



Finding Hope

Remediation and Redevelopment
in Struggling Steelton Borough



Jill Gaito, Gaito & Associates LLC
Moderator

Jonathan Bowser
Integrated Development Partners

Doug Brown
Dauphin County Office of Comm. & Econ. Dev.

Dominick Anselmo
KU Resources

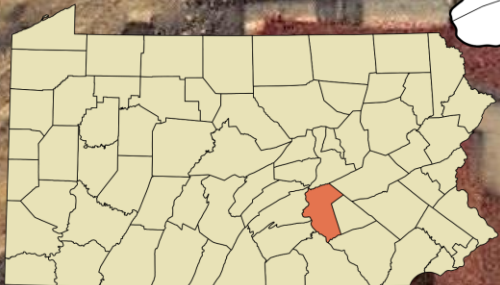
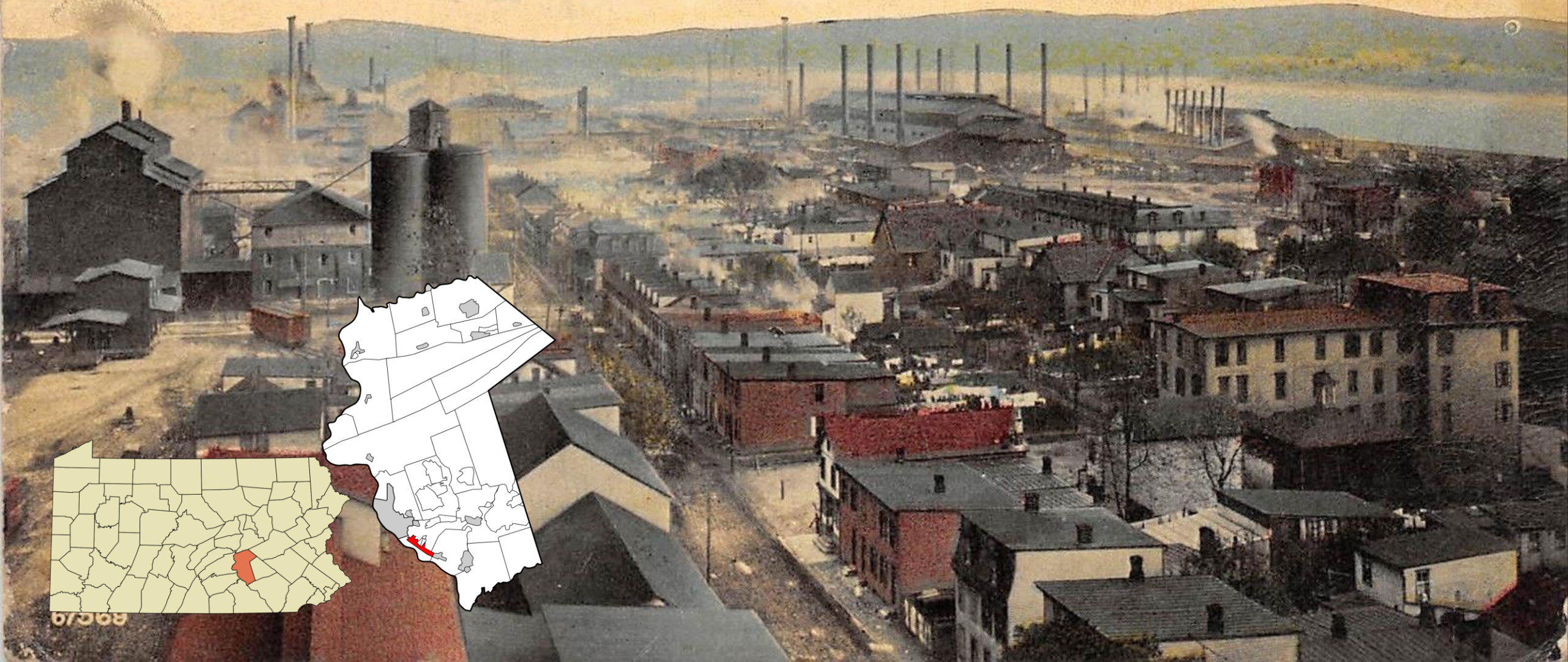
Steelton's Revitalization – Decades of Hope

To tell Steelton's story, we'd like you to know:

- Where we started
- Where we hoped to end up
- Steps taken along the way
- Who helped – financially and otherwise
- Unforeseen hurdles that had to be cleared
- Major achievements through the years
- Where we are today

The Town – Steelton Borough

A small, historic steel town on the Susquehanna River just south of Harrisburg City..



