

York Outdoor Recreation Complex

PHYSICAL VISION PLAN

December 2005



Prepared for the:

**Redevelopment
Authority
of the
City of York**



*Murphy &
Dittenhafer*
ARCHITECTS



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With: **Mahan Rykiel Associates, Inc.**

Landscape Architects



December 21, 2005

Mr. Matthew Jackson, Coordinator/Secretary
The City of York Redevelopment Authority
14 West Market Street
PO Box 509
York, PA 17405

**Re: York Outdoor Recreation Complex
Physical Environment Vision Plan**

Dear Matt:

On behalf of Murphy & Dittenhafer, Inc., I am pleased to convey to the City of York Redevelopment Authority the attached report detailing the Physical Environment Vision Plan for the York Outdoor Recreation Complex. The Murphy & Dittenhafer Team has been able to develop an achievable catalytic vision for the District via an exciting process that involved the active participation of residents, business people, developers, public officials, other interested parties and experienced design professionals.

As the City of York begins a new phase in its history, I offer my best wishes. I learned through this process that there are many opportunities within the proposed Stadium District to improve the quality of life, address neighborhood issues and develop the economic base. I know the rest of the project team joins me in looking forward to both observing—and being a part of—positive changes for the City of York.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Frank E. Dittenhafer, II".

Frank E. Dittenhafer, II, AIA

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 York Outdoor Recreation Complex

Over the last several years, there has been considerable discussion in York City about a suitable site for a proposed outdoor recreation complex. The site currently under consideration is in a commercial/industrial/residential area bordered by North Queen, Arch, North George and North Streets in the north end of the City of York. While the York County Industrial Development Authority would be the owner of the outdoor recreation complex, the York City Redevelopment Authority must prepare the Redevelopment Plan for the site, and is considering the project's potential impact. In July, 2005, the York City Redevelopment Authority selected Murphy & Dittenhafer, Inc. to develop a vision plan for the physical environment surrounding the proposed outdoor recreation complex site.

1.2 Consultant Team

The Murphy & Dittenhafer Team was headed by Frank Dittenhafer, AIA, principal of Murphy & Dittenhafer Architects of York, Pennsylvania, and Baltimore, Maryland. The other team members were Todd Grove, AIA, and Gail Dennis of Murphy & Dittenhafer, Scott Rykiel, ASLA, and Tom McGilloway, ASLA, and Richard Jones of Mahan Rykiel & Associates of Baltimore.

1.3 Acknowledgements

Murphy & Dittenhafer Architects and Mahan Rykiel Associates are solely responsible for this report and its findings. These recommendations would not have been possible, however, without the commitment and involvement of many other individuals, organization, agencies and institutions. Many thanks to everyone who assisted this process.

2.0 Executive Summary

Background – In July 2005, the York City Redevelopment Authority commissioned Murphy & Dittenhafer, Inc., to create an achievable vision for the physical environment around the proposed York Outdoor Recreation Complex through a process that involved residents, business owners/employees, property owners and other stakeholders.

Goals – The goals of the Vision Plan are to weave the stadium into the urban fabric, improve the quality of life within the District and provide a catalyst for redevelopment opportunities in the area and linked with other similar projects in York City.

Immediate Actions (0-2 years)

- **Consider two design options for the siting of the stadium:** west of Howard Avenue and south of Arch Street or with an integrated Arch Street.
- Give careful attention to the **appearance of the stadium**.
- Create an **outdoor public gathering place** (plaza).
- Enhance **safe pedestrian access** into the stadium site.
- Maintain and improve **Westminster Park**.
- Ensure that **access routes** to event parking are very visible.
- Integrate and connect adjacent **Codorus Creek waterfront** “park” areas.
- Develop a **façade improvement program** for area residents and businesses.
- Encourage **advocacy** for the Northeast neighborhood.

Short-term Physical Vision Plan (2-7 Years)

- Continue to enhance **safe pedestrian routes** to the stadium.
- Monitor vehicular and rail impact on the **traffic flow** on surrounding streets.
- **Extend North Street** from the Stadium District to the east and west.
- Encourage **private mixed-use reinvestment** at key sites.
- Support **linked redevelopment** in the Northwest Triangle.
- Enhance and connect to **York Street and Broad Street redevelopment efforts**.
- **Extend the Heritage Rail Trail County Park** in the North End.
- Incorporate **historical interpretation**.

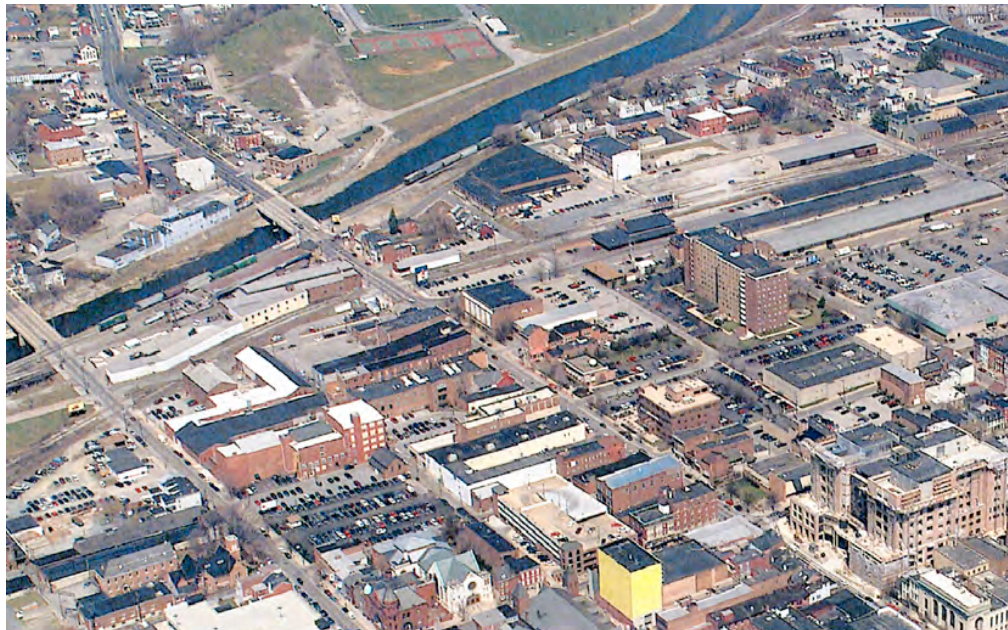
Long-term Physical Vision Plan (7-20 Years)

- Continue to encourage **private mixed-use reinvestment** at key sites.
- Continue to support **linked redevelopment** in the Northwest Triangle.
- Continue to connect with **York and Broad Street redevelopment initiatives**.
- **Connect Codorus Creek and other improvements** with the stadium.

