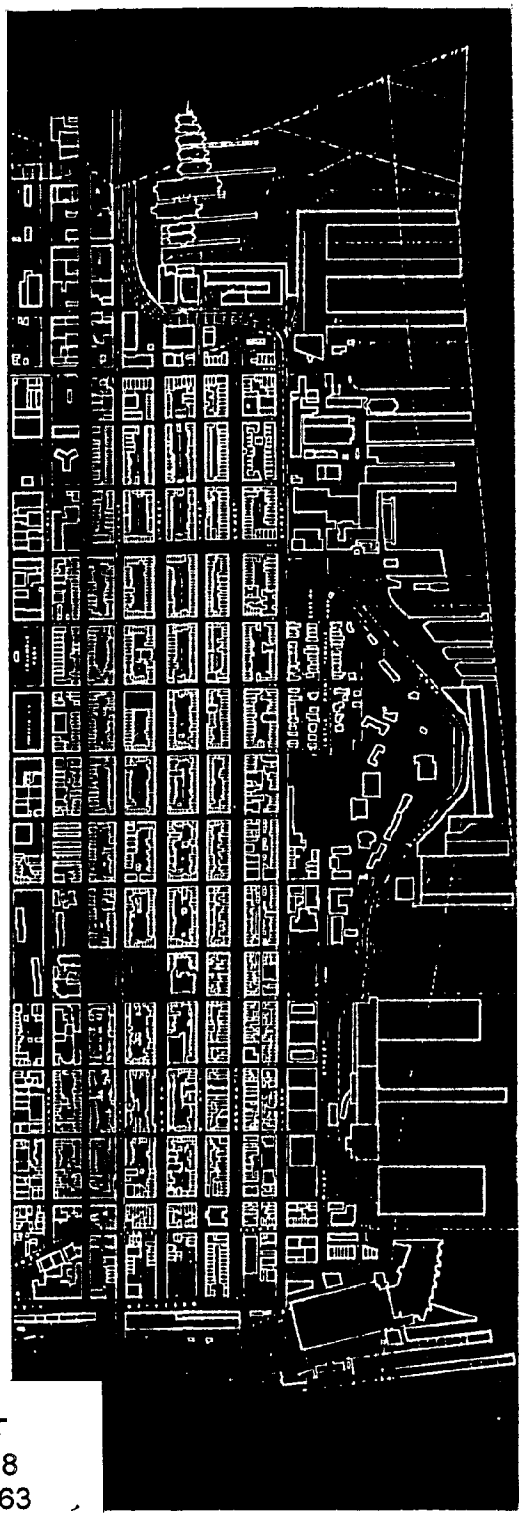


HUDSON WATERFRONT WALKWAY

HOBOKEN, N.J.

Prepared for:

The Community Development Agency City of Hoboken, N.J.

Final Design Report, Comprehensive Plan & Executive Summary

December 19, 1986

HT
168
.H63
H83
1986

Gaudy · Hadley associates

Architecture • Environmental Design • Planning • Landscape Architecture

Introduction

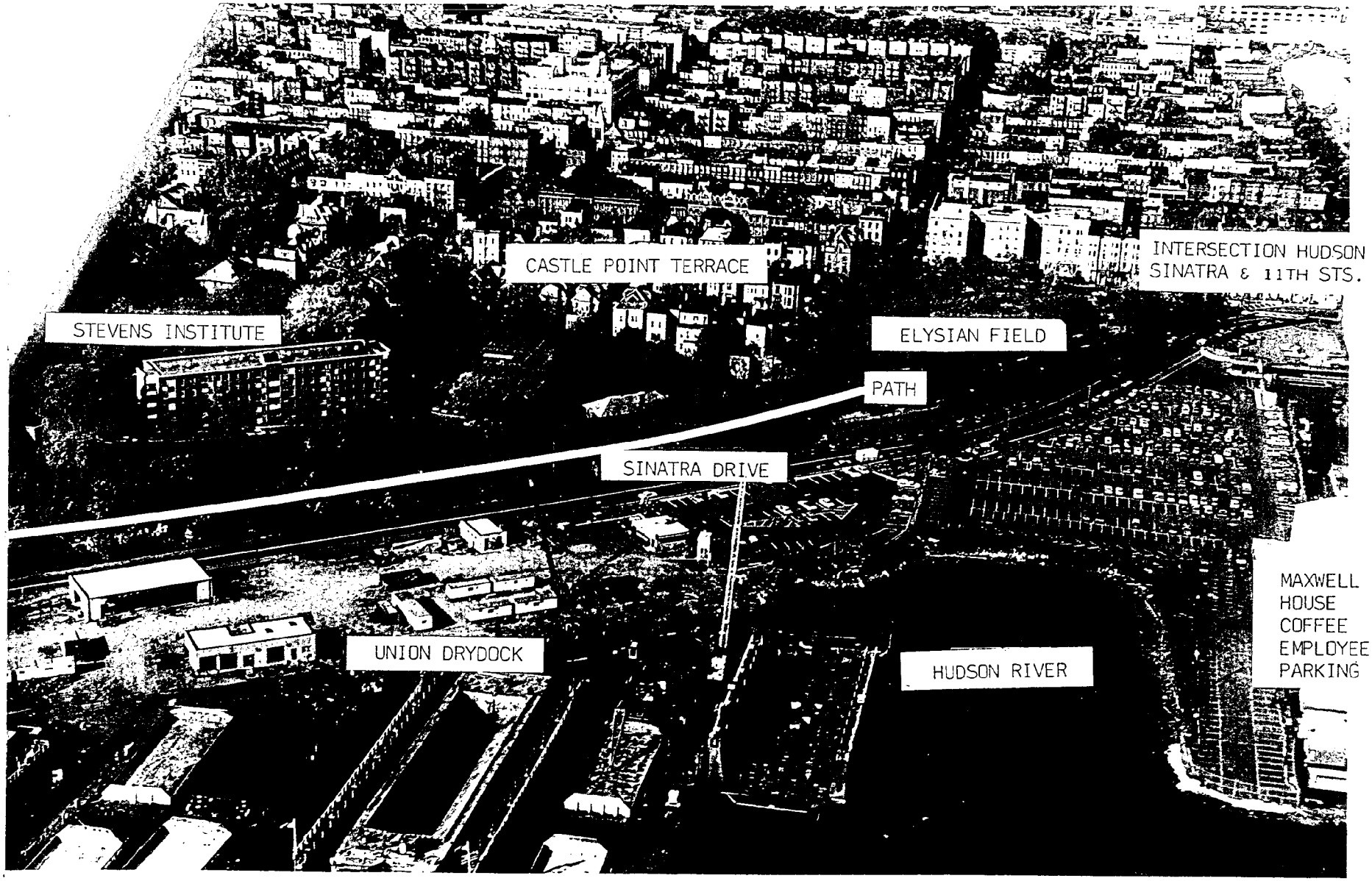
The third phase, or Task Three of the Preliminary Design for Hoboken Riverwalk is comprised of three parts, included here as follows:

1. The Final Design Report, including the exact alignment of the Riverwalk, typical sections of the Riverwalk and its Overlooks, preliminary construction details and recommendations for the management of maintenance and security.

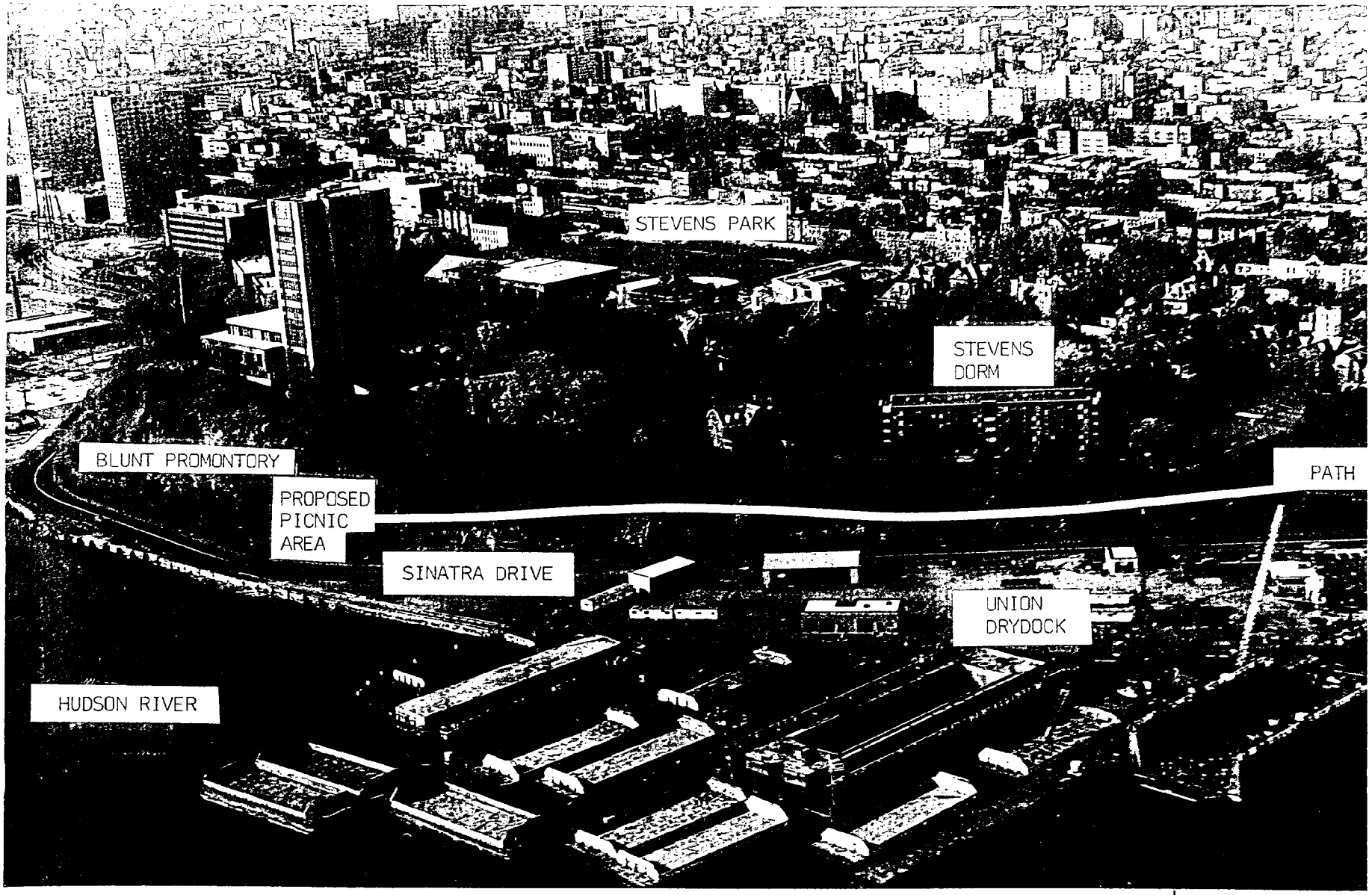
2. The Comprehensive Plan, illustrating the Hoboken Riverwalk's connection to the Hudson Waterfront Walkway.

3. The Executive Summary, a compilation of all work completed under the Coastal Management Agency grant suitable for public distribution.

