



Newsletter for
Our Community & Supporters

Happenings

Spring 2006

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Master Plan Update

Capturing the dreams of the entire community, the RiverPlace Master Plan is now complete. Our vision presented in the Plan links Greater Reading and Berks communities both to the River and each other. Economic development and neighborhood revitalization are central to projects presented. Seeking a broad consensus, the planning process involved the entire community. Over 500 individuals participated.

A full-color Executive Summary can be found on the RiverPlace web site at www.RiverPlacePA.com/master.htm.

Our Plan proposes many projects phased over the next twenty years, coordinating with the Schuylkill River National Heritage Area plan, the Berks County Greenway, Parks, and Recreation Plan, and other local revitalization efforts like the Corridor initiative.

The RiverPlace Team is grateful to all those who made the Master Plan possible, especially the funding and guidance provided by our partners at the Pennsylvania Department of



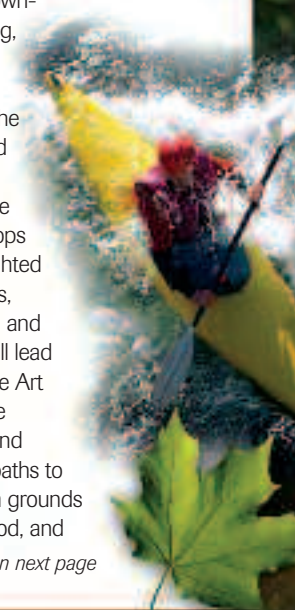
Conservation and Natural Resources, the Schuylkill River National & State Heritage Area and the County of Berks.

Summer Solstice '06

Come join us after work Wednesday, June 21st, for a great evening of music, food, culture, and community as RiverPlace and the Reading Public Museum present a special celebration of the longest day of the year. Summer Solstice 2006 will unveil the new RiverPlace Art Walk, the Wyomissing Creek Trail, the Port of Reading Heritage Trail, the Reading Public Museum environmental art sculpture, and, tentatively, the Museum's new Arboretum Master Plan.

Park in downtown Reading, along Riverfront Drive, or at the Museum and take a free shuttle to one of several stops along highlighted trails. Guides, signs, artists, and musicians will lead you along the Art Walk's gentle downtown and streamside paths to the Museum grounds for music, food, and

continued on next page



free admission from 5–9 p.m. Along the way, you will see over thirty major pieces of permanent public art and four galleries.

Click on www.RiverPlacePa.com/artwalk.htm for more details.

RiverPlace 5K Run

The First Annual RiverPlace Run will be held on Sunday, May 7 beginning and ending at the Field House at Schlegel Park, Lancaster Avenue. The major sponsor for this year's run is **Fromuth Tennis/Running/Fitness**. Supporting sponsors include: **The Works at Wyomissing, Maple Grove Raceway, and Precision Graphics, Inc.** Three 3-month memberships, donated by **Body Zone Sports & Fitness**, will be raffled off at the run.



This year's inaugural race will be a wheel-measured, fast and flat 5k run along the Thun Trail, crossing the Schuylkill River onto paved trails and roads near RACC, then ending at the newly constructed Lancaster Avenue Bridge. A 1.5 Mile Fun Run/Walk will also be held at the same time. Registration forms will be available at local race clubs, shops, gyms, and athletic organizations. On-line registration is available at www.active.com. Registration can also be made on the day of the race beginning at 8:00 a.m. The race begins at 9:00 a.m. Awards will be presented to various age groups of both male and female race finishers. The \$16 entry fee will also include a race t-shirt displaying the new RiverPlace Run '06 logo.

2007 Calendar Contest

RiverPlace Development Corporation invites area photographers and artists to enter our second annual RiverPlace Calendar Contest. Thirteen local images are sought of RiverPlace from Stonecliffe



to Heritage Park. These credited images will be used in a full-color monthly wall calendar and a full-color limited edition print.

First prize will be a \$150 cash award and a free Angelica level membership in RiverPlace (\$100 value). The first prize image will be printed on the calendar cover and will also be printed as a limited edition 11" by 14" print, with copies to be signed by the artist to be used as a membership premium. Twelve other images will be chosen, each to be featured on a different monthly calendar page and will be awarded a \$40 cash prize.

Please deliver your submissions by 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, June 1, 2006, to the RiverPlace offices at the GoggleWorks. All submissions must be in the form of a 4" x 6" color photographic print.