3.0 Context

3.1 Study Area

At the beginning of this study, the Stadium District was an undefined area surrounding the proposed outdoor recreation complex site (see section 3.3). During this visioning process, the York Stadium District was identified by the community as an area stretching from Loucks Mill Road on the east to North George Street, and from the north bank of the Codorus Creek south toward Philadelphia Street. This area includes current industrial uses, row houses, senior citizen high-rise housing, new loft housing, warehousing, office and commercial uses and churches. The boundaries of the District also encompass the Codorus Creek, the proposed route of the Heritage Rail Trail County Park northern extension and North George Street, the major northern gateway into the City of York.



Aerial view of the north end of York City

A variety of projects have been proposed for the immediate vicinity. Section 3.3 describes the plans for the Outdoor Recreation Complex which would be located between North George and North Howard Streets, north of North Street.

Over the past four years, a redevelopment plan has been created for the Northwest Triangle, the area west of North George Street and north of West Philadelphia Street in the City of York. This effort was initiated by community volunteers and recommends infrastructure, residential and commercial improvements. The York City Redevelopment Authority currently is considering this plan for implementation.

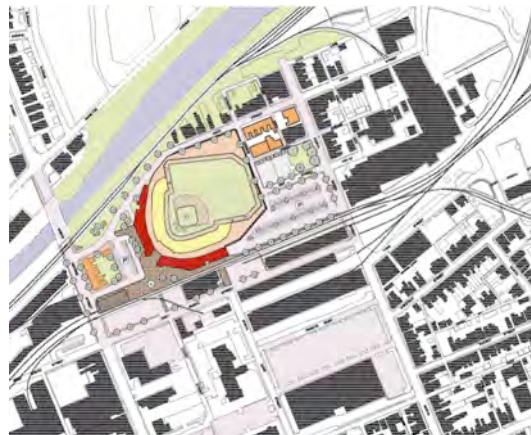
A commercial redevelopment plan for the area around North Broad Street in the Northeast Neighborhood has been under discussion in 2005. The York Street Community Center also recently completed a Feasibility Study for the Neighborhood Renaissance of the Northeast Neighborhood. The neighborhood as defined in this study encompasses the area located between North Queen and North State Streets, north of East Philadelphia Street and extending to the existing Northern Central rail line. The feasibility study recommends significant redevelopment within an overall multi-faceted strategy of neighborhood enhancement.

South of the Stadium District, the central business district of York City has been undergoing renewal with the construction of the new County Courthouse and the Susquehanna Commerce Center, the renovation of the Strand-Capitol Performing Arts Center and the arrival of new businesses, especially restaurants.

3.2 Scope

The defined scope of the York City Stadium District Physical Environment Vision project was:

- To create an achievable and catalytic vision for the physical environment located around the proposed Outdoor Recreation Complex
- To engage residents, business owners/employees, property owners, stakeholders and other interested parties in envisioning a York Stadium District
- To develop general design and planning concepts for the District that can be applied by the public and private sectors to future development
- To provide visual materials to encourage public and private investment in the area



Proposed Outdoor Recreation Complex

3.3 Stadium Plans

The York County Industrial Development Authority has responsibility for the development of the \$33 million Outdoor Recreation Complex on a site located in the area between North Howard, North George, North and Arch Streets in the North End of York City. The 6,000 seat multi-purpose stadium is expected to be

used by a new Atlantic League (independent) baseball team owned by Keystone Baseball for approximately 70 games per year. The complex also would accommodate other types of events throughout the year including high school athletic events, band competitions, exhibits and craft shows. Tetra Tec, Inc. of Christiana, Delaware, is designing the stadium with civil engineering by C.S. Davidson, Inc. of York, Pennsylvania.

3.4 The Visioning Process

The key elements of the visioning process were:

- Interviews with individuals and groups representing residents, business owners/employees, property owners and other interested parties
- One public workshop to collect input from the community
- Multiple site visits by the consultant team
- Review of existing data and reports by the consultant team
- Multiple meetings of the consultant team with the Redevelopment Authority staff
- Multiple consultant team meetings
- One public workshop to present the vision plan to the community

4.0 Existing Conditions

4.1 Context

The York City Stadium District is in a central geographic location within the City of York with convenient access to the central business district and Routes 30, 462 and Interstate 83.



Aerial view of the Stadium District

4.2 Infrastructure

- **Gateways** – There are several vehicular gateways into and through the Stadium District. From the north, North George Street will be the primary access route from Route 30 south through North York Borough into York City. Local visitors also are expected to use Loucks Mill Road from Route 30, leading into Arch Street. From the south, George Street will receive traffic from Interstate 83 and East Philadelphia and West Market Streets. Some local traffic will travel

north to the Outdoor Recreation Complex via North Queen and North Duke Streets.



North George Street at Arch looking north



North George Street near North looking south

The major pedestrian gateway from the central business district will be North George Street. There is the potential for more pedestrian traffic on North Duke and North Queen Streets as they are improved.



North George Street at the railroad tracks

- ***Vehicular and Rail Traffic*** – A high volume of vehicular traffic uses North George Street. Another popular route into York City via the North End is to use Loucks Mill Road to North Queen Street and North Street. Both of these routes cross active rail lines that have been experiencing an increase in train traffic over the last several years. Interviewees report more and longer delays at rail crossings, including instances when long trains block multiple crossings.

- ***Pedestrian Traffic*** – There is a moderate amount of local pedestrian traffic on George, Queen, Duke and Arch Streets although some of this traffic involves people walking from their cars to their office or a business. Frequently the streets are empty during the day. North Street, in particular, as it is currently configured is not safe for pedestrians.



North Street looking east

- ***Heritage Rail Trail County Park*** – The first section of the Heritage Rail Trail County Park opened to hikers, joggers, bicyclists and equestrians in 1992 along the right of way of the Northern Central Railroad in southern York County. This immensely popular 21-mile trail now connects with the Northern Central Railroad Trail at the border with Maryland, and stretches north as far as West Philadelphia Street in York City, slightly west of the Stadium District. In 2003, a feasibility study was completed to extend the trail north to Rudy Park in East Manchester Township. The Rail Trail Authority and the York County Department of Parks and Recreation are committed to building the northern extension, and are at work on the many tasks required in the process. While the trail route shown in the feasibility study is conceptual, the expectation is that the Rail Trail will be in close proximity to, and easily accessible from, the Stadium District.