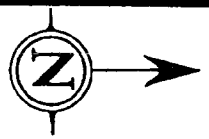
Final Design Report

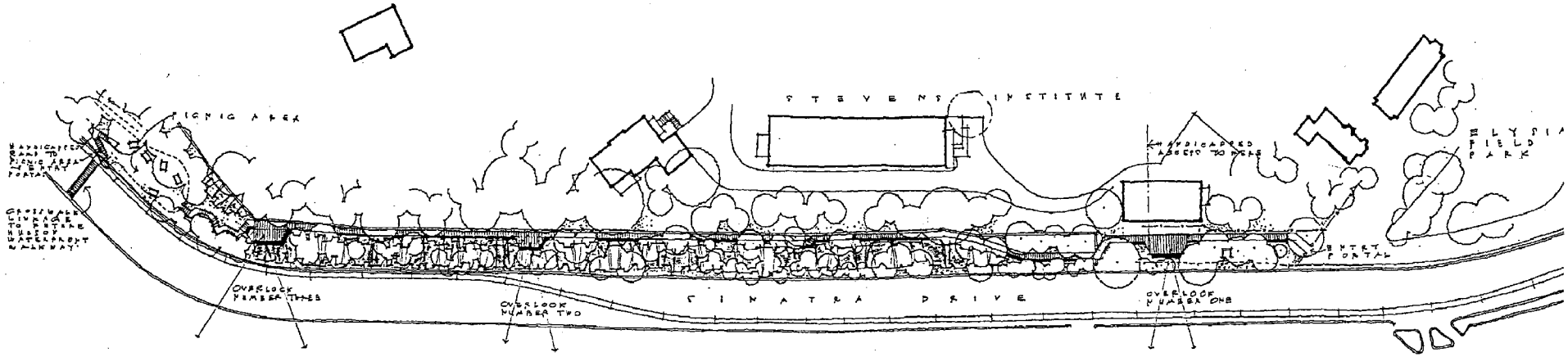


AERIAL VIEW OF STUDY AREA

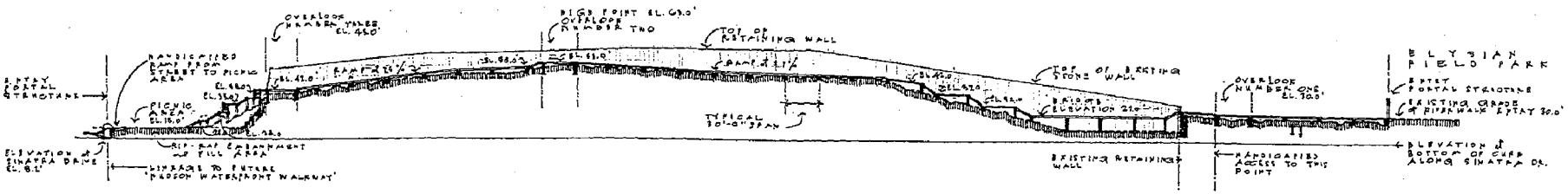


AERIAL VIEW OF STUDY AREA

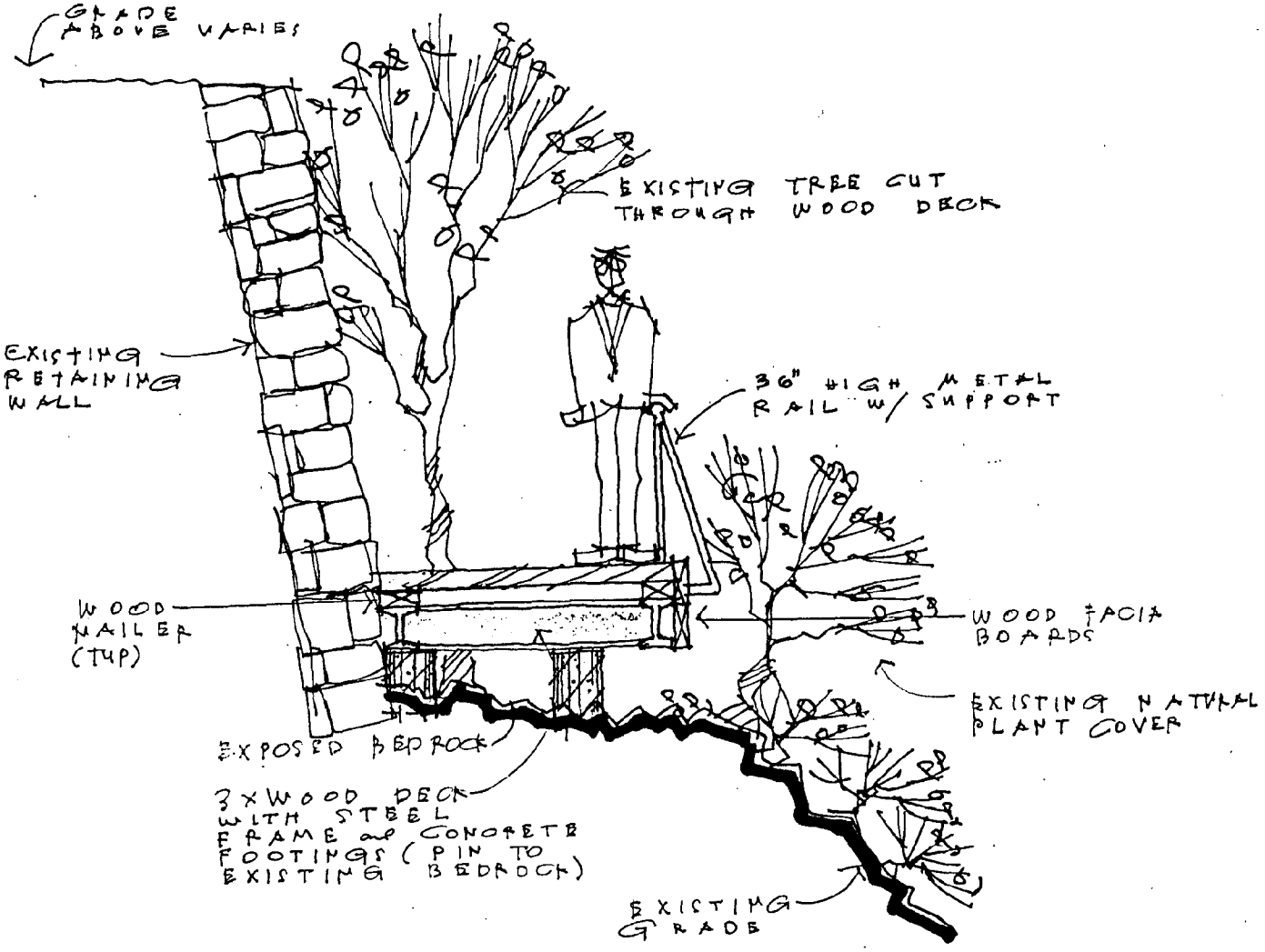




PROJECT AREA PLAN

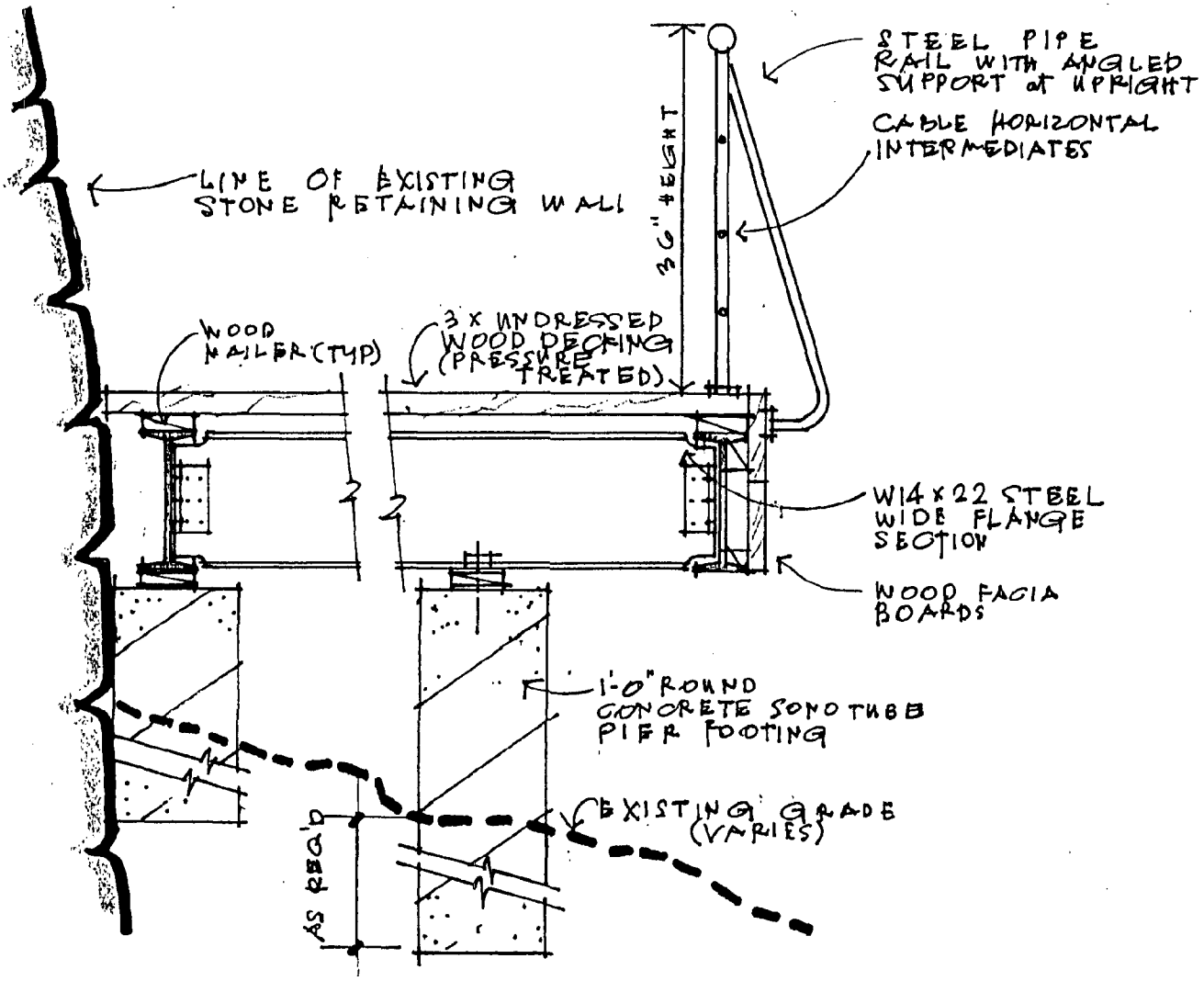


ELEVATION PROFILE



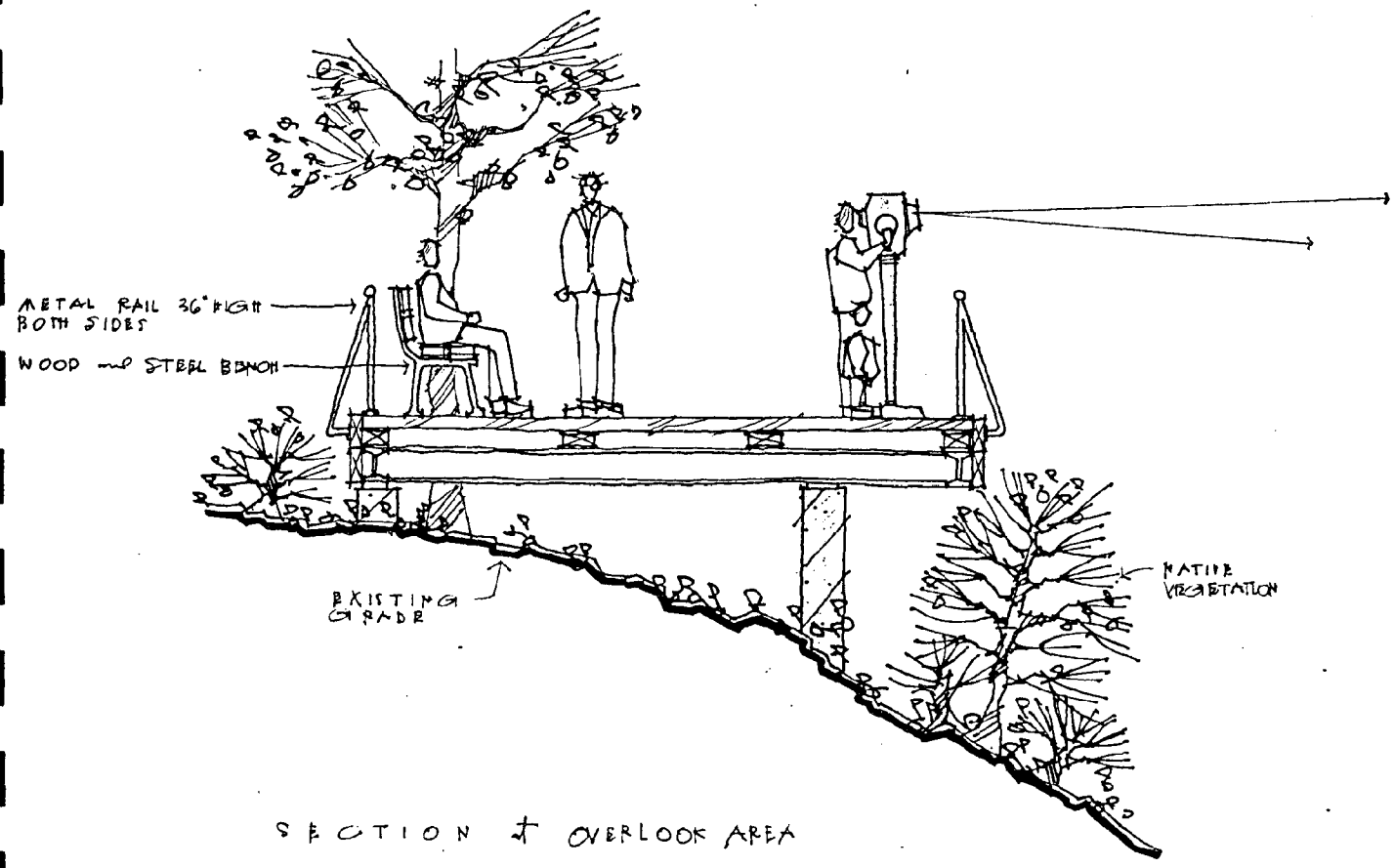
TYPICAL SECTION/
DECK ALONG EXISTING RETAINING WALL
N.T.S.

Typical Cross Section Through Walk



SECTION DETAIL
SCALE 3/4" = 1'-0"

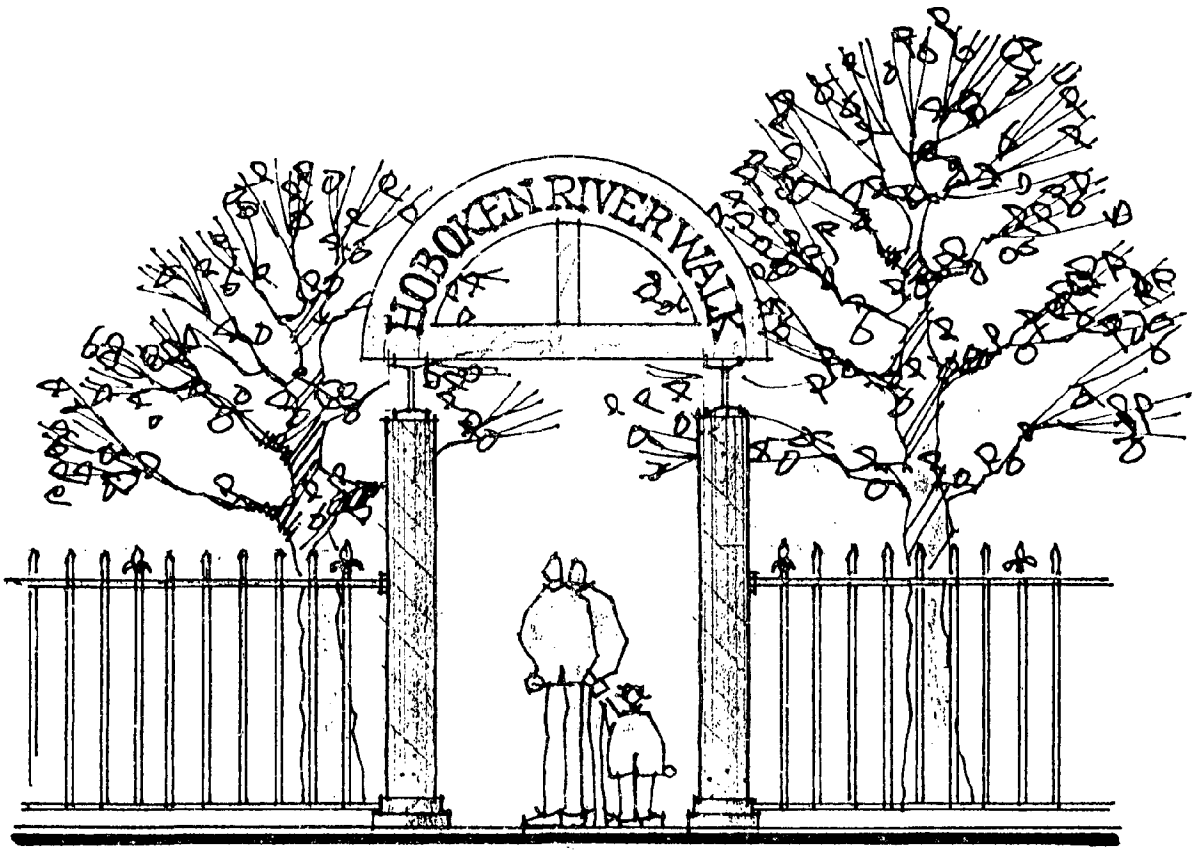
Typical Detail Section at Walk



Typical Section at Overlook Area

VIEW FROM OVERLOOK AREA

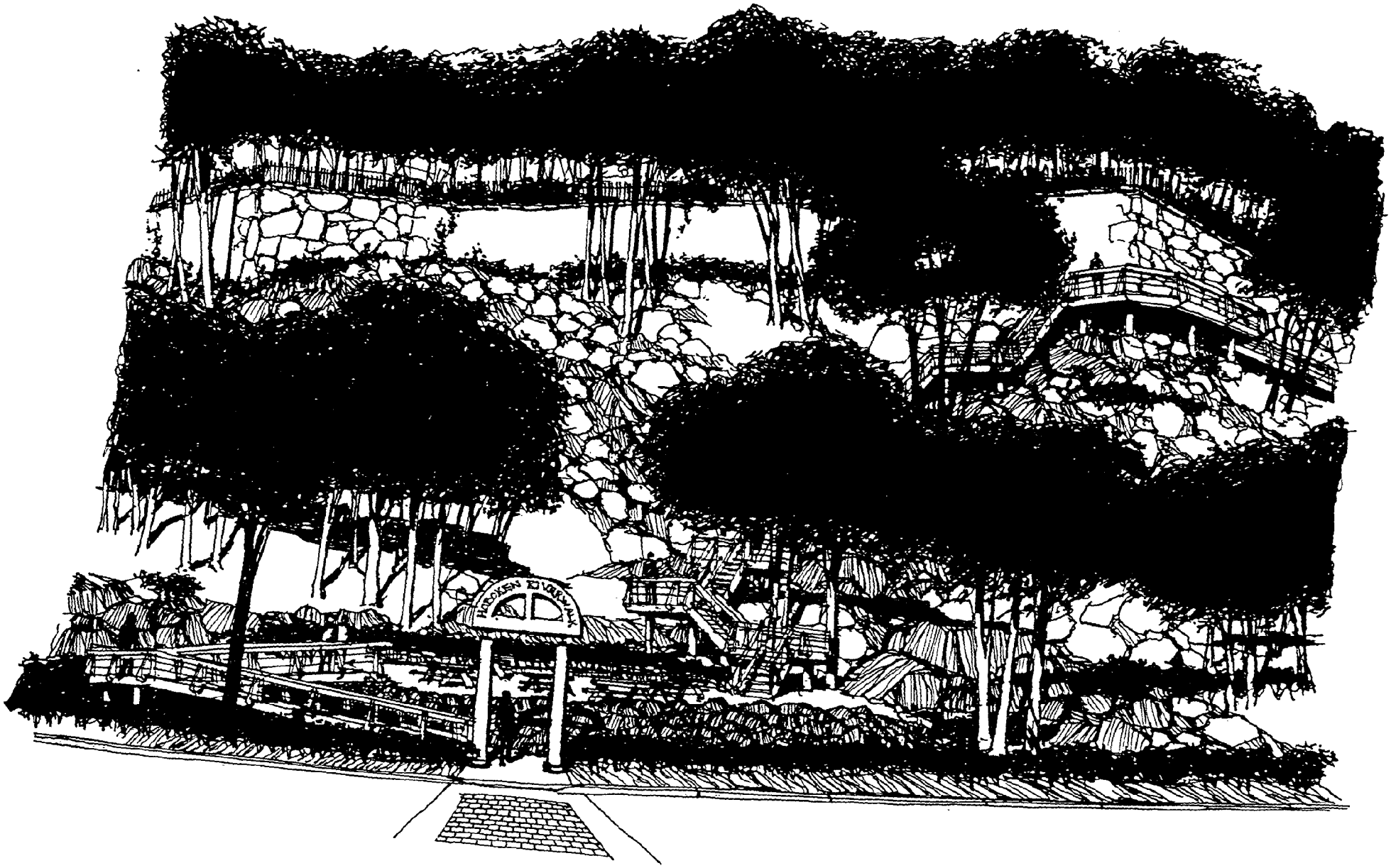
Proposed Location
for Entry Portal at
North/Elysian Field Park



Entry Portal at North/ Elysian Field Park

Existing Conditions Next to Retaining Wall

Perspective Looking South Along Walk– Typical Treatment



View of South Entry

MANAGEMENT OF MAINTENANCE AND SECURITY

Maintenance

Gaudy-Hadley Associates, P.C., recommends that a management schedule be set up to determine the necessary maintenance of the project. In the interest of saving time, money and manpower, the responsibilities for these different aspects could then be divided among all of those involved in development of the waterfront.

A detailed schedule could include types of services to be performed and their associated frequency, cost, manpower, hours, tools, etc., The program could be expanded or reduced accordingly in order to accommodate those participating.

Security

Since completely securing the Riverwalk will be impossible, a psychological deterrent will be implemented in the form of bollards and chains with hours posted on nearby signs. These would be placed at entry portals and other strategic locations.

It is also recommended that an agreement be worked out with Stevens Institute and their Security personnel to patrol the Riverwalk as part of their regular rounds. Eventually, as other projects are developed, an overall security system for the Walkway may be instituted by participants of development.

