



E-Blast

April 2005

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What's so great about the city?



Just like most cities with rivers, Pittsburgh's riverfront is prime property for housing and recreation.

The Armstrong Cork Building in the Strip District will be the future home of a

Greetings!

In this month's E-Blast we invite you to come to our space planning workshop on May 4th, introduce you to one of our recently placed clients, share with you the effects of CDBG funding cuts on our neighborhoods, and introduce you to Pittsburgh's Strip District.

We hope you find this information useful (or at least interesting) and as always, we look forward to your feedback!

• Cool Space Awards: Thank You!

Cool Space Locator and PNC Bank, along with our other sponsors and partners, would like to thank you for your support of the first ever Cool Space Awards.



Nearly 300 guests attended the April Cool's Day Party in the Catalyst Building on April 1st to celebrate cool spaces and the ongoing revitalization of our region's urban spaces. The party boasted three ongoing audiovisual displays of Cool Space Award winning spaces projected onto the walls, a delicious hors d'oeuvre and dessert buffet catered by Aspinwall Everyday Gourmet, and tunes spun by DJ Soy Sos. We hope that you enjoyed yourself and have been inspired to find the cool spaces in your neighborhood!

• WORKSHOP May 4th

Right Size It: Find the Right Space for Your Small Business

Are you a start-up or existing business in need of office space and don't know the first thing about the current commercial real estate market? Or are you an existing business with future downsizing or expansion space needs?

riverfront mixed-use development along the Allegheny River, between 23rd and 24th streets. The former cork factory (originally constructed in 1901) is being redeveloped into 295 residential loft apartments, with over 47,000 square feet of commercial space and a 427-space parking garage on an adjacent lot.

The building's classic red brick façade, historic silo, and engine room, along other original details, will be restored and incorporated into the re-development. The groundbreaking ceremony occurred on April 7th, and the project is scheduled for completion during the summer of 2006.

What do you love about *your* city? If you have a photograph of urban life that you would like to see featured here, please send it to us, and be sure to tell us what you love about your community.

On Wednesday, May 4th from 4:00 to 5:30 p.m., Cool Space Locator will offer an office space planning workshop for start-up and/or existing small businesses, artists, and arts organizations. The workshop will be held at Cool Space Locator's office in Lawrenceville at 279 45th Street, and will provide you with basic and essential tools necessary to find the right office or studio space for your business. We will help you identify your true space needs to make effective and financially healthy space planning decisions.

Cost is \$35.00 per person. Registration is required and space is limited. Registration form available online at www.coolspacelocator.com/seminars.html.

Contact Kilolo Luckett at (412) 683-5790 x24 or kilolo@coolspacelocator.com for more information.

• Social Services Placement

Who

Zoar NewDay

What

Zoar NewDay offers addiction treatment for women in a community of hope. They provide day treatment programs to women through individual and group therapy, relapse prevention groups, life skills classes, and art therapy (making masks was one art therapy project). Zoar also offers substance abuse programs to women in the Allegheny County Jail and a reintegration program for women released from jail.



Where

822 Wood Street, Wilkinsburg

Why

Zoar NewDay had been operating in two locations: one in the North Side at 801 Union Place, and another in the Holy Rosary Convent in Homewood. When the diocese announced that they were selling the Homewood location, Zoar had to find a new space. Executive Director Claudia Detwiler began searching on her own, with some assistance from Homewood civic groups, but soon became frustrated with the lack of appropriate spaces available to suit the organization's needs; a number of licensing regulations and compliance issues for the treatment program, complete with a tight time frame (they had to move soon!) made the search for the perfect space difficult.

Claudia was extremely satisfied with her decision to

partner with CSL to find a new space. Placement Director Kilolo Luckett had the resources necessary to find spaces on Zoar's behalf, and helped negotiate obstacles like occupancy permits and specific regulations. Within three months, Claudia had signed a lease for space in a former doctor's office in Wilkinsburg, and the Zoar counselors and program participants are comfortable in their new space.

What Else

In addition to having Cool Space Locator as their tenant agent, Zoar NewDay was fortunate to find such an accommodating landlord. According to Claudia, the landlord, Prudential Realty, was super-welcoming and went out of the way to help them. Prudential understood the time pressure that Zoar was under and was willing to work quickly to help them meet their licensing regulations; they also helped by combining two adjacent spaces to suit the organization's needs, and have since helped with smaller matters since they've moved in.

If you would like to learn more or get involved with Zoar NewDay (they are currently looking for board members), contact Claudia Detwiler at (412) 323-2400 or detwiler@zoarnewday.org, or visit www.zoarnewday.org.

• CDBG Funding Cuts Threaten Communities

For over thirty years, the federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program has provided funding to cities, urban counties, and some rural areas for various projects encouraging community and economic development. Because these grants provide flexible funding, community recipients select the most appropriate use of the funds to fulfill one or more national objectives for CDBG: fighting poverty and spurring community and economic development through programs that benefit low and moderate income persons, prevent and/or eliminate slums and areas of blight, and provide funding for urgent community needs. The proposed 2006 budget presented by the Bush administration this past February, however, could greatly impact the ability of beneficiaries to continue community endeavors.