- **Roadways** – George Street is two-way with multiple lanes for vehicular traffic, and on-street parking on two sides. Queen, North and Arch are two-way. Queen has on-street parking on two sides while Arch Street has on-street parking on one side. North Duke Street is one-way north with parking on both sides. Most blocks have access to the interior through alleys.



Yorktown Mall and parking lot

- **Parking** – There is on-street, public and private surface and public structured parking in the area. A recent traffic and parking study undertaken by TRG for the City of York identified over 2,800 spaces located in eleven public parking facilities within a 15-minute walk of the proposed Outdoor Recreation Complex. In addition, many of the businesses provide some on-site surface parking for customers and employees. The TRG report concluded that the parking capacity located within an 8-minute walk could accommodate average attendance at an event, and the parking required for full capacity attendance is located within a 10-minute walk. This report did not take into account potential parking at the York City School District's Small Field immediately north of the proposed site which the School District might make available on a fee basis for some events.
- **Streetscape** – While many streets have adequate sidewalks, there are a number of key areas where the sidewalks are deteriorated or non-existent. The streetlights reflect a number of utilitarian styles, and many show their age. Street signage and wayfinding are not well organized, and there are no banners or other decorative elements that establish an identity for the area. There are some areas with street

trees, especially within residential areas of the District. There are several prominent billboards along the George Street corridor. Aboveground electric and telephone utility lines are still in use throughout the District.



North Queen Street near York Street



North George Street

- ***Parks and Recreation Areas*** – The Westminster Park is located on North Queen Street and is the only park or recreation area currently in the Stadium District. It has both a green area and hard surface play area that are extensively used by neighborhood children.



Westminster Park on North Queen Street

4.3 Housing

The Stadium District includes a variety of owner-occupied and rental housing, primarily located along Arch and Queen Streets. The majority of this housing consists of late nineteenth and early twentieth century row houses. The York Towne House, a senior citizen high-rise, is located in the 300 block of North Duke Street, and the Lofts on George, an adaptive reuse project, is in the 300 block of North George Street.



Composite photo of Arch Street houses



York Towne House senior high-rise

4.4 Commercial Activity

- ***Rail Activity*** – Currently, a large part of the commercial activity in the area immediately around the proposed Stadium site relates to deliveries by rail and the movement of cargo from train cars to ground transportation. While the rail lines are expected to remain active, much of this activity would be relocated along with the transloading facility as part of the Outdoor Recreation Complex project itself. This reduction in rail traffic also would greatly reduce the amount of staging and switching occurring in the neighborhood. Much of this

work takes place with the trains physically located across North George and North Queen Streets, triggering the crossing gates and delaying vehicular traffic.

- **Businesses** – There are several customer-oriented businesses that are located along George, Duke and North Streets. Many of the businesses expect customers to arrive by car, and have on-site surface parking lots. The Yorktown Mall between North Duke and Queen and the associated office building across Duke Street date from a 1970s redevelopment project. Other businesses such as Life Touch Prestige Portraits (the former Blatner's Photographers) and Barry Advertising are in historic buildings now adaptively reused. Other historic buildings such as the rail sheds along North Street are being used for warehousing and similar uses, but are candidates for adaptive reuse.



Life Touch Prestige Portraits on North Street



Barry Advertising on North Street

- **Industry** – Several industrial concerns operate in the Stadium District. The largest is Metso Minerals which has operated on this site on Arch Street for more than one hundred years. Some of the smaller companies are expected to relocate if the neighborhood is redeveloped, but there is also the potential for redevelopment to accommodate some companies' expansion.

4.5 Codorus Creek

The Codorus Creek winds through York City in an reverse S-curve. In the north end, the Creek parallels Arch Street and then curves to follow Loucks Mill Road. While at one time flooding frequently occurred along its banks, flood control projects initiated after the major floods of 1933 and 1972 built up the banks, directed the channel and reduced flooding.

The Codorus Creek Improvement Association has been working for a number of years to improve the Creek and its banks, and to increase appreciation for the Creek. Within the last two years, several groups have come together to expand this effort and advocate with the Army Corps of Engineers for major improvements. These efforts are gaining momentum and several proposals have been discussed to provide additional access to the Creek and link redevelopment with the waterfront.



Codorus Creek from North George Street Bridge looking northeast

4.6 Historical Background

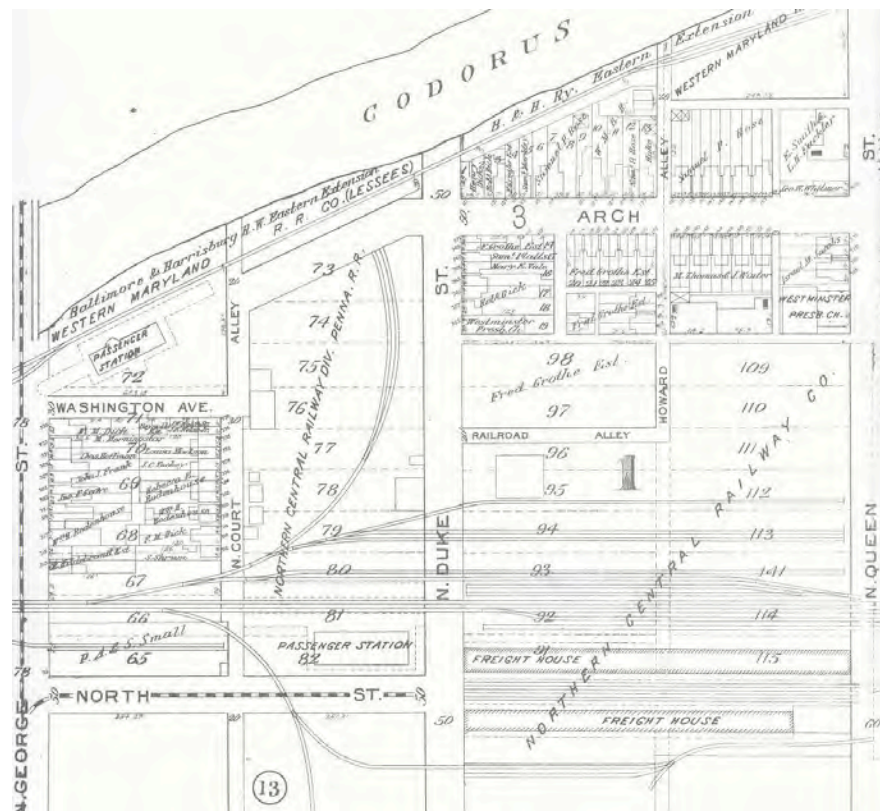
While York was laid out in 1741, the north end remained largely undeveloped until the nineteenth century and the advent of the railroad. The 1876 York County Pennsylvania Illustrated Atlas (reprinted 1994 by Windmill Publications) shows the Northern Central Railway tracks crossing what was then York Borough along North Street. Multiple track spurs extended north and south of the main line between North Court and North Queen Streets. In addition to the freight yards, the map also identifies several companies and the Northern Central passenger station both of which brought people — workers and travelers — into the neighborhood. Arch Street consists of only half a block between North Duke Street and North Howard Avenue. The north/south streets extend to the banks of the Codorus.