Comprehensive Plan

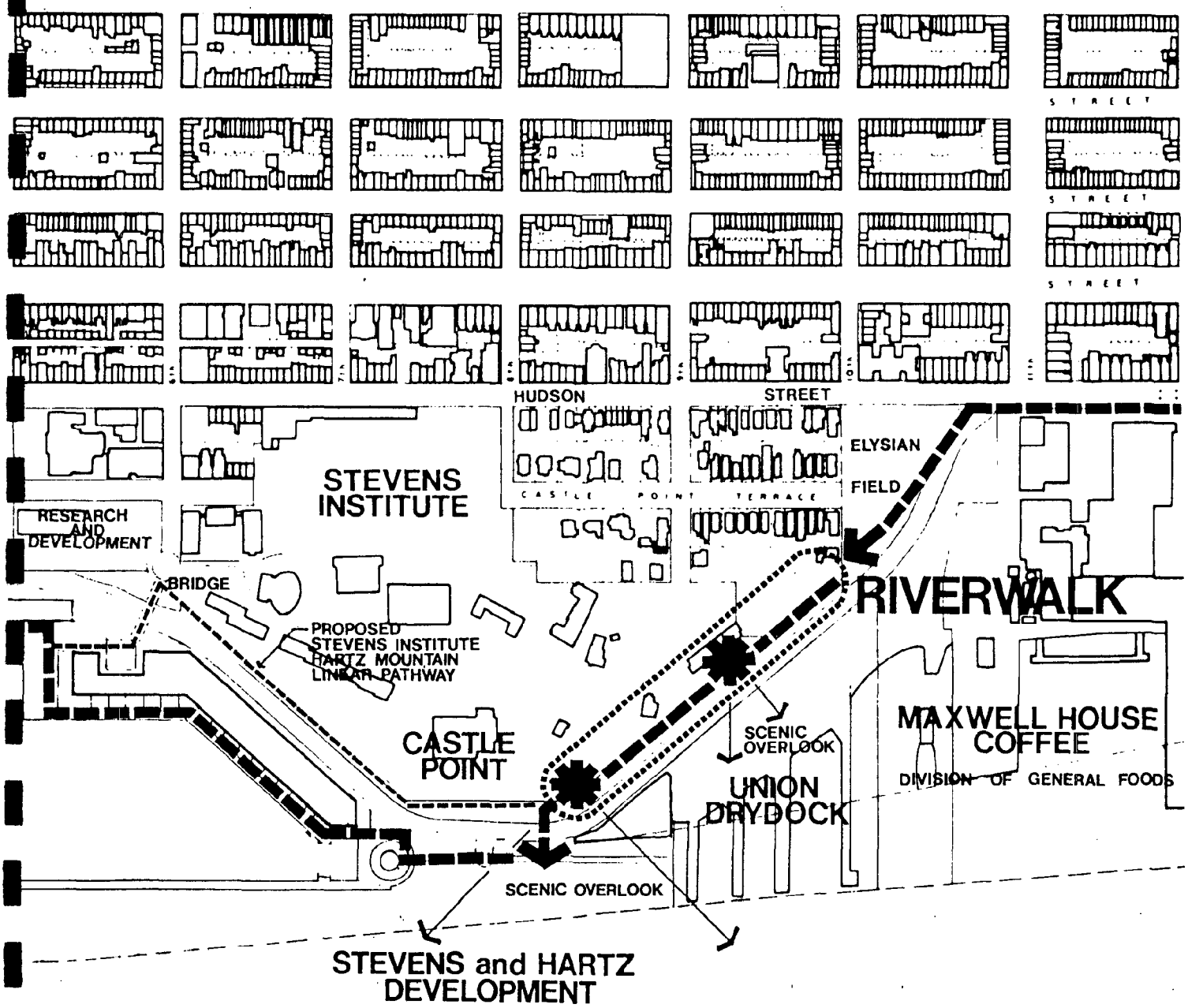
Hoboken's 1.8 mile river frontage is comprised of both public and privately owned land. Some of this land is currently being planned and developed, other portions will remain as working industries, and still other portions have future development ideas still in their infancy. The Hoboken Riverwalk proposed in this report will provide residents with development of high recreational value. But this link must ultimately be connected to other developments to form the Hudson Waterfront Walkway. A comprehensive plan to link the Riverwalk with walks to the north and south is hereby outlined.

In order to connect the walk to the Seaport Plaza to the north and until Union Drydock and Maxwell House develop their portions of the overall Riverwalk, this report recommends that an alternate route along the sidewalk in front of Maxwell House and Union Drydock be developed.

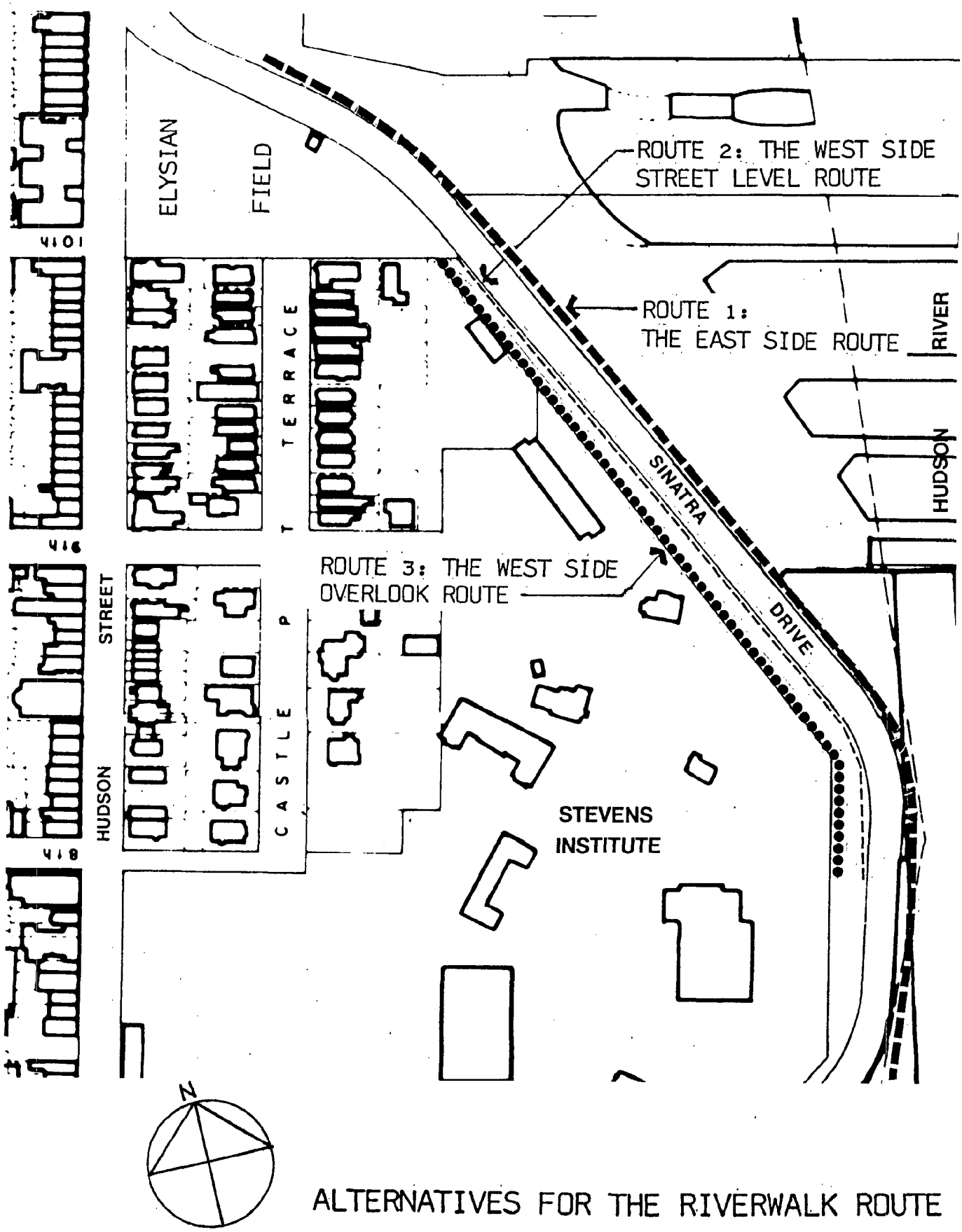
To the south, the proposed projects by Stevens Institute and Hartz Mountain, as well as the Hudson Center Development, will eventually link the Waterfront Walkway to Jersey City's walkway. Temporarily, it is recommended that the existing sidewalks be utilized to allow users direct access to the waterfront.

Handicapped people access to the Hudson Waterfront Walkway shall be provided by handicapped curb cut ramps, pedestrian crosswalks with traffic light control, and temporary alternative sidewalk routes.

The Hoboken Riverwalk, as designed in this report, will constitute one of the very attractive and picturesque links of the Hudson Waterfront Walkway.