Judging will take place during June. A committee of RiverPlace volunteers will judge all entries. For more information, point your browser to www.river-placepa.com/documents/Calendarcontest.pdf

Projects Update

Here's an update on all the progress happening at RiverPlace. We invite you to volunteer as well and be a part of your community's long-term strategy for Riverfront revitalization.

• Completed

Bushong Mill Dam Canoe Portage Trail – This new 400' carry allows canoe and kayak access from the Schuylkill River to a mile of flat water above this scenic but unrunnable dam on the Tulpehocken Creek. The trail is located in Confluence Point Park, just upstream from the mouth of the Tully and its confluence with the Schuylkill. The Confluence is a rich fishery where the coldwater Tully and warmwater Schuylkill meet. The new portage was cleared through the combined effort of the Glenside

Neighborhood Association, Alvernia College, Reading City Parks Department, and Keystone Canoe Club. The 400' long carry is an easy walk with level to slightly sloping terrain, passing through the scenic dam overlook plaza at the historic mill ruins.

GoggleWorks Center for the Arts – The largest artist complex in the country, now open every day, with a great café featuring free wireless Internet service.

Franklin Street Guard Lock Bridge Canal Heritage Mural – In partnership with Reading Area Community College and the Olivet Boys and Girls Clubs Center for the Arts, and with funding support from the Reading Redevelopment Authority, Berks County Community Foundation, and PA Council for the Humanities, a mural was painted this summer on the sides of the old Pennsylvania Railroad bridge near RACC's Yocum Library that interprets the rich canal and rail history of this site.

RiverFest Fireworks – Berks Festivals, Inc. and RiverPlace teamed up to put on an incredibly spectacular fireworks display on the Penn Street Bridge during RiverFest 2005. This community celebration of culture and the arts featured live performances of local groups, arts, crafts, food, educational displays, and children's activities. Most importantly, it celebrated the Schuylkill River and was centered in the very area where the City of Reading was first formed and where a 21st century urban renaissance is occurring.

RiverPlace Master Plan – see article on page 1.
RiverPlace Visitor's Guide – Our popular pocket map guide to the parks, trails, and heritage sites of RiverPlace. Download a copy from our web site at www.RiverPlacePA.com/projects.htm.

Schuylkill River Trail – Lancaster Avenue Bridge – Now open and ready for use, walkers and bicyclists may now safely travel the length of RiverPlace without crossing any highways. A gift to the community by the Schuylkill River Greenway Association, and a



key link in the Schuylkill River Trail, RiverPlace is now walkable from the Schuylkill Avenue Bridge to the Brentwood trailhead and the Thun Trail bridge over the Schuylkill River.



• **Underway**

Angelica Park Connector Trail - This trail will connect the Schuylkill River Trail at the Brentwood trailhead to a new Angelica Park loop trail around the old lake bed, also connecting Alvernia College to RiverPlace. The Redevelopment Authority of the City of Reading has construction scheduled on this trail segment for the spring and summer of 2006.

Birding Trail - RiverPlace is home to over 200 species of birds, both resident and migratory. The habitat includes aquatic, riparian floodplain, open and forested wetland, open and forested upland, cliffs, and urban. Watch our web site for a complete list of birds and birding hot spots.

Confluence Point Park - Major clearing operations have already been completed for a new park at the Confluence Point of the Tulpehocken Creek and Schuylkill River including two murals, and several



neighborhood events. Volunteers from the Glenside neighborhood and Alvernia College have worked alongside City staff and other volunteers to clear brush, pick up litter, paint, and build new trails. Help is now sought to build picnic tables and benches, an amphitheater, rain shelter, and an improved canoe launch.

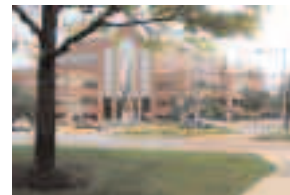
• **In Design**

Art and Community Landscapes (ACL) – a program of the New England Foundation for the Arts (NEFA), has selected RiverPlace as the recipient of the 2005 national prize to develop new public art along a National Recreation Trail. In partnership with the Schuylkill River Heritage Area, the County of Berks, and the

Reading City Redevelopment Authority, and the Pennsylvania Partners for the Arts, over \$100,000 will be dedicated to this project along the Schuylkill River Water Trail. RiverPlace is still seeking additional funding patrons for this project, in order to create a more significant project budget. Interested patrons should contact the RiverPlace office.