The History



Farmland with six homes

Penn. Steel Co. Constructs Steelton Plant

Steelton Borough Incorporates

Population peaks at 14,000

6,000 employees at steel mill

Robust economy

Diverse and booming downtown with brick mills, machine shops, retail, etc.



Period of stability

Population between 12,000-13,000

Hurricane Agnes destroys West Side

Population declines 24%

Large sections of mill close

Displaced workers move out of town

Businesses shutter

Record low population

Urban flight from Harrisburg City

Property values depressed

Downtown vacant

65% LMI

Highest concentration of poverty in Dauphin County

No developer interest

<1860s

1866

1880

1910

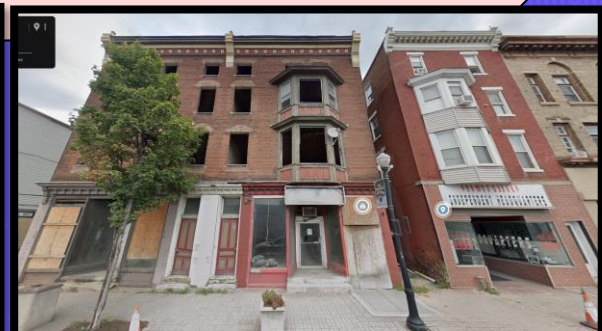
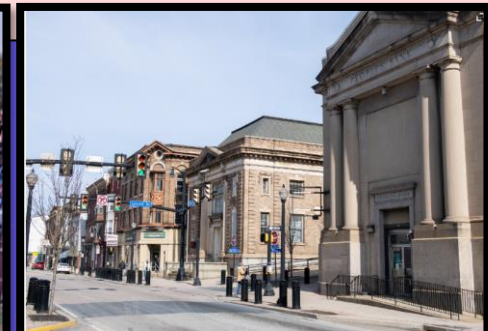
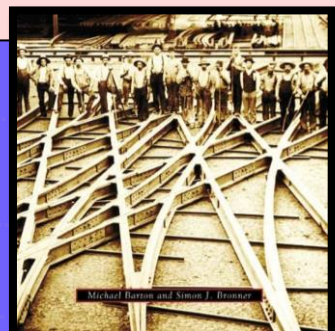
Through 1960s