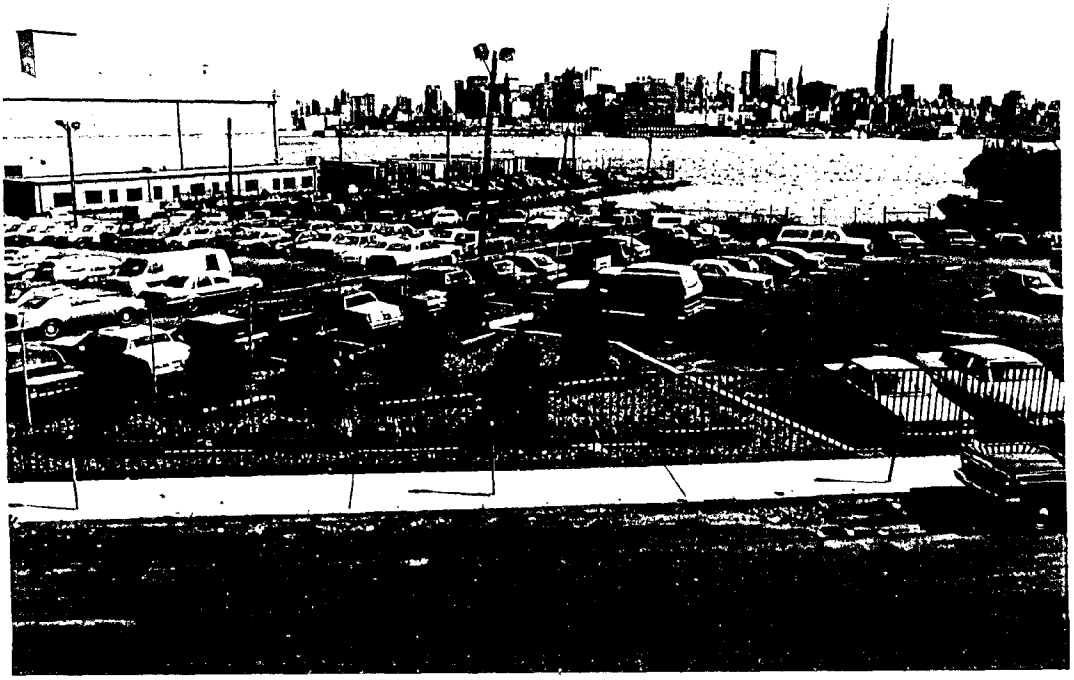


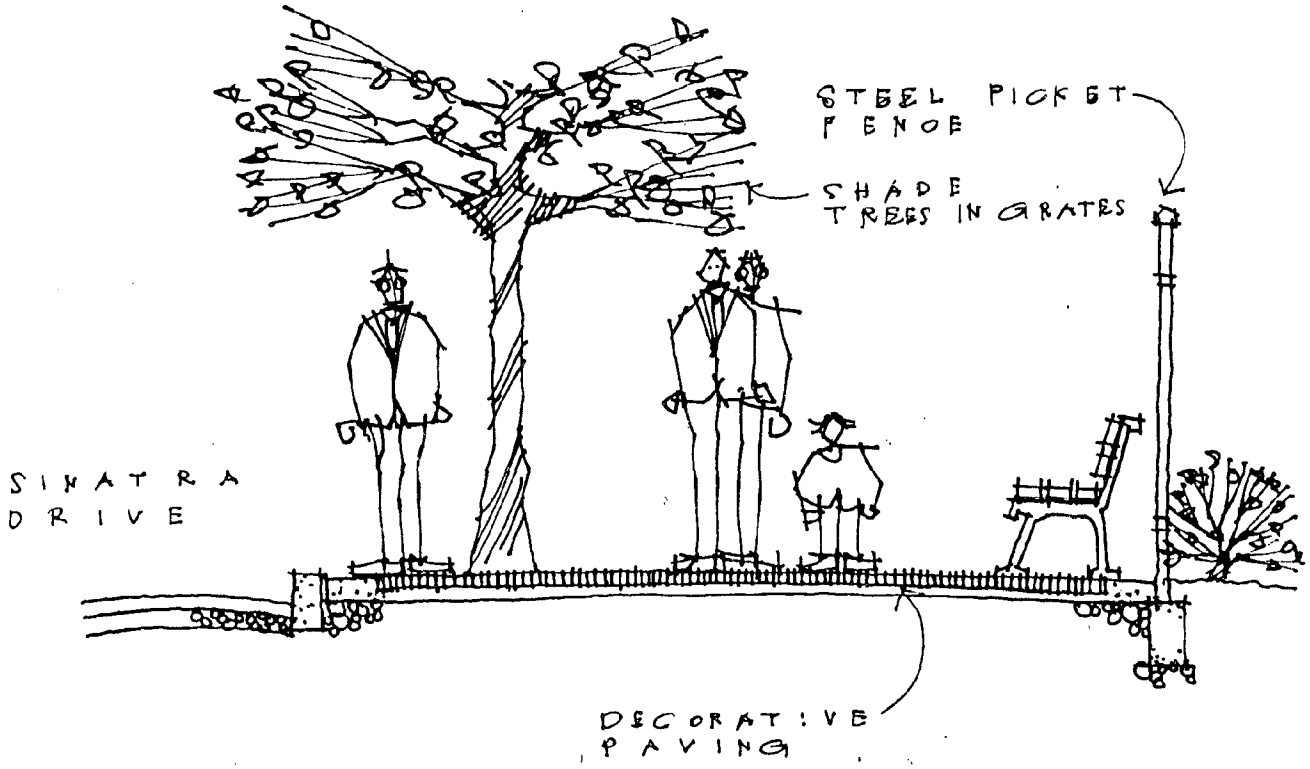
Study Area Plan



ALTERNATIVES FOR THE RIVERWALK ROUTE

SCALE: 1"= 200'





Typical Section for Riverwalk Alternative at Grade

The Riverwalk Route - Linking to Hoboken Waterfront Walkway & Alternatives

There is presently, an existing footpath running along the top of the cliff above Sinatra Drive from the southern end of Elysian Field to the middle of Castle Point, terminated by a thirty foot drop from the top of a stone retaining wall. There are many positive aspects of this route. Due to the elevation of this cliffside route, many undesirable views of the adjacent parking areas, traffic, drydock equipment and street utilities are either eliminated or partially screened by the vegetation. This route has a lovely park-like setting. There are wonderful views along the route of the New York skyline and the Hudson River. According to the Wallace, Roberts & Todd Report (1984), existing overlooks should be developed to take advantage of the outstanding views and negative factors should be eliminated or reduced as much as possible. The cliffside route is considerably less noisy than the street level route alternatives. The vegetation and elevation of the cliffside route dissipate the sounds, smells, and negative views.

Conversely, the routes on grade level have more negative than positive aspects. The route along the west side of Sinatra Drive would be extremely difficult to develop due to the existing rock outcroppings that, in many areas, comes right down to the street curb. A portion of the east side of Sinatra Drive does not have an existing sidewalk nor are there current plans for development by the present owner.

In summary, the cliffside route is the best possible one since, in addition to its natural beauty, it offers the potential to link this portion of the Riverwalk with a linear park which Stevens Institute is planning nearby on the promontory. It also offers the advantage of incorporating a picnic spot on the flat area to the south (at grade level) on the west side of Sinatra Drive. Because the cliffside route accommodates the handicapped at both ends only, this report recommends that an alternative sidewalk be developed along the east side of Sinatra Drive to provide an accessible linkage to the overall Riverwalk because the Union Drydock and Maxwell House portions are not available for development at present. In the future, if the waterfront properties belonging to Maxwell House and Union Drydock are developed for residential or recreational use, a portion of the Riverwalk adjacent to these properties can be incorporated into the development of these properties.

Executive Summary

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

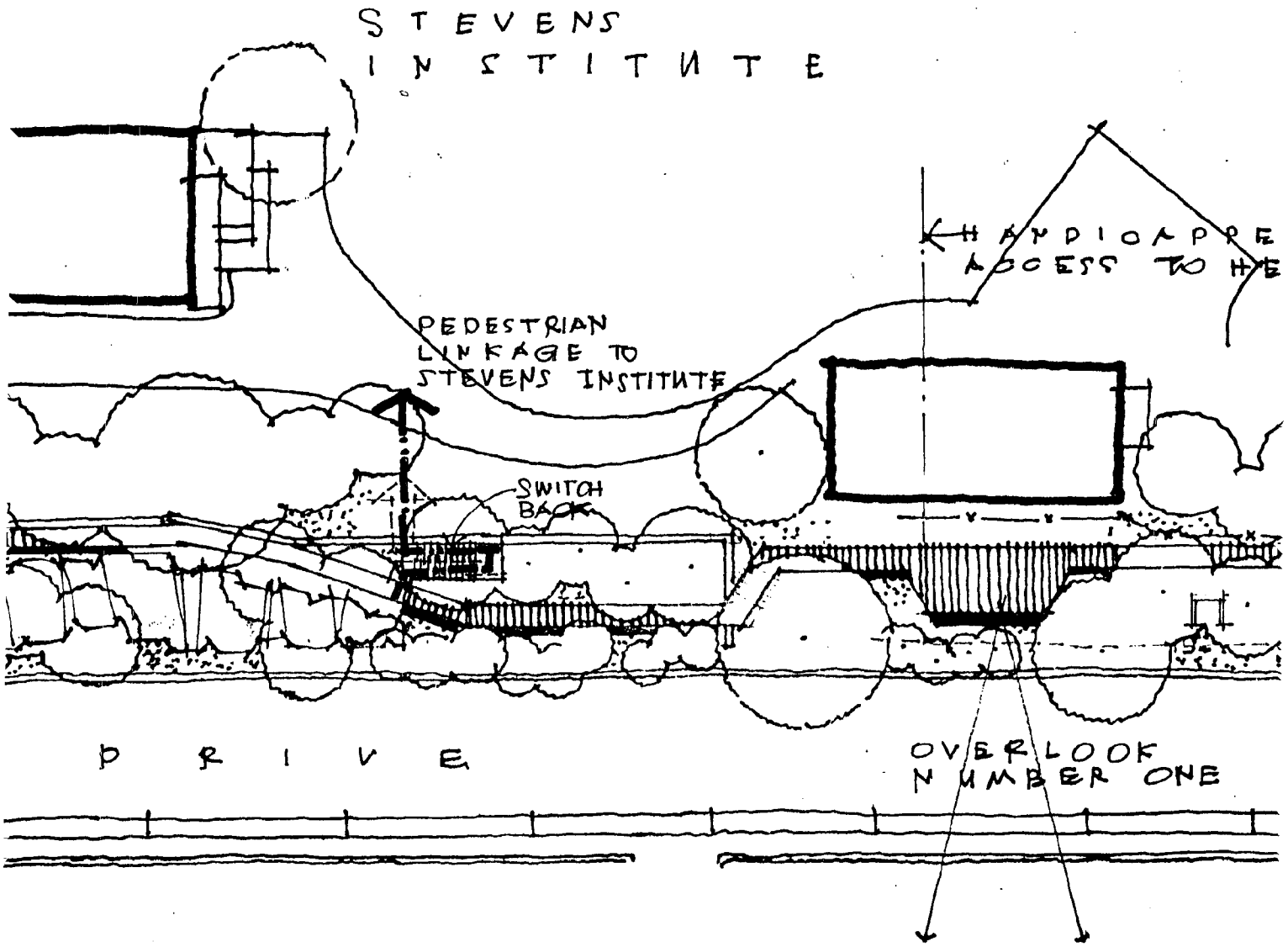
In 1980, an idea was born to develop a continuous waterfront walkway from Fort Lee to Bayonne, New Jersey running parallel to the Hudson River. This walkway would link points of interest, existing parks and local residential communities, while providing access to paths ascending the Palisades cliffs. This proposal became known as the Hudson Waterfront Walkway. The firm of Wallace, Roberts & Todd published a report in 1984, the HUDSON WATERFRONT WALKWAY: PLAN AND DESIGN GUIDELINES, to outline the criteria for development of this future Walkway.

The first part of this Walkway to be developed in Hoboken, between Elysian Field and Castle Point, is known as the Hoboken Riverwalk. Gaudy-Hadley Associates, P.C. have designed the Riverwalk in compliance with the Wallace Roberts & Todd report after studying the City of Hoboken's waterfront. This study enabled the firm to choose the best possible route for the proposed walk. The Riverwalk wil begin at the southern end of Elysian Field and run along the cliffs above Sinatra Drive, providing picturesque views across the Hudson River while removing the user from the noise of the roadway below. The Riverwalk will have handicapped people access from the Elysian Field entry portal to the Scenic Overlook at the northern end, and to the Picnic Area (accessible from street level at the pedestrian crosswalk) at the southern end. It is also recommended that a sidewalk at grade level be developed along the east side of Sinatra Drive to provide the handicapped with an accessible linkage to the waterfront opportunity, while the Union Dry Dock and Maxwell House portions of the Riverwalk are not available.