1876 York County Pennsylvania Illustrated Atlas (detail)

The 1887 Sanborn Insurance Company map of York shows much more industrial and residential development. Westminster Church is illustrated at its original location on North Duke Street on this map although a new church designed by local architect J.A. Dempwolf would be built later that year on North Queen Street. The focus of the area continued to be the railroad and associated industries, employers of many of the neighborhood's residents.

By 1900, a second rail line through York was built by the Baltimore & Harrisburg Railway and leased to the Western Maryland Railroad. This rail line was placed along the southern bank of the Codorus, separating the neighborhood from the creek. The 1903 Atlas of the City of York (reprinted 1994 by Windmill Publications) shows the Western Maryland passenger station on the east side of North George Street at the Creek and a new Northern Central Railway Company passenger station at the corner of North Duke and North Streets where it remains intact today. On this map, Arch Street extends from Loucks Mill Road on the east as far west as North Court Alley, deadending behind the Western Maryland passenger station.



1903 Atlas of the City of York (detail)

Current oral tradition suggests that the Creek was a key part of the neighborhood despite the dividing railroad tracks. The explanation for the residents' nickname "swampers" was that, when the Codorus went over its banks, this area was always flooded. Local history also suggests

that the neighborhood tended to focus inward as it was cut off from other neighborhoods by multiple railroad tracks both north and south as well as the Creek.

During the 20th century, the railroad traffic gradually declined and passenger service was eventually discontinued, reducing the number of people passing through the neighborhood. Some new companies located in the north end while the residential component remained stable. According to research conducted by Historic York, Inc., Westminster Park was created in 1945 on land sold to the City for \$1.00 by the Pennsylvania Railroad, successor to the Northern Central. Redevelopment changed the landscape of the District in the 1970s when the Farquhar Farm Implements Manufacturing facility was replaced by an office building, the Yorktown Mall, the York Towne House senior high-rise housing and associated parking lots.

5.0 Community Interview Findings

Eighteen interviews with a cross section of the community including property owners, elected and appointed government officials, business owners, developers and other stakeholders took place during September, October and November 2005. A total of 32 people participated in this aspect of the process, and they identified a variety of issues they believe should be addressed to maintain or improve the quality of life in the Stadium District.

Three closely related topics were mentioned in half of the interviews, receiving the most attention. These issues are the need for **high-quality pedestrian routes** which are **well-lighted** and **feel safe to pedestrians**. The interviewees generally supported the concept of stadium visitors making use of existing public and private parking dispersed throughout the City. However, they believe that improved streetscapes and bright, inviting streets will be critical to providing a positive experience for attendees walking through the City of York to reach the stadium. Those interviewed clearly are interested in encouraging high-density development in addition to the stadium project to generate active and exciting urban street life in the Stadium District and the downtown. While some visitors to the proposed outdoor recreation complex might limit their trip to the event itself, the interviewees would like to see people who work and live in York walking from other sectors of the downtown to events, and visitors extending their visits to include nearby activities before, after or independent of stadium events.

In seven interviews, there was discussion of the importance of **connecting the Stadium District with other redevelopment projects** in the North End of York City, specifically redevelopment of the Northwest Triangle area and efforts to improve the Broad Street corridor/Northeast Neighborhood area, east of the Stadium District.

The following topics were noted in one-third of the interviews:

- **Urban flavor** – Several interviewees noted that the design of the proposed outdoor recreation complex should fit into the existing neighborhood and use such urban design elements as frontage on the street, limited on-grade parking, similar materials to existing buildings and high-quality, pedestrian-oriented streetscape connections.
- **Gateways** – Since the proposed outdoor recreation complex will be reached via several routes, there was discussion of the importance of these gateways and the views of the structure along the gateways. Interviewees believe that out-of-town visitors will use North and South George Street and North Duke Street while local visitors also will use Loucks Mill Road and North Queen Street.
- **Vehicular Traffic** – There was concern expressed about the level and movement of vehicular traffic through and around the district. The interviewees' perception is that heavy traffic is already characteristic of the area, and this issue must be closely monitored. For example, additional and/or improved intersection signaling might be required over time. Event sponsors should use a variety of methods to manage traffic including advance information provided to attendees, permanent and temporary signage, staff directing traffic, parking incentives, etc.
- **Rail Traffic** – The interviewees discussed the current level of rail traffic, and especially the way it can impact vehicular circulation by blocking intersections. There is an expectation that over the next five to ten years, the amount of rail traffic will decrease as industry changes. The relocation of the transloading facility now at North and North Queen Streets as

part of the Outdoor Recreation Complex project would have an immediate impact in the area by reducing the amount of rail traffic. The relocation also would significantly reduce the switching and staging that currently occurs across vehicular intersections and improve the traffic flow. However, new pedestrian walkways across the rail lines must be designed for maximum safety.

- **Recreation and green space** – Existing recreation areas in the district should be maintained and green space, especially along the Codorus Creek, should be improved and made more accessible. There was concern that the City would not be required to take responsibility for small grass or landscaped parcels around the Outdoor Recreation Complex site, but that these parcels would be incorporated into the stadium footprint.
- **Reuse of buildings** – While many interviewees expect redevelopment in the district as a result of the stadium construction, they would like to see the existing buildings reused. They appreciate the variety of building styles, and want to retain the character of the City neighborhood. Where there are infill projects, one interviewee noted that high-quality contemporary design would be the best way to “honor” the existing architecture.

6.0 Community Workshop Findings

6.1 Vision Session/Public Workshop – September 14, 2005

The first public workshop gathered a group of interested individuals to meet with the consultant team. The team shared their impressions of the Stadium District based on the existing condition assessment, and then the community members gave their input. A total of twenty-eight individuals attended and their names are included in Appendix B. A copy of the agenda also is in Appendix B. The comments from participants are summarized below within topics.