After a national competition, artist Stacy Levy of Spring Mills, Pennsylvania was selected by NEFA to design, fabricate, and install the piece. Stacy is now working with RiverPlace to find the right location and refine her design to the site, and to make connections in the local community.

“This award is a national honor for this region,” said SRHA Executive Director Kurt D. Zwikl. “The project has significance on so many levels—locally, regionally, and nationally.



This will be a great addition to the Schuylkill River Water Trail and the Heritage Area.”

“The Art and Community Landscapes project will be a key element of the revitalization program that is presently bringing new life to our community and the Schuylkill River,” said David L. Thun, Chairman of RiverPlace Development Corporation and a member of the SRHA Board of Directors.

Key partners in this project are the Berks Arts Council and GoggleWorks Center for the Arts. The fact that the proposed project integrates a number of municipalities and partners is a primary reason that RiverPlace was selected for the grant. When finished, the project will help communicate the nationally significant story of the Schuylkill River and its

watershed within a local context, celebrating the area’s rich natural, cultural, and industrial heritage.

Art Walk – On a one-mile easy walk, you can view over thirty major pieces of public art and visit four galleries. This new interpretive trail will guide visitors

along a one-mile stretch of the Penn Corridor between the Reading Public Museum and City Park to view the many existing public art sculptures and murals, many unknown to residents and visitors alike. Partners in this project include the Reading

Public Museum, RACC, the Reading Redevelopment Authority Fine Arts Board, the Downtown Improvement District, Albright College, and the Community School of Music & Arts. A color walking guide brochure is in preparation, and will be available on the RiverPlace web site and at the GoggleWorks Visitor Information Center. The Walk will be featured and dedicated on June 21st, as part of the Summer

You're help can accelerate these projects. Please contact us to volunteer your time, talent, or resources.

Solstice joint event now being planned by RiverPlace and the Museum.

Bingaman Street Gateway – Local architect Lou Masciotti and the Southwest Neighborhood Association have designed a new beautifully landscaped southern entrance to RiverPlace. With funding from the Association and Berks Packing, and support from the City of Reading and Berks Master Gardeners, the transformation will take place this summer at the triangle intersection of Bingaman and south Third Streets.

Children's Museum – Plans are underway for a world-class interactive hands-on children's museum at RiverPlace. The RiverPlace Children's Museum will be a community-based institution for young people up to 12 years of age and their families and a self-sustaining destination in touch with and serving local neighborhoods, all Berks residents, and outside visitors.

The museum project team is seeking advice and ideas from children, parents, educators, and others in the community about what this museum should offer.

Flowering Cherry Trees along the Riverfront Trail – This April, over twenty new mature flowering cherry trees will bloom along the Riverfront. Chaired by Doug Fisher of Discoveries Gallery and Pagoda Printing, this team is now seeking sponsorship for the trees at \$350 each. Each tree will be at least 9' tall and in bud, ready to bloom this spring. Contact us soon to sponsor a tree.



Jackson's Lock – A team is now working to locate, restore, and interpret Schuylkill Navigation Lock 48 (Jackson's) at the foot of Canal Street in Heritage Park.

Jackson's Lock is a historically significant feature of the Schuylkill riverfront area and the southern entrance to the Port of Reading. The general location of the lock is known, however, the precise site is unclear today.

With guidance from Glenn Wenrich of the Pennsylvania Canal Society and Kutztown University archaeologist, James Delle, and assistance from Quantum Geophysics, the lock chamber will be excavated to a depth of approximately 20 inches to simulate the filled level of the lock and emphasize its outline.

The lock chamber will be used as a canal and historical lecture site and as a site for neighborhood events, with the coping stones providing durable seating.

Port of Reading Heritage Trail – Our historian and sign location team are hard at work writing and designing over two dozen interpretive signs for this trail that will reveal an important chapter in our community – the canals and port facilities. Expect to see these trailhead and site signs going up along the trails of RiverPlace this summer and fall.

Reading Area Firefighters Museum – The Reading Area Firefighters Museum is located at the corner of 5th and Laurel Streets in Reading's Callowhill Historic



District. Containing one of the finest collections of volunteer firefighting memorabilia, including antique furnishings designed by John Wannamaker, the museum is housed in the 1876-built active firehouse of Liberty Fire Company No. 5. The building itself is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Tours are available now upon request by calling 610-372-5721.