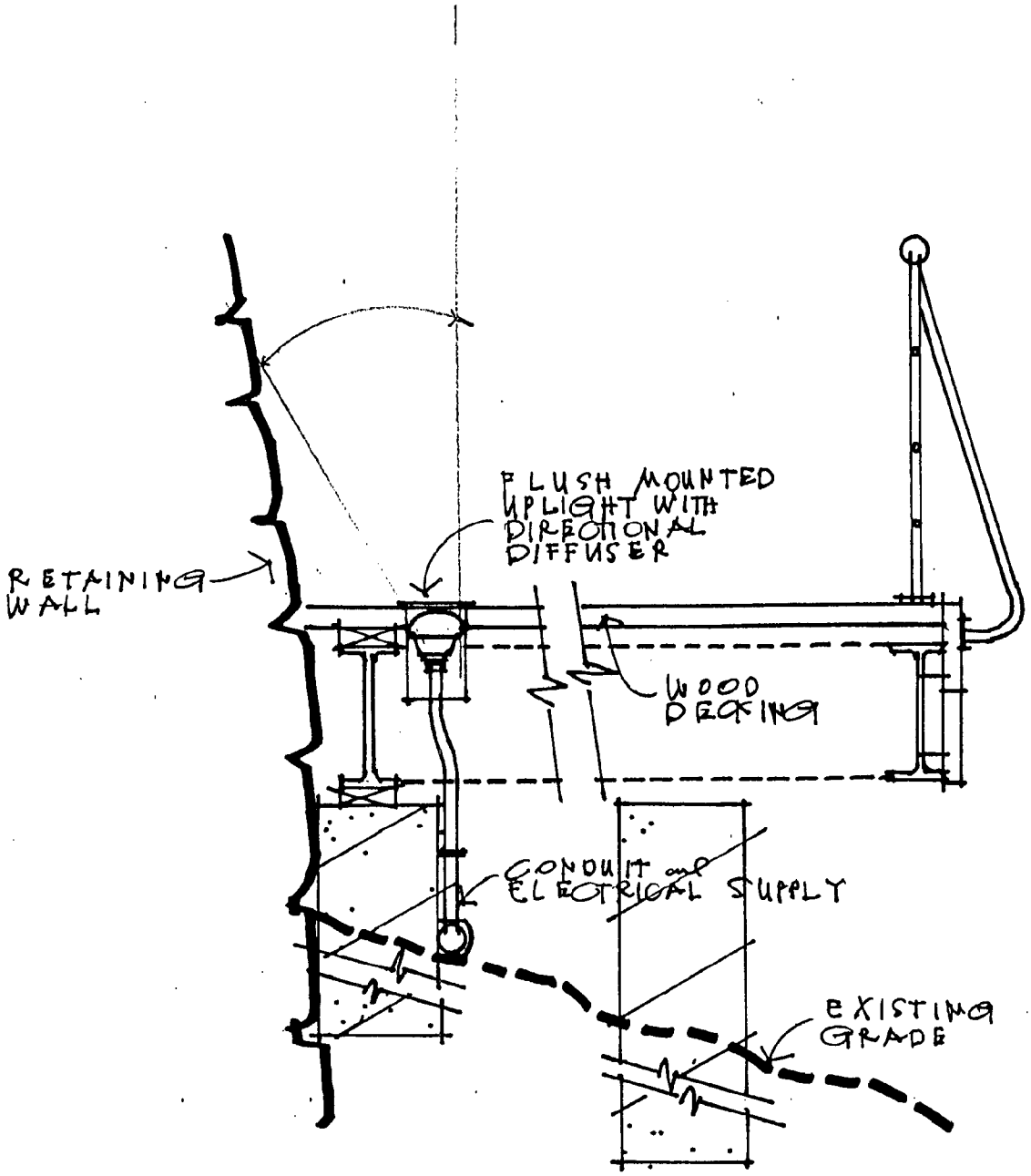
The Riverwalk will be constructed of wood decking on a steel frame with concrete footings and will have a metal handrailing for safety. The Picnic Area will have a crushed stone surface with grills and picnic tables provided for the public's use. In the Overlook areas, benches will allow the user to rest and look toward the city's spectacular skyline.

Residents, citizens' groups, organizations, developers and municipal, county, state, and federal agencies, working together, can provide Hoboken's 42,000 residents with a project which recalls the beginnings of the community as a "peaceful riverside resort for visitors from Manhattan who wandered along its six mile riverwalk to Elysian Field". This first part of the Riverwalk will eventaully link various projects which are presently being designed along the riverfront. The proposed Hoboken Riverwalk will provide the user with unmatched views of the New York skyline, while the natural cliffside setting in one of the most densely populated and dramatic urban settings in the world, will provide the residents and visitors to Hoboken with a rare and exciting recreational experience.

Appendix

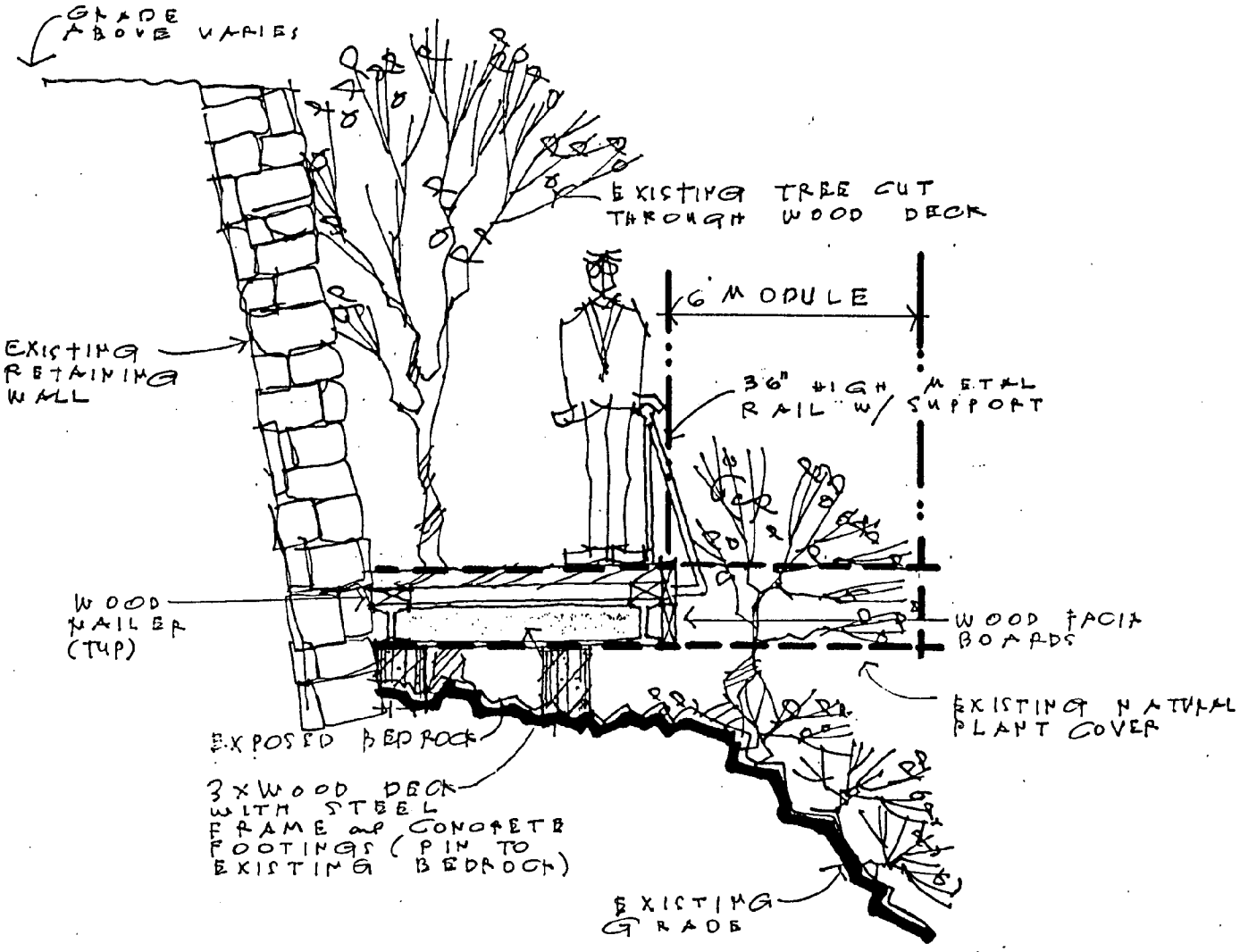


Pedestrian Linkage to Stevens Institute



LIGHTING DETAIL

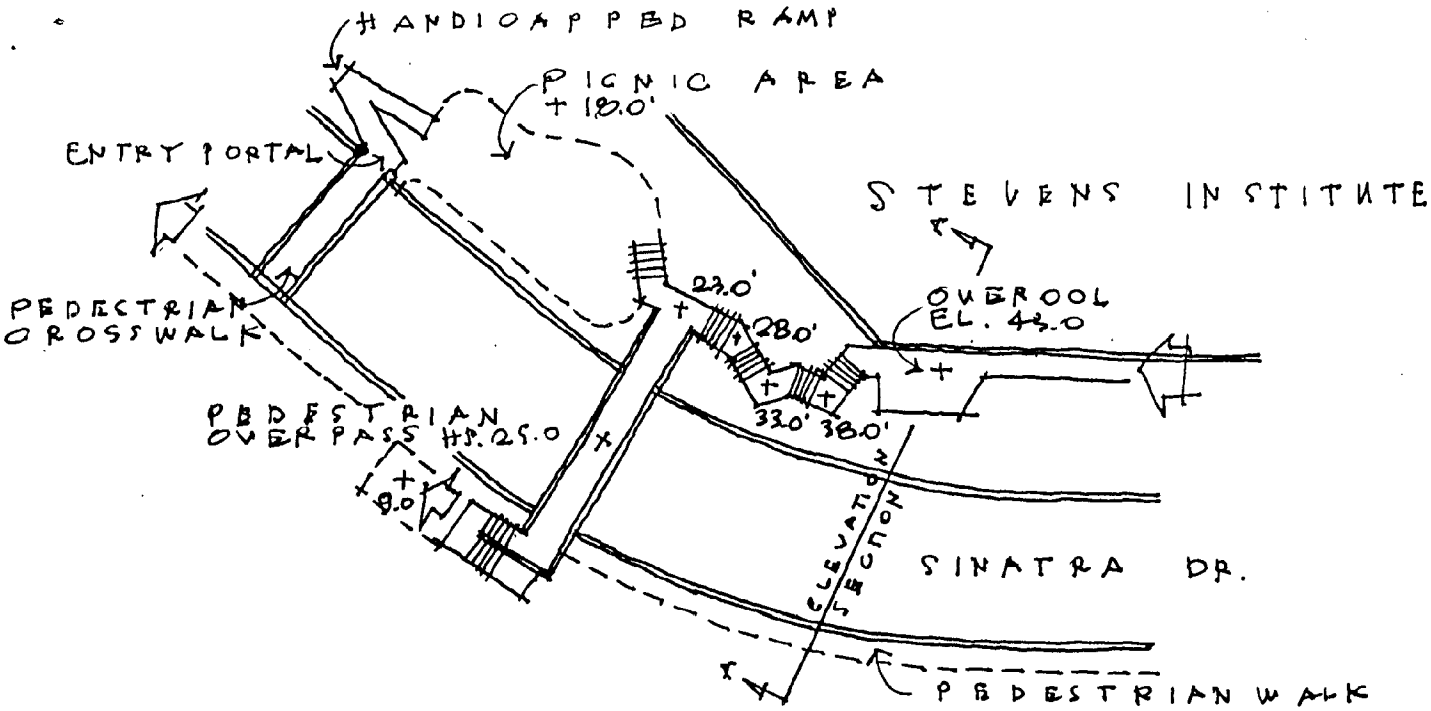
Typical Lighting Detail



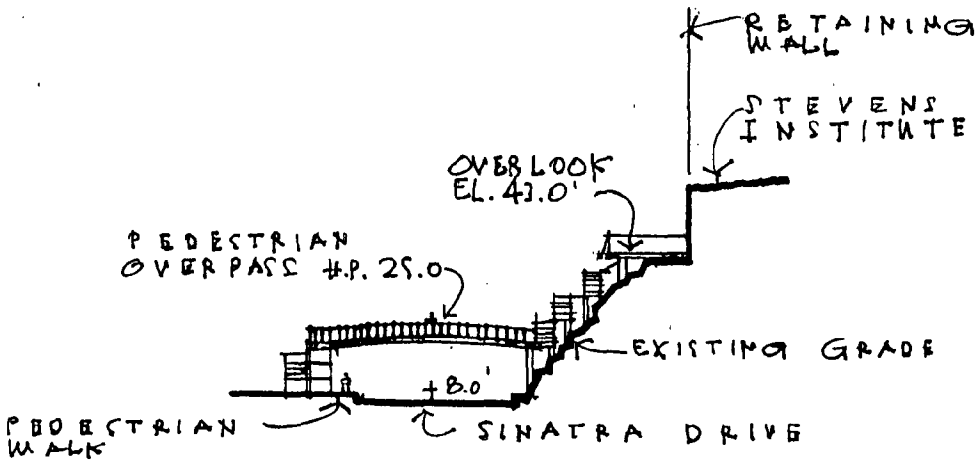
TYPICAL SECTION/
DECK ALONG EXISTING RETAINING WALL
N.T.S.

