrepresented in the archaeological record.

