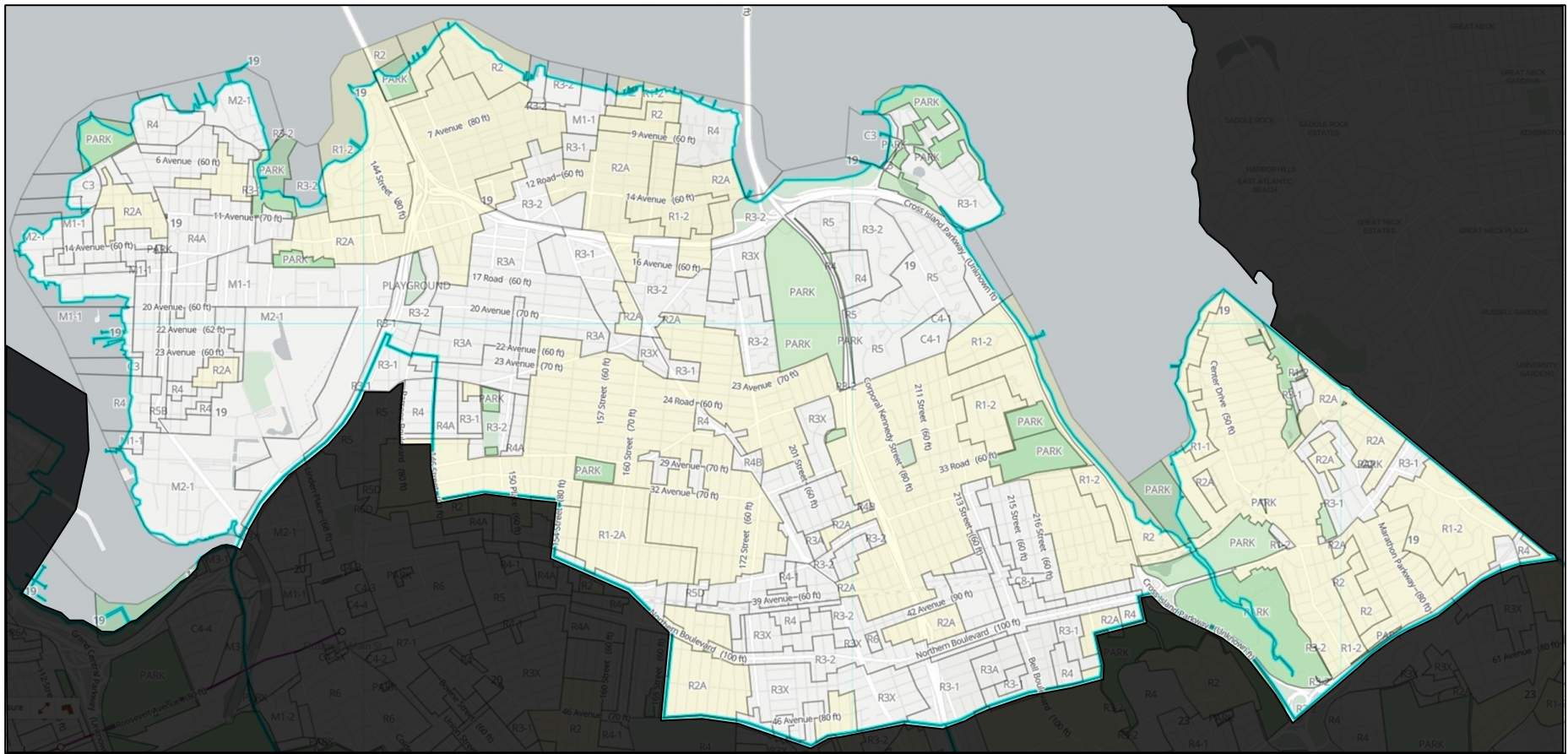


## **Bellcourt Walking Tour**

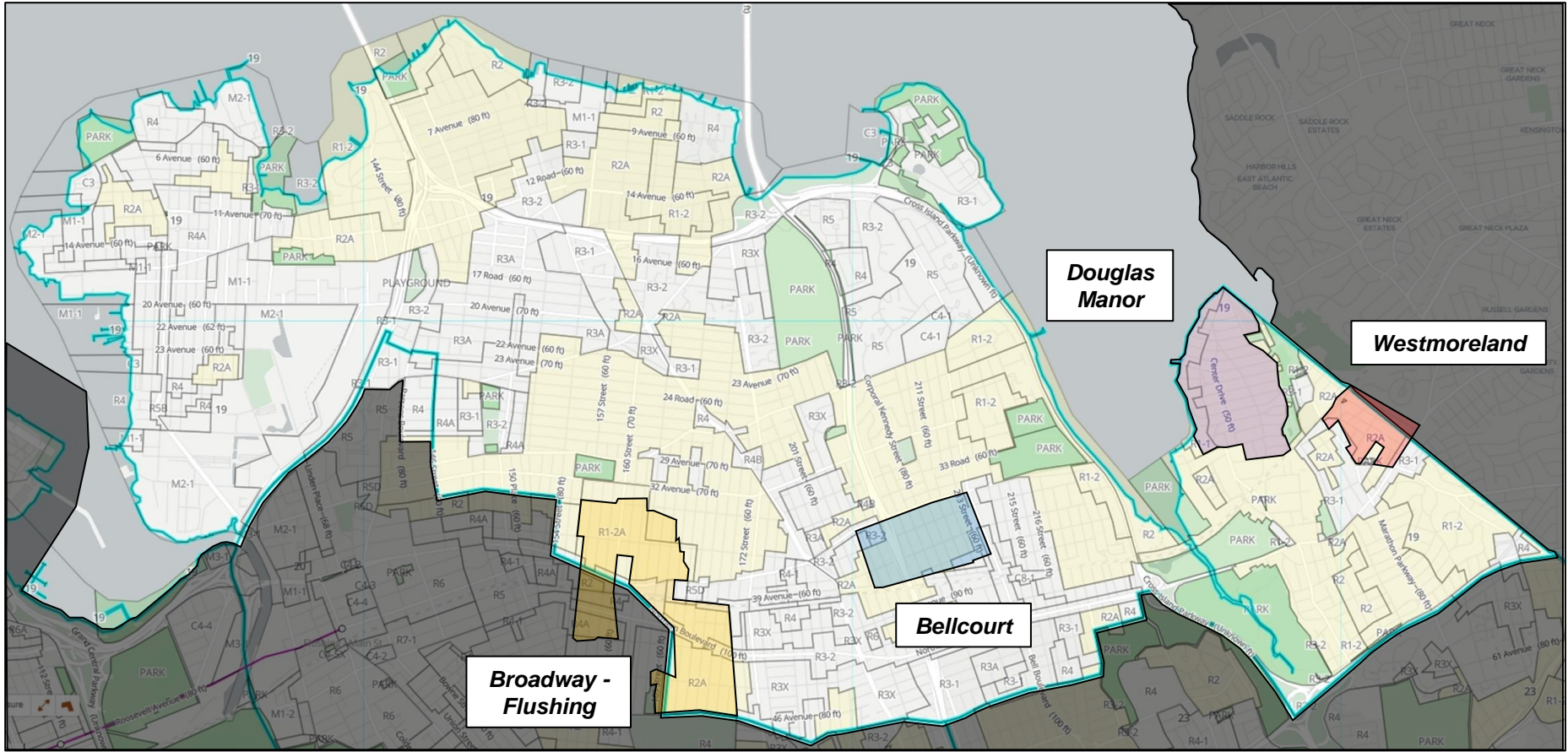
Bellcourt was the brainchild of Edward J. Rickert and Charles E. Finlay, the principals of the Rickert-Finlay Realty Company. The first (1904) of four Rickert-Finlay developments in northeast Queens – the other three being Broadway-Flushing (1906), Douglas Manor (1906) and Westmoreland (1907) – Bellcourt was the initial experiment in suburban-type development for the company; several other more urban developments were undertaken in Astoria, Queens, including East River Heights (1906) and Norwood Gardens (1907); and their coup de grace, Kensington (1909), a fully restricted “residential park” was later incorporated into its own village in Nassau County in 1921.