NOTE
THE STEEL FRAME & WOOD WALK SYSTEM WILL BE CONSTRUCTED IN MODULES OF 6'-0" WIDE BY 30'-0" LONG

Typical Cross Section Through Walk



PEDESTRIAN OVERPASS ALTERNATIVE



ELEVATION SECTION A-A

Section of Overpass from Stevens Institute

Dan - FYI
Jan

Stevens Institute of Technology Castle Point, Hoboken, New Jersey 07030

Office of the President
201 • 420 • 5213

December 22, 1986

Mr. John R. Weingart
Director, Division of Coastal Resources
N. J. Department of Environmental Protection
CN 401
Trenton, New Jersey 08625

Dear Mr. Weingart:

I am taking this opportunity to write to you about a proposed walkway on property along the Hudson River waterfront owned by Stevens Institute of Technology. This past summer during a period of time when a request for proposal for a feasibility study was awaiting response, I met with a representative of the Hoboken Community Development Agency. During this meeting I was presented with a preliminary plan for the construction of a walkway along the land bank below the Institute which was presumed to be property for which the city of Hoboken had an easement. Later review of the various documents concerning the property in question revealed that the property proposed to be used for the walkway was in fact owned by Stevens Institute of Technology.

Over the past couple of months a contract award was made to Landscape Architects, Gaudy-Hadley Associates of South Nyack, N. Y. to conduct the feasibility study for said walkway. Their report has been received and was the subject of a public hearing held on Monday December 1, 1986 by the Hoboken Community Development Agency with Mr. Thomas Norris of your department present.

While we certainly think that the land might lend itself to such a walkway, and that some rather interesting ideas have gone into the study, we feel obligated to point out to you that Stevens has several problems with the proposal, some major and some minor. The first major problem presented by the proposal involves the pre-empting of the access to the northern part of our campus from Sinatra Drive. The second major problem is the likelihood that further development to the east of Sinatra Drive on Stevens Waterfront owned property might be foreclosed, especially as to height of any project.

Over the past few years Stevens waterfront development has been discussed at great length with the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey. More recently negotiations for a major office and research development structure has been under negotiation with Hartz Mountain Industries. One of the considerations of these prior and current negotiations is the relocation of our building housing our Physical Plant operations. One of the identified sites for such relocation has been the Northern extremity of our campus with access to and from Sinatra Drive.

In addition to the relocation of the physical plant building, Stevens also owns both the air rights over Sinatra Drive and property east of Sinatra Drive out to the pier head line. While no current plans are in place for this area, Stevens purchased the property with the intention of developing the waterfront area at some future date. To build a walkway which could limit building heights due to view corridor visibility would present distinct and unacceptable sacrifices to Stevens in the use of its property.

Had any of these discussions taken place prior to the granting of the feasibility study, some understandings might have been agreed upon prior to this time. Unfortunately, none of these serious difficulties were raised previously due to the fact that the Community Development Agency did not take Stevens' plans and intentions into consideration before embarking upon the current feasibility study. Stevens now finds itself in the unenviable position of trying to work around a fait accompli or of objecting to a project in which public money has already been spent. Neither prospect is attractive to Stevens.

When I mentioned above that in addition to two major difficulties, there were several minor ones as well; I was referring to all the unanswered questions about maintenance, safety and liability difficulties which must be addressed after the costs of building a cliffside walkway have been determined. This still says nothing about the precedents created by the extreme reduction in width (from 30 feet wide to 6 feet wide); the planning and continuity elements in crossing Sinara Drive twice in the course of 1,500 feet in Hoboken; and the advisability of expending public monies to put a "waterfront walkway" on the west side of a roadway which must serve traffic and developmental needs both to the north and south of the walkway.

Stevens Institute finds itself in the position of being opposed to the continuation of the planning of the present segment of walkway over Stevens property on the west side of Sinatra Drive for all the above reasons. Unless and until some adjustments and understandings can be reached with the City of Hoboken and with your Department, Stevens would recommend not proceeding further with such walkway planning.

As I mentioned before, Stevens does plan a waterfront development in conjunction with Hartz Mountain which should be finalized in the very near future. This development includes a waterfront walkway in the full required width to the east of the development along the entire length of the Stevens property from approximately 10th to 5th Streets. Stevens will be seeking permitting for this development and is willing to meet the requirements for DEP permitting. We would like to request that all decisions on a cliffside walkway be delayed until Stevens' alternative plans are ready for review.

In the meantime, my office is ready to discuss any and all elements of this letter at our mutual convenience. I wish you a happy holiday season.

Sincerely yours,

Robert A. Hand

Robert A. Hand
Vice President

RAH:ais

c: Mr. Michael Coleman, Director
Hoboken Community Development Agency
Ms. Catherine Spina, Principal Planner,
Hoboken CDA
✓ Mr. Thomas Norris, New Jersey DEP

Board blasts cliffside path

Waterfront walkway planned for cliffs

By Wendy Hester

The CDA's plans for a proposed waterfront walkway to be built along the cliffs overlooking Sinatra Drive were harshly criticized by the planning board earler this month.

The walkway, which would extend along the cliffs in front of Stevens Institute from Elysian Field park to a point on Sinatra Drive, would cost an estimated $317,885. There is no funding for the project at this time, said Kathy Spina of the CDA.

The public path would be built of wood decking and measure six feet in width, except at three overlook points where the walk would widen. Benches would be placed along the path, and a picnic area near the Sinatra Drive entrance is also included in the plans.

Planning Board objects

Planning Board members objected to the plans after examining the study at their December 2 meeting. Board Secretary Jim Starrett is currently drafting a letter to the CDA detailing the Board's specific objections.

According to Starrett, who attended the public hearing, where the plans were introduced. Neither Stevens nor the Planning Board were consulted over the walkway, even though part of the proposed walkway would be on Stevens property.

"Stevens said they would be willing, if they have any development (along the waterfront), to put in a walkway that would meet the state requirement of 30 feet (in width)," said Starrett. "The CDA plan of six feet would go against efforts to enforce the state requirement.

"They're talking about a thousand-foot goes nowhere, and is not related to anything," said Starrett. "They treated a limited segment that made no effort to integrate itself with current plans."

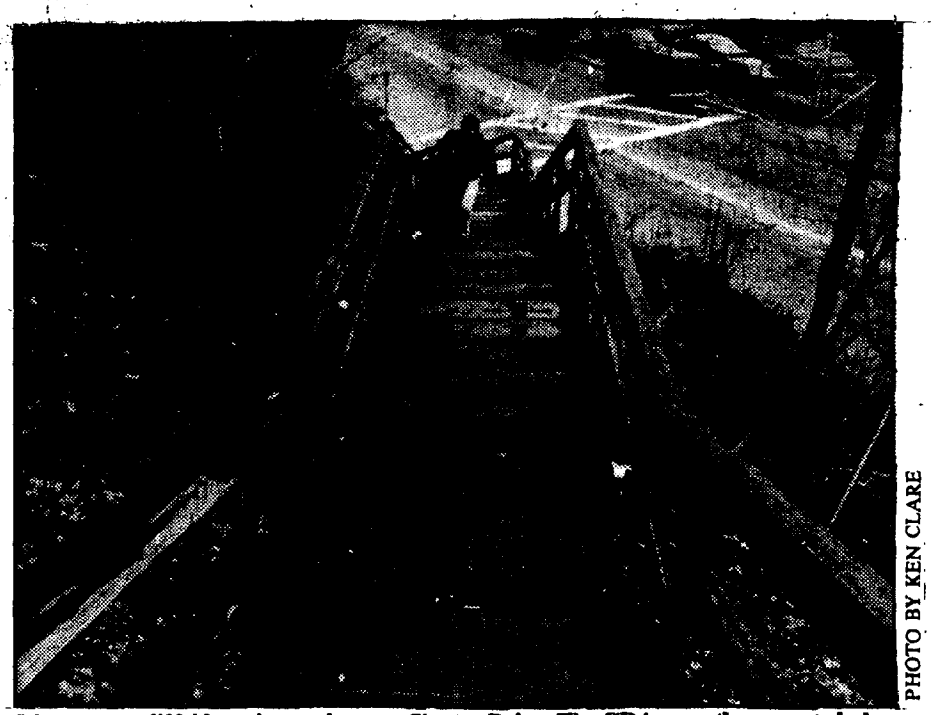


PHOTO BY KEN CLARE

The current cliffside staircase down to Sinatra Drive. The CDA recently presented plans for a waterfront walkway that goes up and down the Stevens cliffs. The plan is supposed to be part of a walkway extending from Bayonne to the George Washington Bridge.

The plan is 'ludicrous'

"We weren't included in the design. We weren't consulted," said Ralph Seligman, City Planner. When he first heard of the proposal, Seligman said, "I thought it was ludicrous they should plan such a thing."

Seligman asked that the letter to the CDA state that the Board felt the planning function was not properly addressed, and that information on the proposal was not properly coordinated.

In addition to concerns about the narrowness of the walkway and the lack of the proposed walkway, Planning Board members were concerned about the lack of handicapped access, and the safety and security of the walkway.

More problems with walkway

The walkway would become a place to hang out, drink beer, and light fires, Board members felt. It would be unsafe at night, they suggested.

The walkway would also make it easier to scale the cliffs and enter the Stevens campus to cause trouble there, Seligman added.

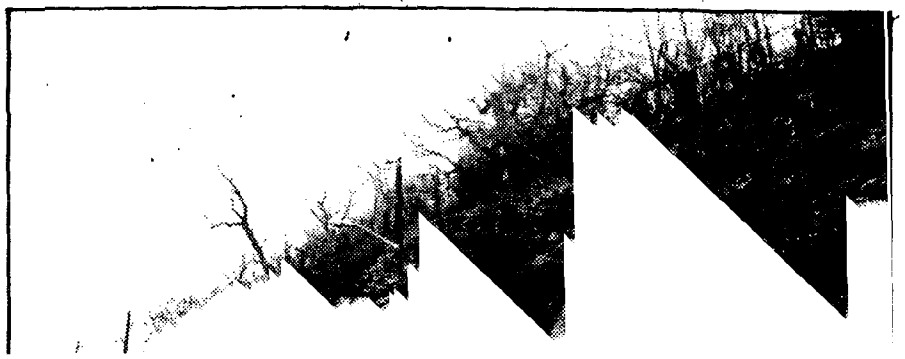
In addition, if Stevens were to develop their portion of the waterfront, the view from the walkway would be blocked. Starrett said a DEP representative at the public hearing suggested that the walkway's view should be protection against any developments. Starrett said he did not think Stevens would want to donate their land for the project and then be told they couldn't build on their own property in front of it.