- **Pedestrian Experience** – There was considerable discussion about the desired pedestrian experience, especially as people walk five to ten minutes from dispersed parking areas to the Outdoor Recreation Complex. Good signage and quality streetscape improvements including lighting would be important. Some thought that the amount of time spent walking to the stadium — even five to ten minutes — would be a negative factor for people attending events. Others suggested that streetscape improvements and redevelopment would encourage pedestrian activity. The meeting participants stressed the need for safety at rail and street crossings, but some also noted that there are cities that take advantage of railroad presence as a positive element. There were concerns about the current level of crime in the areas surrounding the proposed stadium, especially at night, and that crime would deter people from walking between parking areas and the stadium. Perhaps a bike patrol or an increased police presence would be needed. Some people were interested in the idea of a pedestrian bridge across the Codorus Creek from Small Field to the Stadium District although others felt that focusing on parking to the north of the stadium would not help the downtown pedestrian activity.

- **Parking** – Comments about parking ranged from the need for handicapped parking adjacent to the stadium to the possibility of using shuttle buses to outlying parking areas. Concern was expressed that there should be long-term planning for parking throughout the City — possibly including structured parking in or immediately adjacent to the Stadium District — as additional development is only going to increase the demand for convenient parking in the downtown. Since the parking would be located throughout downtown, good wayfinding was considered to be key to helping visitors find available parking. There was discussion as noted above concerning the construction of a pedestrian bridge across the Codorus Creek for people parking at Small Field should the School District of the City of York pursue this idea of parking as income generator.
- **Capital investment** – Several participants emphasized that investment and redevelopment in the neighborhood and in York City should occur as a result of the Outdoor Recreation Complex project. There was concern that new businesses in the Stadium District could compete with businesses in the Central Business District of the City rather than connecting and strengthening downtown. It was suggested that investment in the Stadium District could include façade improvements, streetscape improvements, a hotel project and redevelopment of specific sites such as the Yorktown Mall on North Duke Street and the former York County Prison on Chestnut Street. Rezoning might be required. Some of the investment might involve assisting current residents to improve their properties. There was interest in preserving and reusing old buildings with the opportunity to adaptively reuse existing buildings in immediate proximity to the stadium or located on nearby streets. There also was mention of incorporating public art into the district. While some participants expressed concern about the impact of stadium events on

residents, others believed that the neighborhood could include both residential and commercial uses. There was discussion that any investment should not be concentrated only in the immediate stadium site itself, but should extend outward and connect to the Northwest Triangle and the Broad Street area. The Stadium District should be considered a gateway into the City of York. Marketing and promotion also should be carefully considered as the stadium could become a key tourist destination.

- **Connection to the Codorus Creek** – A number of people were interested in having the Outdoor Recreation Complex visually and physically relate to the Codorus Creek. The stadium could be designed to provide views of the Codorus from the left field concourse. If the Creek is improved, there also could be interaction with the water through strategic direct access points. Open green space and pedestrian trails would be a positive element in the district and connect it to other areas of the City and County.
- **Traffic** – Current residents noted that there are times when vehicular and pedestrian traffic already is congested in the neighborhood, especially due to the movement of railroad cars. Traffic issues must be addressed including access for emergency vehicles. New traffic lights and intersection improvements might be required. Perhaps there should be an effort to encourage people to bike to the stadium.

6.2 Vision Session/Public Workshop – October 25, 2005

The second public workshop focused on the presentation of preliminary planning and design concepts for the physical environment vision. A total of twenty-five individuals attended the session and are listed in Appendix C. The goals, strategies and recommendations were refined as a result of this session and are detailed in section 7.0.

This workshop elicited questions and discussion ranging over a wide variety of topics including the route for deliveries to the stadium via Arch and George Streets, the importance of coordinating available parking through public and private providers, adding a public transportation stop at the stadium, and studying the need for residential parking permits for Arch Street residents. There was a suggestion that the redesign of Westminster Park allow for the park to be included in some stadium activities during baseball games while not requiring a ticket for admittance. Attendees encouraged the strengthening of the existing Northeast Neighborhood Association and the expansion of the existing City façade improvement program to include residential projects. One participant noted that institutional partners would not have to be immediately adjacent to the stadium, as, for example, expanding the current Business Improvement District. There was a question about whether potential redevelopment sites identified in the Vision Plan would be improved by the Redevelopment Authority with the response that there should be proactive public and private efforts to improve the Stadium District.

7.0 Physical Environment Vision

After reviewing the community input and analyzing the provided information and team fieldwork, the consultant team prepared two immediate physical vision plan options, a short-term physical vision plan and a long-term physical environment vision plan for the proposed Stadium District. The plans are based upon specific goals and strategies.

7.1 Goals

- Weave the new stadium seamlessly into the urban fabric of the North End of York City in a visually stimulating manner.
- Improve the quality of life for residents and businesses within the District; and, provide a positive experience for visitors to the District.
- Provide a catalyst for adaptive reuse and redevelopment opportunities in a mixed-use North End that will benefit the City and the County — linked with similar projects within the Northwest Triangle, North George Street Corridor and the North East Neighborhood.

7.2 Strategies

- Present design and planning ideas to maximize the stadium's urban location, visual image, and its pedestrian access.
- Recommend physical environment improvements of the City gateways, streetscapes, building facades and other elements to enhance and extend "connections".
- Identify and promote reinvestment in existing properties, and also new construction for high-quality commercial, residential and professional office uses in, and linked to, the Stadium District.



Option 1 (left) fits the Outdoor Recreation Complex into the area west of Howard Avenue and south of Arch Street. This option uses street frontage on Arch as a key boundary, respecting the urban setting. A limited amount of on-site parking can be accommodated west of Queen. An east/west pedestrian route is created along the southern boundary of the site.



Option 2 (right) brings the Outdoor Recreation Complex closer to the waterfront by closing Arch Street from Duke Street west and using that area as a plaza and pedestrian route. This option also uses Arch Street as a key boundary, and provides for a limited amount of on-site parking. The east/west pedestrian route along the southern boundary of the site remains a key feature.

7.3 Immediate Physical Vision Plan for the Stadium District (0-2 years)

- **Consider one design option for the siting of the stadium** west of Howard Avenue and south of Arch Street. This alternative fits the stadium into the neighborhood as a strong element of the urban fabric.
- **Consider an alternative design idea for the siting of the stadium.** By closing Arch Street west of North Duke Street, the pedestrian areas around the stadium would be expanded. This option also would allow for direct pedestrian access to the Codorus Creek and other nearby green space.
- Give careful attention to the **exterior appearance of the stadium** to emphasize the unique architectural setting that this City location offers.
- Create an **outdoor public gathering place** (plaza) at George and North Streets integrated into the stadium plan with interpretation of the area's history.
- Enhance **safe pedestrian access** from George, North, Duke, and Queen Streets into the stadium site with lighting, signage, well-marked safe rail crossings and other amenities.
- Maintain and improve **Westminster Park** — both the “green” and “active recreational” components.
- Ensure that **access routes** to available event parking event staff, marketing brochures and a variety of other means.
- Integrate and connect adjacent **Codorus Creek waterfront** “park” areas into the Stadium site.
- Develop a **façade improvement program** for area residents and businesses.
- Encourage existing local organizations to partner with the City as **advocates** for the Northeast neighborhood.