After purchasing the last Bell farm in Bayside, totaling 95 acres west of the present Bell Boulevard, Rickert-Finlay created their first planned community in Queens. Experimenting with basic deed restrictions regulating setbacks, lot widths, rooflines and occupancy as well as front yard open space, the area was an early example of de facto zoning controls more than a decade prior to the adoption of New York City municipal zoning regulations. The earliest houses were constructed closest to or on Bell Boulevard and the nearest to the Long Island Railroad along what are now 39<sup>th</sup> Avenue, 211<sup>th</sup>, 212<sup>th</sup> and 213<sup>th</sup> streets. By 1909, 14 houses had been built; by 1918, there were 62 buildings completed. Many of these buildings are still extant, including the New York City-landmarked Arts and Crafts-style 35-34 Bell Boulevard (1905), also known as the Cobblestone House. Building styles typical to Bellcourt include Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival and Arts and Crafts-style bungalows, all examples of the Eclectic period in American architectural history. In addition, several Tudor-Revival-style apartment buildings and other housing of high quality are located in Bellcourt.

In addition, the last extant Bell family building, the landmarked Ahles Farmhouse (ca. 1860) stands immediate to the south of the Bellcourt development.



**Council District 19 – 1-Family Zoning (Yellow)**

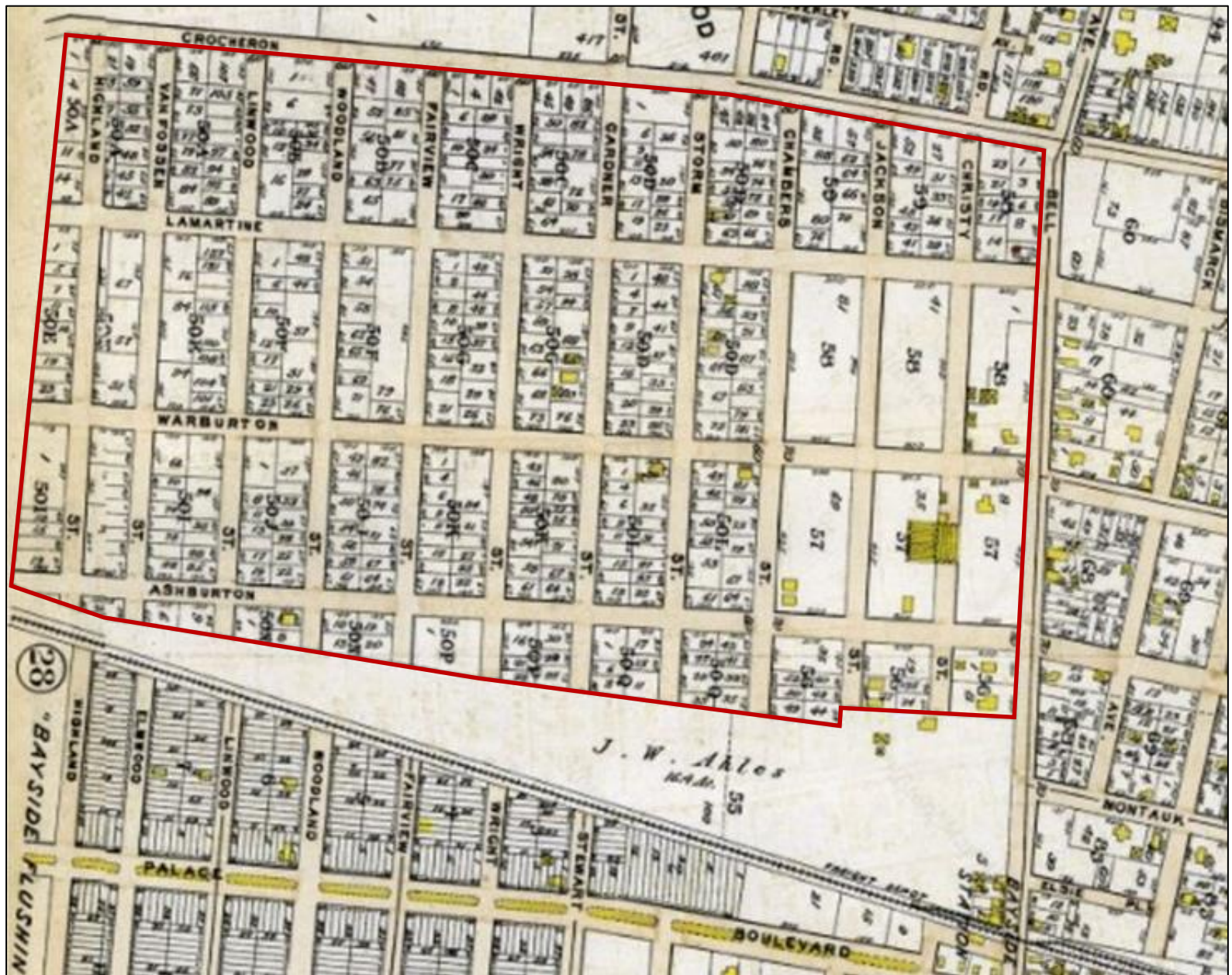


**Council District 19 – Rickert-Finlay Realty Company Developments**



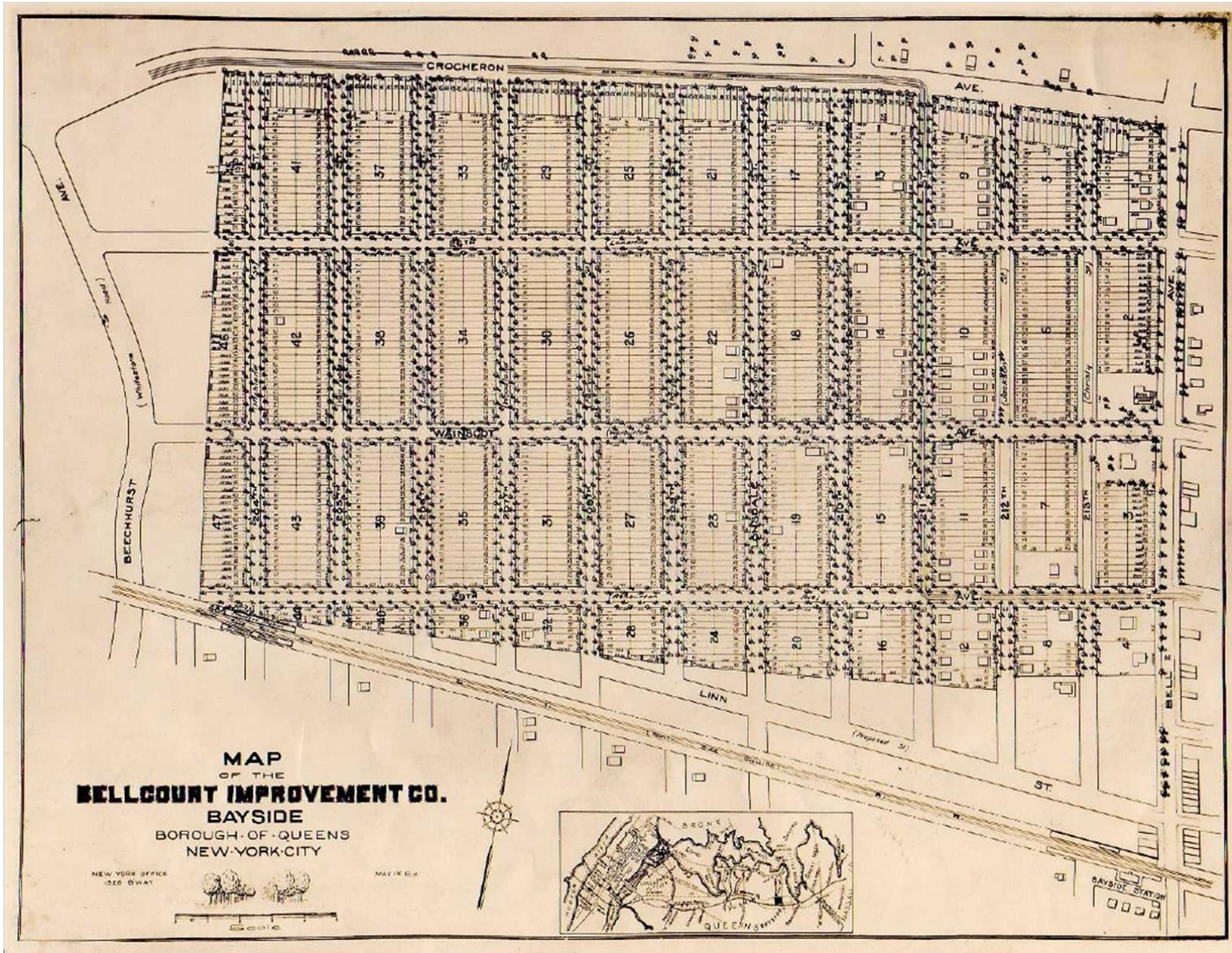






**Bellcourt – 1909 Bromley Atlas of Queens County**





**MAP**  
 OF THE  
**BELLCOURT IMPROVEMENT CO.**  
**BAYSIDE**  
 BOROUGH OF QUEENS  
 NEW-YORK-CITY

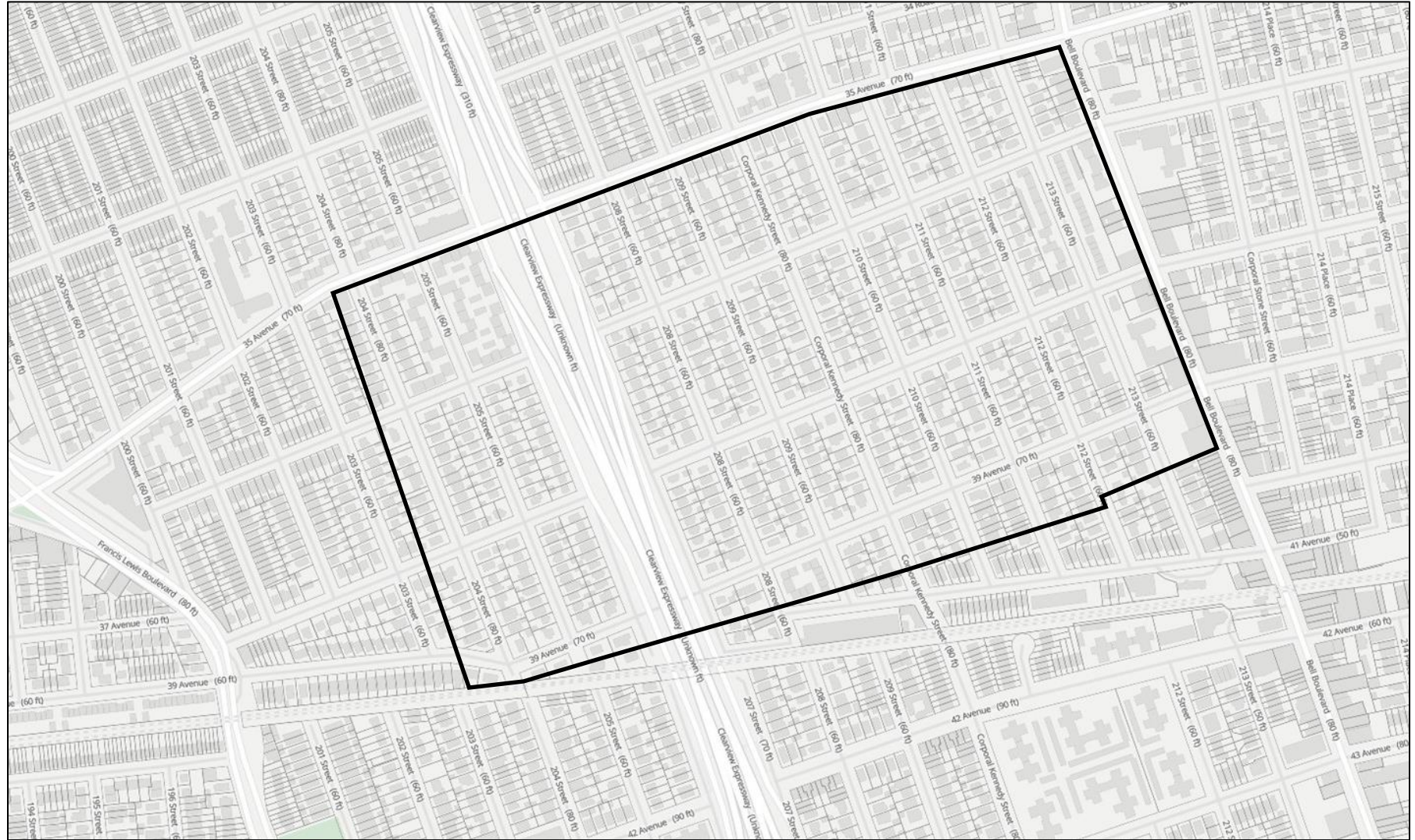
NEW YORK OFFICE  
 1526 B'WAY

MAY 1918



**Bellcourt Improvement Co. Map Ca. 1918**





**Historic Bellcourt Boundaries - 2022**