Limited handicap access

Only a limited portion of the walkway, which varies in elevation from 18 to 63 feet, would allow handicapped access. While handicapped access to a small portion of the walk would be possible from Elysian Field Park, a ramp at the other end would lead only to the picnic area. From the picnic area, the main walkway can only be reached by a twisting staircase.

The study was prepared for the CDA by Gaudley/Hadley Associates, an environ-

continued on page 8



Board blasts path

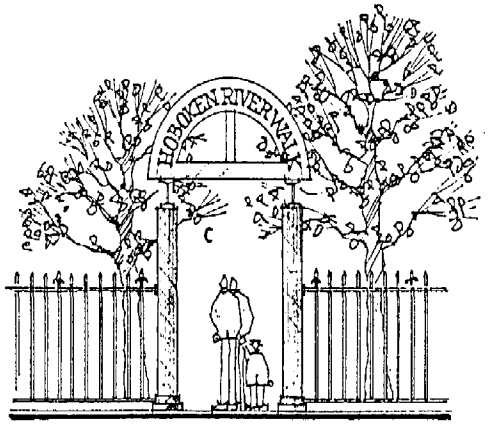
continued from page 4

mental design and architecture firm. Still in the preliminary stages, the study was funded by the Department of Environmental Protection.

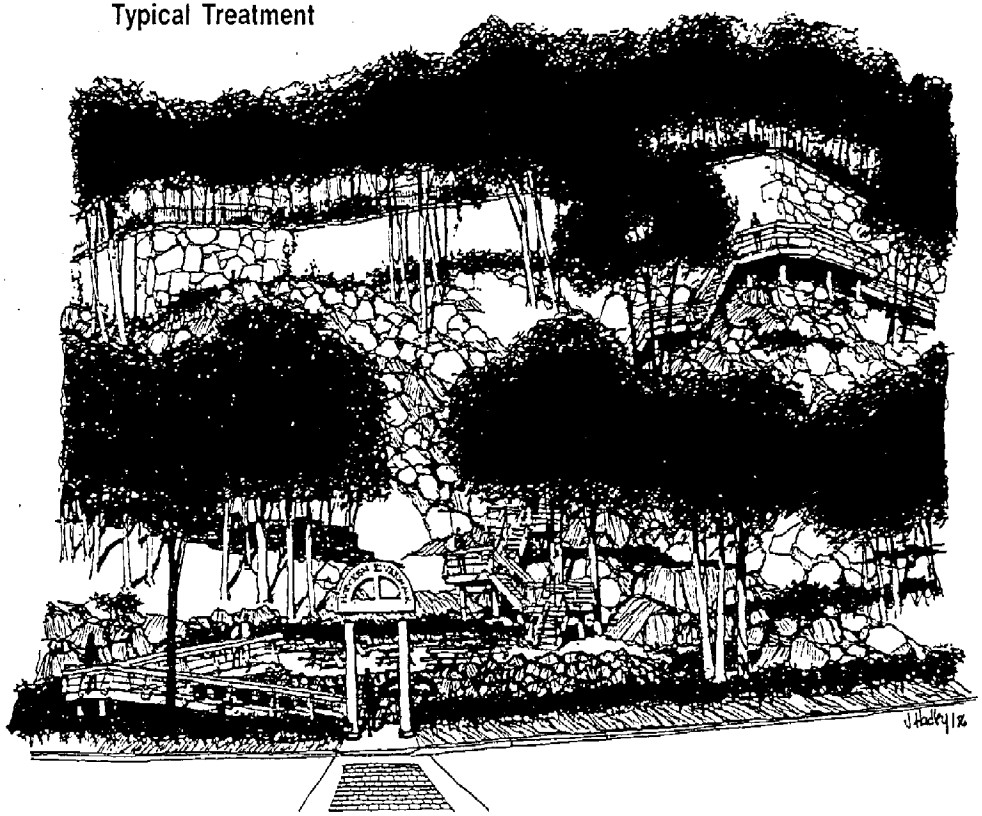
A finalized version of the design is expected to be completed in several weeks. It will incorporate suggestions made by the public at the December meeting. A public hearing will not be held on the final plans, because the public will have input at many points later on, according to Peggy Thomas of the CDA.

The plan is intended to tie in with a proposed waterfront walkway that would stretch from the George Washington Bridge to Bayonne. The walkway is still highly theoretical, and no cohesive overall plan has been worked out. □

Perspective Looking South Along Walk – Typical Treatment



Entry Portal at North/ Elysian Field Park



View of South Entry & Picnic Area

Gaudy · Hadley associates
ASLA AIA P.C.
Architecture • Environmental Design • Planning • Landscape Architecture

HUDSON WATERFRONT WALKWAY

HOBOKEN, N.J.

Prepared for:

The Community Development Agency City of Hoboken, N.J.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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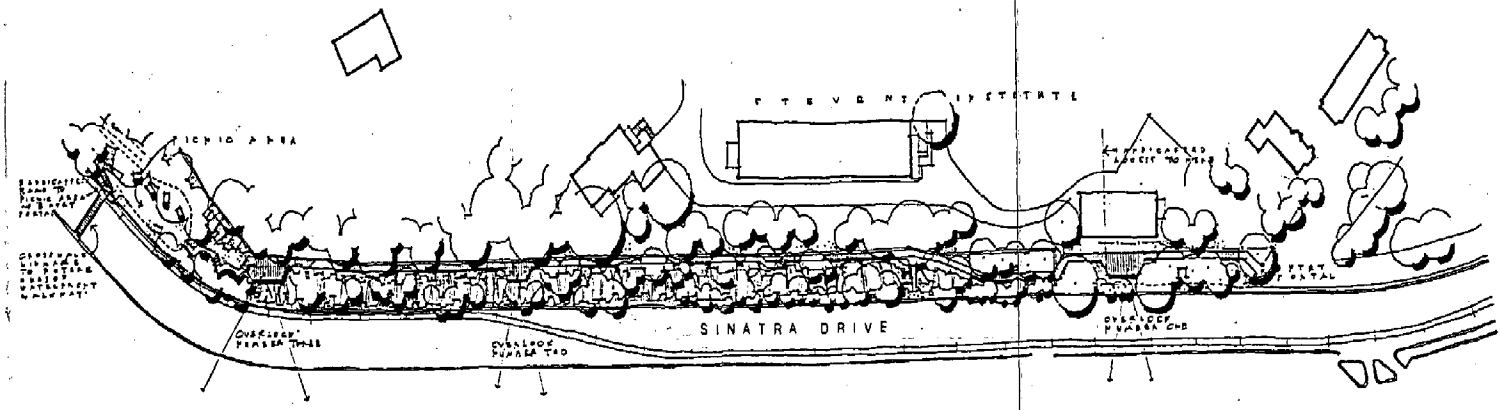
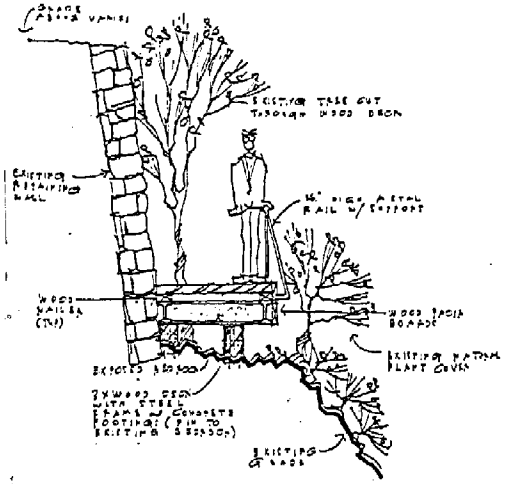
The first part of this Walkway to be developed in Hoboken, between Elysian Field and Castle Point, is known as the Hoboken Riverwalk. Gaudy-Hadley Associates, P.C. have designed the Riverwalk in compliance with the Wallace Roberts & Todd report after studying the City of Hoboken's waterfront. This study enabled the firm to choose the best possible route for the proposed walk. The Riverwalk wil begin at the southern end of Elysian Field and run along the cliffs above Sinatra Drive, providing picturesque views across the Hudson River while removing the user from the noise of the roadway below. The Riverwalk will have handicapped people access from the Elysian Field entry portal to the Scenic Overlook at the northern end, and to the Picnic Area (accessible from street level at the pedestrian crosswalk) at the southern end. It is also recommended that a sidewalk at grade level be developed along the east side of Sinatra Drive to provide the handicapped with an accessible linkage to the waterfront opportunity, while the Union Dry Dock and Maxwell House portions of the Riverwalk are not available.

The Riverwalk will be constructed of wood decking on a steel frame with concrete footings and will have a metal handrailing for safety. The Picnic Area will have a crushed stone surface with grills and picnic tables provided for the public's use. In the Overlook areas, benches will allow the user to rest and look toward the city's spectacular skyline.

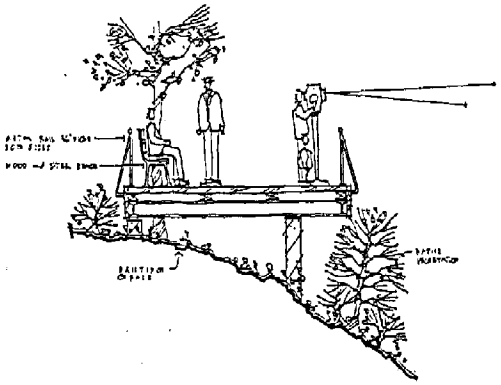
Residents, citizens' groups, organizations, developers and municipal, county, state, and federal agencies, working together, can provide Hoboken's 42,000 residents with a project which recalls the beginnings of the community as a "peaceful riverside resort for visitors from Manhattan who wandered along its six mile riverwalk to Elysian Field". This first part of the Riverwalk will eventaully link various projects which are presently being designed along the riverfront. The proposed Hoboken Riverwalk will provide the user with unmatched views of the New York skyline, while the natural cliffside setting in one of the most densely populated and dramatic urban settings in the world, will provide the residents and visitors to Hoboken with a rare and exciting recreational experience.



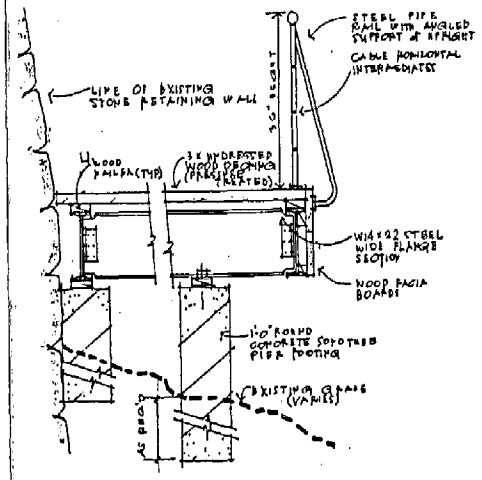
Project Area Plan



Typical Section / Deck Along Existing Retaining Wall



Section at Overlook Area



Section Detail

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