7.4 Short-term Physical Vision Plan for the Stadium District (2-7 years)

- Continue to enhance **safe pedestrian routes** to the stadium by improving the surrounding streets with general street lighting and decorative lighting fixtures, sidewalk replacements/repairs, trees, banners, trash receptacles, curb cuts and other upgrades.
- Review vehicular and rail impact on the **traffic flow** on surrounding streets, and recommend improvements, if needed.
- **Extend North Street** from the Stadium District west into Neighborhood.
- Encourage **private mixed-use reinvestment** at key sites adjacent to the immediate stadium site.
- Support **linked redevelopment** in the Northwest Triangle.
- Enhance and connect **York Street and Broad Street redevelopment initiatives** to the Stadium District including **significant residential rehabilitation/redevelopment** of the Northeast Neighborhood, major streetscape and new infill housing projects along with comprehensive community support initiatives.
- **Extend the Heritage Rail Trail County Park.**
- Incorporate **interpretation** of the neighborhood's rail and other history into the entire Stadium District.



7.5 Long-term Physical Vision Plan for the Stadium District (7-20 years)

- Continue to encourage **private mixed-use reinvestment** at key sites adjacent to and near the stadium.
- Continue to support **linked redevelopment** in the Northwest Triangle.
- Continue to enhance and connect **York Street and Broad Street redevelopment initiatives** to the Stadium District including **significant residential rehabilitation/redevelopment** of the Northeast Neighborhood, major streetscape and new infill housing projects along with comprehensive community support initiatives.
- **Connect improvements** along the Codorus Creek and other proposed projects in that area such as the Heritage Parkway with the stadium.



View 1
Looking east from North George Street

- The **outdoor plaza** is a City gathering place during events and at other times.
- **Safe pedestrian access** along the street and across the railroad tracks enables people to walk to events from their homes, offices and parking.





View 2

Looking south from North George Street, north of the Codorus Creek

- The **appearance of the stadium** fits with its York City context.
- **Safe pedestrian access** along the street and across the railroad tracks enables people to walk to events from their homes, offices and parking.
- **Private mixed-use redevelopment** adjacent to the Recreation Complex creates a vital and varied urban experience.
- **Interpretation** of the district's history is incorporated into the plaza and the surrounding areas.
- The **Codorus Creek waterfront** is connected to the Recreation Complex.





View 3
Looking north on North Duke Street,
north of Gas Avenue

- **Safe pedestrian access** along the street and across the railroad tracks enables people to walk to events from their homes, offices and parking.
- **Private mixed-use redevelopment** adjacent to the Recreation Complex creates a vital and varied urban experience.
- **Interpretation** of the district's history is incorporated into the plaza and the surrounding areas.
- **Access routes** to event parking are clearly visible.





View 4
Looking northwest on Queen Street,
north of North Street

- **Westminster Park** has been maintained and improved.
- **Interpretation** of the district's history is incorporated into the Stadium District.
- **Safe pedestrian access** along the street and across the railroad tracks enables people to walk to events from their homes, offices and parking.
- A **façade improvement program** assists residents, businesses and institutions.





View 5
Long-term potential for the Stadium District

- The **appearance of the stadium** fits with its York City context.
- **North Street is extended** to the east and west.
- **Linked redevelopment** connects the Stadium District with the Northwest Triangle and the Northeast Neighborhood.
- **Private mixed-use redevelopment** adjacent to the Recreation Complex creates a vital and varied urban experience.
- The **Codorus Creek waterfront** is connected to the Recreation Complex.



7.7 Relevant Examples

Many other cities have dealt with similar issues in their downtowns related to streetscapes, pedestrian safety and the like. They have developed useful solutions that can be adapted to York.

Gateways and Streetscapes



Greenville, SC



Greenville, SC



Petoskey, MI



Denver, CO



Towson, MD

Gateways and Streetscapes



Greenville, SC



Bethesda, MD



Bethesda, MD



Denver, CO



Baltimore, MD



Leesburg, VA

Vehicular/Pedestrian Accommodations



Greenville, SC



Greenville, SC



Columbia, MD



Bethesda, MD



Cleveland, OH



Dover, DE

Rail Crossings/Barriers



Baltimore, MD



Denver, CO



Baltimore, MD



Baltimore, MD



Baltimore, MD



Madrid, Spain

Plazas



Memphis, TN



San Francisco, CA



Bethesda, MD



Denver, CO



Rehobeth Beach, DE



Baltimore, MD

Waterfront



Denver, CO



Denver, CO



Denver, CO



Greenville, SC



Greenville, SC

Parks and Play Areas



Columbia, MD



Memphis, TN



Charlotte, NC



Arlington, VA



New York, NY



Abbeville, SC

Redevelopment/New Development



Denver, CO



Denver, CO



Greenville, SC



Memphis, TN



Savannah, GA



Unionville, Ontario

Redevelopment/New development



Denver, CO



Greenville, SC



Memphis, TN



Portland, OR



Pittsburgh, PA



Bethesda, MD

Interpretation



Albuquerque, NM



Greenville, SC



Baltimore, MD



Cumberland, MD



Columbus, GA

8.0 Next Steps

8.1 Policy

- ***Zoning*** – The City of York Planning Commission will need to review the current zoning classifications and initiate the revision process to ensure that uses compatible with the Physical Environment Vision Plan are permitted and encouraged, and incompatible uses are not introduced into the district. Any zoning changes must be approved by the York City Council.
- ***Connection to the Northwest Triangle and the Northeast Neighborhood*** – As clearly articulated by the participants in this planning process, the Stadium District will not exist in a vacuum. Redevelopment in the Stadium District must be linked to other City and County redevelopment efforts, particularly (but not exclusively) in the Northwest Triangle and the Northeast Neighborhood/Broad Street redevelopment area. The City of York, the York City Redevelopment Authority, the York City Planning Commission and other stakeholders must utilize a larger perspective in directing these redevelopment efforts as they occur over time.
- ***Funding*** – The City of York will direct its departments and authorities to place high priority on the pursuit of funding for infrastructure and other projects to support those elements of the Vision Plan. Research into potential funding sources will be needed in addition to responding to publicized grant opportunities.

8.2 Infrastructure

- ***Streetscapes and pedestrian routes*** – Improve sidewalks, curbs, lighting and crosswalks and add street trees and trash receptacles. This work should begin with George, North, Duke and Queen Streets in the first two years, and continue with other streets during the short-term and long-term.