1972

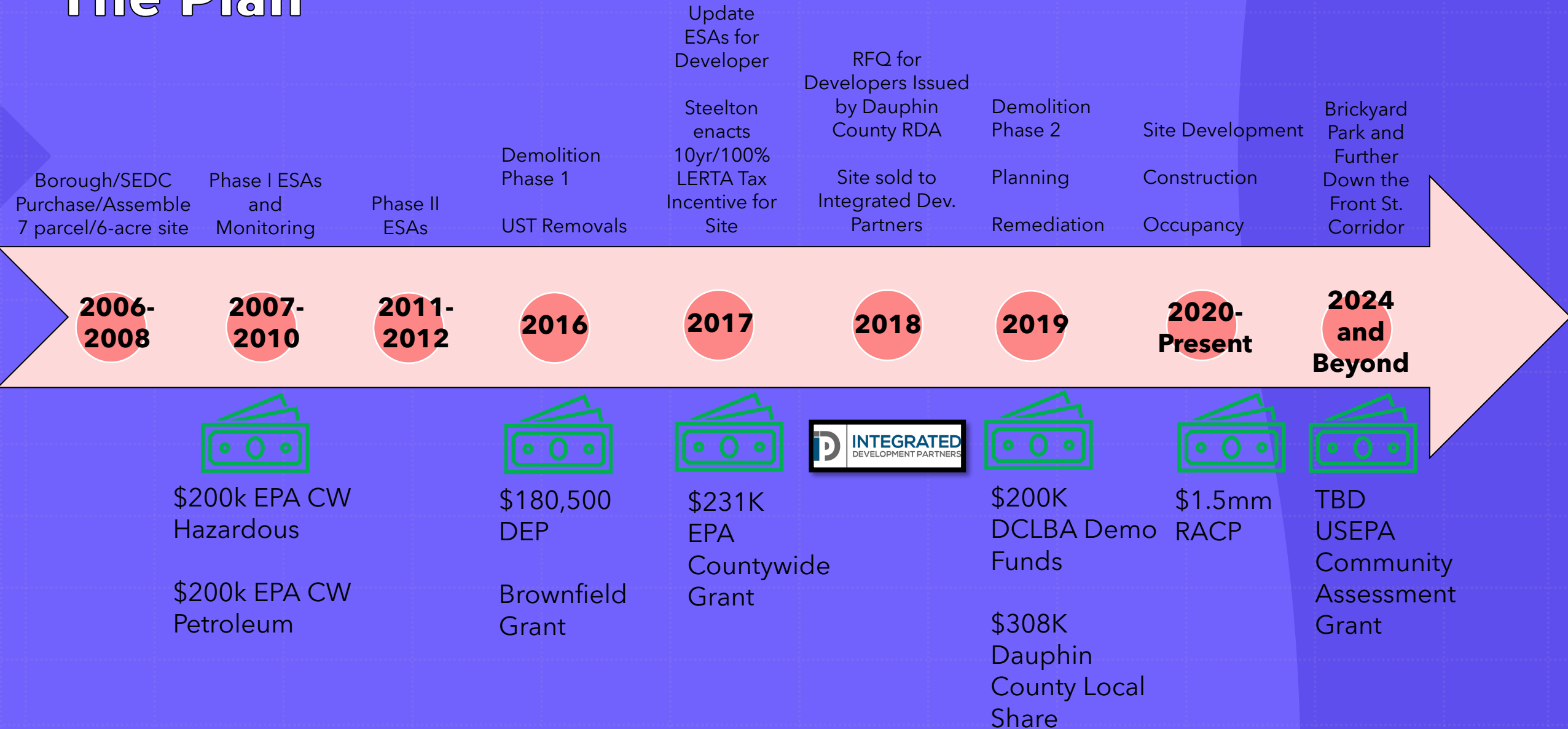
1970s - 1980s

1990

2000s



The Plan



The Site: North Front Street



The Vision



The Site(s)

102-118 North Front Street

Fish vendor, grocery store, closing store, flower shop, storage, office, tailor, apartments, laundry, furniture store, accounting firm, funeral home/undertaker.

REC No. 1: Historic use as undertaker = formaldehyde, arsenic

REC No. 2: Neighboring property SVOCs, VOCs, metals

REC No. 3: ACM, LBP, hazardous/regulated materials stored in buildings



120-140 North Front Street

Furniture maker, cigar production, undertaker, hardware store, garment manufacturing, gas station, mechanic's garage.

REC No. 1: Onsite garages: petroleum constituents, SVOCs

REC No. 2: Hydraulic lifts impact on soil

REC No. 3: Historic use as undertaker

REC No. 4: Atmospheric deposition: lead, mercury, heavy metals attributed to industrial surroundings





154 North Front Street

Residential, gas station, mechanic's garage.

REC No. 1: Onsite garages: petroleum constituents, SVOCs

REC No. 2: Hydraulic lifts impact on soil



180 North Front Street

Residential, warehouse, stable, candy shop, club room, grocery store, steam laundry, YMCA, offices, paint store, movie theater, aluminum doors sales, bar and restaurant

REC No. 1: Potential groundwater impact from neighboring garages. VOCs/HVOCs

REC No. 2: Atmospheric deposition



202-230 North Front Street

Bowling alley, billiards, and shooting gallery, crockery, candy shop, club room, grocery store, steam laundry, opera hall, shirt cutting, wood and coal yard, beauty supply, gas station, bookstore, convenience store.

