

Do you know what, or who, is Codo?

You'll find out Thursday who 'she' is and what she means for York

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Daily Record/Sunday News

York Daily Record/Sunday News

Article Last Updated: 09/09/2007 03:37:31 AM EDT

At bottom: · [TRY TO SOLVE THE MYSTERY](#) · [WHAT WE KNOW](#) · [WHEN THE MYSTERY ENDS](#)

Sep 9, 2007 — Codo, it seems, is a 28-year-old woman from York, Pa.

Her favorite photos are of local bars and restaurants, such as the National Grille, Left Bank and Granfalloon Tavern - along with some Baltimore and Harrisburg hotspots.

She has more than 1,000 friends. (MySpace says so).

And, curiously enough, she's also the public face of a firm the state is trusting with thousands of redevelopment dollars already - and many hope will trust with millions more taxpayer dollars to come.

Such is the story of Codo 241, whose identity has been teased throughout this inaugural baseball season at Sovereign Bank Stadium through a huge banner visible to fans and downtown bar patrons alike.

It hangs a block from the stadium on the former York Auto Parts building in the 200 block of North George Street, one of the large vacated buildings throughout the city.

The building is Codo's first project.

The state apparently trusts her, as it has ponied up a good chunk of the money to make it happen.

And her sole spokesman to date, William Swartz, also president of Sherman Property Management, says she'll be great for York.

Swartz and others behind Codo's rise to some kind of secret fame have dropped a trail of breadcrumbs through newsletters, a MySpace page and a Web page hinting at the real identity.

Along with everything else, those sources say Codo is "fresh" York.

What's her scheme?

Swartz said Codo is excited about the former York Auto Parts site. It's exactly Codo's taste, as is the rest of York.

He said architecture around the site and its proximity to other redevelopment sites, including the stadium, were a draw to invest.

Codo, after all, hates the plastic signs, massive parking lots and strip-mall atmosphere the 'burbs offer. She's even warned her potential friends: Anyone who likes that kind of stuff need not apply, according to one of the newsletters that were sent out occasionally to her "friends" during the weeks leading up to Thursday's unveiling.

When the project is finished, the site will have two commercial office suites on the first floor and 18 loft-style apartments on other floors. The project is expected to bring about 30 jobs to downtown York.

The \$8.3 million project is being partially funded by a Building PA loan through the state Department of Community and Economic Development.

Swartz said the York Auto Parts project is one of many being planned by Codo.

Can she be trusted?

She has the nod from the York County Economic Development Authority and the state's Commonwealth Financing Authority to use \$843,360 in loans to put lofts and commercial space into the aging auto parts site.

The loan program has oversight on several levels to make sure selected projects are something good for communities, said Greg Morgan, spokesman for the Department of Community and Economic Development.

The financing authority gave \$4 million to the York County Economic Development Corporation in late 2006. Morgan said there is latitude built into the law as to who can administer the funds; in other counties or communities, it could be a different type of agency.

The corporation then looks for projects and reports back to the Commonwealth Financing Authority for approval.

The authority OK'd Codo's use of the money this summer.

"There are a lot of eyes on it," Morgan assured.

Try to solve the mystery

If you want to try to figure out the Codo mystery for yourself, check out these sites: <http://www.whatiscodo.com>
<http://www.myspace.com/codoyork>.

[top](#)

What we know

- Codo 241's first project is the former York Auto Parts building in the 200 block of North George Street in York.
- The building will be used for office suites and loft-style apartments.
- The project is expected to bring about 30 jobs to downtown.
- The \$8.3 million project is being partially funded by a Building PA loan administered through the state Department of Community and Economic Development.
- More projects are planned.

[top](#)

When the mystery ends

When: Thursday during the last York Revolution game of the season.

Where: Sovereign Bank Stadium.

Who: The first 100 subscribers to Codo's Web site get in free.

Other than that, it's another mysterious event.

[top](#)

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