- ***Rail crossings*** – Upgrade the existing rail crossings, especially for pedestrian traffic. A new rail crossing also is planned for North Duke Street at the plaza. These crossings will make use of fences and/or shrubbery, planters, clear sightlines, perpendicular walkways, signage and gates to ensure the safety of pedestrians.
- ***Gateways and traffic improvements*** – Monitor traffic flow and potential congestion within the stadium district over time. Improve key City gateways from North and South George Streets and Loucks Mill Road. Coordinate with other possible initiatives such as the proposed Heritage Parkway.
- ***Extension of North Street*** – As redevelopment occurs east of the proposed outdoor recreation complex, utilize land formerly occupied by rail lines to extend North Street to meet North Broad Street. North Street also will be extended to the west as part of the Northwest Triangle Redevelopment Plan.

8.3 Public Funding

Public funding, particularly of infrastructure improvements, should be secured by the City of York as there are a number of grant programs for which the City is an eligible applicant. While it will not be possible, in almost all cases, for the local matching funds required by many of these funding sources to be provided through existing local government revenues, every effort should be made to secure private matches in order to access these grants.

8.4 Private Funding

The City of York is experiencing a growing interest by private investors in the redevelopment of City sites. This Vision Plan highlights several critical sites within the Stadium District and emphasizes the key role of private investment in the redevelopment process. The City, the Redevelopment Authority and other City agencies should exploit every opportunity to encourage

private funding of improvements when these opportunities fit within the goals of the Vision Plan.

8.5 Advocacy

Enhancing existing partnerships and strengthening grassroots efforts will be of great benefit to the evolution of the Stadium District over both the short-term and the long-term. Community efforts also will assist the linked redevelopment in the Northwest Triangle, the Broad Street redevelopment area and the Northeast Neighborhood.

Advocates for the residents, the neighborhood, the North End and the City are required in order for the Vision Plan to become reality. This advocacy role could be undertaken by a strengthened Northeast Neighborhood Association and/or by expanding the Business Improvement District to include the Stadium District.

8.6 Projects

- ***Stadium siting and design*** – The Vision Plan illustrates two options for the siting of the stadium. One option fits the stadium into the available space south of Arch Street while the second option utilizes the area available if Arch Street were closed west of North Duke Street. Both options emphasize creating pedestrian connections, integrating the stadium placement within its urban neighborhood, and fully developing the exterior design of sections of all of the stadium façades that will be visible from visitor gateways. At the same time, these options work to limit adjacent on-grade parking and odd grass strips that would be difficult to maintain.
- ***Public plaza and Westminster Park*** – At the time that the stadium is constructed, areas adjacent to it on the east and the west should be improved and incorporated into the stadium site as public open spaces. The proposed Brooks Robinson Plaza at the North George Street entrance to the stadium will create a gathering space that can be a unique and dynamic place during events and also at other times. The green area and hardscape of

Westminster Park are both actively used by the neighborhood. The park should be refurbished and continue to be available to the public.

- ***Access to parking*** – A basic premise of the development of the outdoor recreation complex is that on-grade and structured parking sufficient to accommodate visitors will be dispersed throughout the district and beyond. The parking options must be clearly identified through the use of very visible signage, event staff, marketing brochures, structured parking incentives and a variety of other means.
- ***Connection to the Codorus*** – Efforts already are underway to integrate the Codorus Creek more closely into the fabric of the City both visually and physically. The redevelopment of the Stadium District offers multiple opportunities to enhance the relationship between the water and the adjacent areas, encouraging residents and visitors to enjoy the creek's natural beauty. Through careful siting, the concourse level of the stadium itself could offer interesting views north and west across the Creek. Other potential projects include managing the vegetation and terracing the creek banks, decorating and lighting the bridges, providing public access to the banks and encouraging development that overlooks the creek such as restaurants.
- ***Extension of the Heritage Rail Trail County Park*** – The strategic plan for the Heritage Rail Trail County Park calls for the trail to be extended north from West Philadelphia Street and overlook the stadium site from the north bank of the Codorus Creek. This work will support and enhance the district's connection to the creek, and offer additional recreational opportunities to visitors.
- ***Façade Improvement Program*** – A program to assist residents and business owners in the Stadium District could be

implemented through public, private or both types of funding. The program could be administered by the City of York or by a non-profit such as the Northeast Neighborhood Association.

- ***Historical Interpretation*** – Interpretive information about the history and traditions of the area will be an enhancement throughout the District, especially to the increasing number of visitors attracted by redevelopment. This information can be placed at specific locations associated with historical events or along pedestrian routes. The photo plaques, brochures and/or tours must be of consistently high quality. They can be produced within the context of a specific redevelopment project as an aspect of the design or multiple materials can be prepared by one stakeholder such as the City, the York County Heritage Trust or the Northeast Neighborhood Association.

8.7 Vision Plan Implementation Timing Matrix

Task	0 - 2 years	Years 2-7	Years 7-20
Determine and implement Stadium siting in urban context	X		
Determine and implement Stadium exterior appearance	X		
Create outdoor public gathering place	X		
Enhance safe pedestrian access	X	X	X
Maintain and improve Westminster Park	X	X	
Create visible and clearly marked access routes to parking	X		
Integrate Codorus Creek green spaces into the Stadium	X	X	
Encourage advocates for the Northeast Neighborhood	X		
Develop a Stadium District façade improvement program	X		
Monitor traffic flow and make improvements if needed		X	X
Encourage private mixed-use redevelopment		X	X
Extend the Heritage Rail Trail County Park		X	
Extend North Street to the east and west		X	
Incorporate historic interpretation into the Stadium District		X	
Support linked redevelopment in the Northwest Triangle		X	X
Support redevelopment in Northeast Neighborhood/Broad Street		X	X
Connect other improvements to the District			X