REC No. 1: History as gas station. Possible unrecognized USTs.



Parking Lot and Canal Alley (L5/L1A)

Pennsylvania canal (filled in 1928), shanties, warehouse, transfer station, Steelton Store Company stock yard, ice manufacturing, refrigeration, and slaughterhouse, stable, blacksmith, PA Steel Company stores and office, auto, church, railroad storage, rail station, UPS fleet storage.

REC No. 1: Unknown drums.

REC No. 2: PA Canal (unknown fill), industrial use.

REC No. 3-6: Impact of neighboring sites.

REC No. 7: Atmospheric deposition.

Soil

- Entire site covered with various fill including PA Canal residuals of unknown origin.
- Arsenic, cadmium, lead, manganese, formaldehyde, six SVOCs
- Metals, SVOC-petroleum, fill related compounds detected in some cases.

Groundwater

- No exceedances detected above PA-DEPs Residential SHS for used aquifers (the most stringent).

Recommendations

- Vapor barrier
- Clean fill (1 ft) above existing grade
- Marker barrier
- PA Act 2 Closure - pathway elimination
- Soil management plan

The Findings and Recommendations

The Steel Works

A community-oriented development



- \$14.8 million capital investment
- Over 100 new jobs created
- Estimated \$220,000 tax revenue after 10 year LERTA abatement ends
- New community health center
- New community park/amphitheater

Steel Works Apartments



Senior Life



Dollar General



Hamilton Health Center



The Brickyard Park



LOT 5
POSED 2 RETAIL
BUILDING
9,760 S.F.
(1-STORY)

DARK SKY COMPLIANT
LED LIGHTING

COMMUNITY OPEN SPACE
FOR FARMERS MARKETS,
PASSIVE RECREATION, AND
OTHER ACTIVITIES

STAGE AND PERGOLA
MADE OUT OF RECLAIMED
MASONRY AND WOOD

BRICKYARD
PARK SIGNAGE

EMERGENCY
ACCESS LANE

NATIVE/NON-NVASIVE TREE
AND ORNAMENTAL PLANTINGS

6FT HIGH ALUMINUM
RAIL FENCE

GREEN SPACE PROMOTES
STORMWATER INFILTRATION AND
GROUNDWATER RECHARGE

LOCUST ST

2023 EPA Brownfield
Assessment Grant Activity

COMING SOON

The Challenges and Successes

Challenges

Tackling the “mountain” with few borough resources.

Making the numbers “work” for a developer, especially in a poor borough with risky ROI.

Maintaining community buy-in over a prolonged development process marked with periods of inactivity and requiring bold policy decisions (LERTA).

Successes

Proved even a small, economically depressed borough can leverage county, state, federal and private partnerships and resources to make major projects happen.

Used the boldest local tax incentives allowable to make the project viable/marketable showing it can work.

Engaged a home-grown developer who established anchor tenants serving community needs while reflecting market realities - Hamilton Health Center, Senior Life, Low-Cost Goods, etc.

Takeaways

- **Be patient and persistent.** This project took nearly 20 years filled with a lot of community skepticism.
- Leverage federal, state, local, and private resources (**both monetary and in-kind**). Even financially struggling communities like Steelton can make it happen.
- Consider **BOLD local incentives** like the LERTA to create interest and “make the numbers work.”
- **Find the right developer.** Sometimes there are more than just financial reasons to invest in a community.
- **Manage** community expectations.



The Team

US EPA

PA DEP

PA DCNR

PA DCED

KU Resources/SGA

Gaito & Associates LLC

Community Networking Resources

Integrated Development Partners

Matt Ward/S2

TRC Environmental Corporation

Rob Goldman

Hull and Associates

HRG, Inc.

Steelton Borough

Steelton Economic Development Corporation

Dauphin County

Dauphin County RDA

Dauphin County Land Bank Authority

**Dauphin County Industrial Development
Authority**

And many more...

Thank you. Questions ?

For more information:

dbrown@dauphincounty.gov

danselmo@kuresources.com

jonathan@steelworkscon.com

jmgaito@comcast.net