Riverfront Drive – We're working now with other community groups to plan the extension of Riverfront Drive north from Buttonwood Street to Baer Park. We're also participating in a traffic study to find the best way to handle the increased traffic resulting from Riverfront development.

Schuylkill River Trail Extension (SRT) (*Reading to Port Clinton*) – An alignment study for this section of the SRT is well underway, including design considerations that will allow horse-drawn carriages to travel into RiverPlace along the trail from the north.

Wayfinding Signage Project – Signs and banners will be installed to help you more easily get around the trails and attractions of RiverPlace.

West Shore Boardwalk – This new trail will create a loop in the heart of RiverPlace, where a Boardwalk will extend north from the RACC

Bridge and connect with Franklin Street and the Penn Street Bridge. A preliminary design has been completed, and ownership and funding options are now under review.

Wireless Public Internet Wi-Fi Hot Zone – Comcast and RACC are working with RiverPlace to create a Public Wireless Internet Hot Zone along both sides of the River from Bingaman Street to Washington Street. Go to www.RiverPlacePA.com/projects.htm for details.



GoggleWorks Open House

On the evening of Tuesday, December 13, 2005, the RiverPlace Team hosted an open house to thank volunteers and friends for their generous support during 2005. Over 100 people attended the festivities, having an opportunity to review our 2005 accomplishments and see highlights of several projects planned for near-term implementation.

Local musicians performed and staff members of Kauter & Kelley Architects were on hand to present their inspiring conceptual plan for a boardwalk along the riverfront in West Reading, traversing the area from the Bertolet Fishing Dock to the Penn Street Bridge.

Food and beverages were supplied by RiverPlace Board members and our volunteer

friends. Thanks to all who supported and helped stage this Open House. Without your generosity and support this activity would not have been possible. The event was a big success and is being planned for the holiday season in 2006.

RiverPlace Office Relocation Complete

During November 2005 RiverPlace completed the relocation of our corporate offices to the GoggleWorks Center for the Arts from our previous home at the United Way of Berks County. Our new home is working well, and we now have a wonderful space to showcase the many components of our plan and vision for the riverfront.



If you have not already done so, please drop by our offices on the fifth floor of the GoggleWorks for a tour by the staff. Additionally, beginning in March 2006, our offices will be open on the first Sunday of each month from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm as we participate in GoggleWorks First Sunday activities.

RiverPlace is pleased to acknowledge the generous assistance of the United Way which provided space and support services during our formative early stage. Without this support, the challenges of launching RiverPlace would have been all that more difficult. Thanks, United Way, for the helping hand!

RiverPlace on the Schuylkill presents the 1st Annual



5k Run & 1.5 Mile Fun Run/Walk • Sun., May 7, 2006 • 9AM • Schlegel Park

All Proceeds Benefit Schuylkill Riverfront Restoration and Development Projects

Major Sponsor: FROMUTH TENNIS/RUNNING/FITNESS, West Lawn, PA

Supporting Sponsors: **THE WORKS AT WYOMISSING, MAPLE GROVE RACEWAY, BODY ZONE SPORTS & WELLNESS and PRECISION GRAPHICS INC.**

BODY ZONE MEMBERSHIP RAFFLE • AWARDS

Registration Begins at 8am at Schlegel Park • 5K Course - Wheel Measured, Fast & Flat! • Walking Course Circles West Reading Park

Contact RiverPlace for Entry Form or Sign Up Day of Race • On Line Registration Available at www.active.com



RiverPlace

ON THE SCHUYLKILL



SPRING 2006

Happenings

Timeline / Calendar

Please add these important RiverPlace events to your calendar

- **Walk Along the River**
March 21 & April 18 - *Meet at Goggleworks*
- **Glenside History Day at Confluence Point Park**
April 22
- **RiverPlace Run, 5K Race**
May 7 - *at Schlegel Park*
- **Deadline for Calendar Contest**
June 1, 4:00 pm
- **Schuylkill River Sojourn Luncheon**
June 5, Noon - 1:00 pm - *at Kerper's Landing*
- **Summer Solstice Walk to Museum**
June 21, 5:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Happenings is a publication of RiverPlace Development Corporation. Please contact us with any comments and/or suggestions.

RiverPlace Development Corporation

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