8.8 Vision Plan Role Matrix

Policy Tasks	Direct Action	Assist	Advocate
Zoning Review	City of York	Design Professionals	Community members, BID/Main Street York, Chamber
Linked Redevelopment	City of York	Private Developers, Business Community	BID/Main Street York, Chamber, Northeast Neighborhood Assoc., Community members
Funding Priority	City of York	City Departments and Authorities	Community members, BID/Main Street York, Chamber
Infrastructure Tasks			
Streetscapes and pedestrian routes	City of York	County of York, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Federal Government	BID/Main Street York, Northeast Neighborhood Assoc., Convention & Visitors Bureau ,Community members
Rail Crossings	City of York, Railroad companies	County of York, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Federal Government	Northeast Neighborhood Assoc., Convention & Visitors Bureau , Community members
Gateway and traffic improvements	City of York	County of York, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Federal Government	BID/Main Street York, Northeast Neighborhood Assoc., Convention & Visitors Bureau , Community members
Extension of North Street	City of York	County of York, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Federal Government	Northeast Neighborhood Assoc., Community members, Private Developers
Public Funding	City of York	Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Federal Government, Private matching funds	Community members
Private Funding	Private Developers, Non- profit organizations	City of York, Private and Corporate Foundations, Donations	Community members
Advocacy	BID/Main Street York, Northeast Neighborhood Assoc.	Community members	
Projects			
Stadium Siting and Design	Redevelopment Authority, Industrial Development Authority, Construction Manager	Design Professionals	Community Members

Public Plaza and Westminster Park	Redevelopment Authority, Industrial Development Authority, Construction Manager, City of York	Design Professionals	Community Members
Access to Parking	Industrial Development Authority, Keystone Baseball	Design Professionals	Community Members, BID/Main Street York, Convention & Visitors Bureau, Chamber
Connection to the Codorus	Redevelopment Authority, Industrial Development Authority, Construction Manager, Codorus Creek Improvement Assoc, Private Developers	Army Corps of Engineers, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Design Professionals, Convention & Visitors Bureau	Community Members
Rail Trail Extension	York County Rail Trail Authority	Codorus Creek Improvement Assoc., Convention & Visitors Bureau, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Federal Government	Community Members
Façade Improvement Program	City of York, Historic York, Inc.	Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Federal Government, Private and Corporate Foundations, Donations	Northeast Neighborhood Assoc., Community Members
Historical Interpretation	York County Heritage Trust, Historic York, Inc., Convention & Visitors Bureau, City of York	Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Federal Government, Private and Corporate Foundations, Donations	Community Members

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Redevelopment Authority Board

Henry B. Leader, Chairman

David Cross, Vice Chairman

Michael J. Black, Treasurer

Katie Bell, Assistant Treasurer

Jerry Gutowski

Donald Hoyt, Solicitor

Matthew Jackson, Secretary

Lyn Wilski, Staff

Appendix B

September 14, 2005 Public Meeting List of Attendees

Darrell Auterson
Ron Billet
Dusan Bratic
Joan Burgasser
Bill Dick
Marlies Dick
Leigh Fitz
Nancy Green
Steve Hevel
Mike Hoover
Craig Kauffman
Dave Keech
Robert Kinsley
Daina Klimanis
Matt Leisses
Jessica Martin
Katie Miles
Blanda Nace
R. Orr
Genevive Ray
Janis Rozelle
Lee Smallwood
Kim Smith
Joe Sykes
Gerry Turner
Vickie Washington
Bob Wright
Jay Zimnicky II

York City Stadium District Vision Session/Public Workshop

September 14, 2005

AGENDA

7:00 P.M. – 9:30 P.M.

- I. Welcome and Introductions**
Matthew Jackson, York City Redevelopment Authority
- II Vision Overview and Workshop Objectives**
Frank Dittenhafer AIA, Murphy & Dittenhafer, Inc.
- III Stadium District Site Data Review/Analysis**
- IV. Physical Environment Improvement Issue Discussion**
 - A. Vehicular
 - B. Pedestrian
 - C. Streetscape Enhancements
 - D. Safety
 - E. Corridors and Gateways
 - F. Neighborhood
 - G. Recreation
 - H. Land Use
 - I. Building Usage
 - J. Economic Development/Community Development
 - K. Other
- V. Next Steps/Wrap Up**

If you have comments at a later date, please do not hesitate to contact:

Matt Jackson 849-2203 mjackson@yorkcity.org

Gail Dennis 848-8627 gld@murphdittarch.com

Appendix C

October 25, 2005 Public Meeting List of Attendees

Randy Angle
David Beecher
Betsy Buckingham
Joan Burgasser
Randy Campbell
Jane Conover
Janet Fink
Tom Foust
Jean Frey
Rev. Charlie Gross
Donna Haley
Kathy Helfrich
Norma Koch
Joe Musso
Blanda Nace
Anthony Pinkney
John Seebold
Russ N. Eusten Sellman
Chrystal Sexton-McEachin
Samuel Shaffer
Carole Stabley
Larry Stets
Pastor David Tarelofai
Cameron Texter
Doris Wooten

**York City Stadium District
Vision Session/Public Workshop**
October 25, 2005

AGENDA
7:00 P.M. – 9:00 P.M.

- I. Welcome and Introductions**
Matthew Jackson, Redevelopment Authority
- II. Design Team Introductions and Workshop Format**
Frank Dittenhafer AIA, Murphy & Dittenhafer, Inc.
- III. Vision Overview, Goals and Strategies**
Gail Dennis, Murphy & Dittenhafer, Inc.
- IV. Physical Vision Plan Review**
Frank Dittenhafer, AIA and Todd Grove, AIA
 - Immediate Improvements — two options
 - Short Term Improvements/Redevelopment
 - Long Term Improvements/Redevelopment/ New Construction
- V. Physical Environment Issue Review**
Thomas McGilloway ASLA, Mahan Rykiel Associates, Inc.
 - Gateways and Streetscapes — George, Duke, Queen, North
 - Vehicular/Pedestrian Accommodations
 - Brooks Robinson Plaza
 - Parks and Play Areas
 - Rail Crossings
 - Vehicular Accommodations
 - Redevelopment and New Development Opportunities
 - Historic interpretation
- VI. Questions and Discussion**
- VII. Next Steps/Wrap Up**
Matthew Jackson, Redevelopment Authority

If you have comments, please do not hesitate to contact:
Matthew Jackson 849-2203 mjackson@yorkcity.org
Gail Dennis 848-8627 gld@murphdittarch.com

Appendix D

Stadium District Physical Environment Vision Planning Process Interview List

Louis Appell, Susquehanna Pfaltzgraff Company

David Carver, York Redevelopment Authority

Jane Conover, YWCA

David Davidson and Thomas Englerth, C.S. Davidson

Thomas Donley, York County Chamber of Commerce

Melinda Higgins, Historic York, Inc.

Lancaster Barnstormers

Jeffrey Leonard, Metso

Eric Menzer, Wagman Urban Group

Mark Platts, Lancaster — York Heritage Region

Genevive Ray, independent consultant

School District of the City of York Board of School Directors

Chrystal Sexton — McEachin, North East Neighborhood Association

Rev. David Tualofai, Westminster Presbyterian Church

TetraTech, Inc.

Tom Wolf, The Wolf Organization

York City Council

York County Economic Development Corporation staff