Since its inception, CDBG has been an initiative of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The new budget proposal moves managerial control of the program from HUD to the Department of Commerce. Additionally, the CDBG program will be combined with 17 other programs under a new umbrella of services called the "Strengthening Communities Initiative." Accompanying the program changes are dramatic cuts in the budget for CDBG. In the 2005 fiscal year, CDBG received a budget of 4.7 billion dollars. Under the new budget, CDBG and the 17 other programs would receive a combined budget of 3.71 billion dollars. The

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rationale behind the changes is to ensure the efficient operation of the program.

Politicians from both parties in Congress have publicly expressed their disagreement with the 2006 budget proposal in regards to CDBG. Senator Santorum (R-PA), a long time supporter of the CDBG program, commented in an April 4th news conference: "I understand the President's desire to eliminate programs that are inefficient and lack accountability, but when it comes to programs like CDBG, which are vital to our state, we should work to strengthen accountability rather than eliminate the program."

According to Grant Ervin of 10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania, "from a statewide perspective the loss of CDBG does not only impact the direct monetary loss of nearly \$250 million dollars that support urban, rural and suburban communities, it will negatively affect the ability of many municipalities to leverage borrowing capacity, improve infrastructure, and improve public facilities like parks and swimming pools. In the cases of some local governments, CDBG is all that is keeping them afloat. If we remove this program, which is a primary financial support stream for local governments we will be placing a great strain on the current system."

What does this all mean for Pittsburgh?

The 2004 CDBG budget for the City of Pittsburgh was \$20.29 million and was allocated to about 180 sources. If the proposed budget cuts pass at the federal level, many of these local projects that depend on CDBG funding will be threatened. You can review the 2004 and (unofficial) 2005 budgets for Pittsburgh on the CSL website to see exactly what organizations, city programs, and projects are being funded through CDBG (outside of Pittsburgh, check with your local government for details). More information about CDBGs and the proposed budget cuts, including links to relevant websites, is also available at www.coolspacelocator.com/CDBG.html.

- **Featured Neighborhood: The Strip District**

The Strip District sits just Northeast of Downtown Pittsburgh, along the southeastern bank of the Allegheny River. Say "Strip District" to outsiders and they may raise their eyebrows, but ask those that live and work in Pittsburgh, and you'll hear all about the unique



"24-hour" neighborhood, bustling with people day and night, a criss-cross of cultures and commerce. The Strip District is filled with a wide variety of wholesale merchants (including the famous Pennsylvania Macaroni Company and Wholey's Fish Market), boutiques, sidewalk vendors, restaurants, night clubs, warehouses, and loft residences. Constantly evolving, there is always something new to see or do in the Strip. Visitors can explore the 16:62 Design Zone, Pittsburgh's design and decor district, which begins at 16th Street and continues through the adjacent neighborhood of Lawrenceville to 62nd Street. In the district you can find a collection of art and antiques, design studios and furnishings for the home; request a free guidebook at www.1662designzone.com.

The Strip also boasts several cultural attractions, including the gallery Society for Contemporary Craft, now featuring artist/fashion designer Cat Chow, who fabricates sculpture out of unconventional materials. Another favorite is the Heinz History Center, currently featuring "Glass: Shattering Notions", "Rediscovering Lewis & Clark: A Journey with the Rooney Family", along with the Western Pennsylvania Sports Museum (learn more at www.pghhistory.org).

The neighborhood organization Neighbors in the Strip (NITS) works to "promote economic development opportunities, while preserving the personality, integrity and character of the Strip." Current initiatives include development of a Strip Marketplace (much like you would find at the Reading Terminal in Philadelphia or Pike Place Market in Seattle) and a Real Estate Summit, the objective of which is to "involve city and strip district planners, neighborhood property owners, and land and building developers in transforming the Strip District into more residential housing, more green spaces, and more service business providers". For more information or to get involved, contact Becky Rodgers at (412) 201-4774 or info@neighborsinthestrip.com, or visit the web at www.neighborsinthestrip.com.

Be sure to check out the following Cool Space Award Winners located in the Strip District:

- The Firehouse Lounge** at 2216 Penn Avenue, www.firehouse-lounge.com
- Open Stage Theatre** at 2825 Smallman Street, www.openstagetheatrepittsburgh.org
- Pittsburgh Decorative Center (The Pink Building)** at 3052 Smallman Street
- Society for Contemporary Craft** at 2100 Smallman Street, www.contemporarycraft.org
- Elliance** in the Cigar Factory Building at 2740 Smallman Street, www.elliance.com

(You can view a list of all 2005 Cool Space Awards winners at www.coolspacelocator.com).

Thanks to Becky Rodgers of Neighbors in the Strip for her assistance in writing this article.

● **About Us**

Cool Space Locator, a project of the Tides Center (PA), is a non-profit real estate organization that connects neighborhoods, properties, and businesses in the revitalization of urban communities. We work in the community development realm to promote revitalization of urban areas and walkable communities and match forward-thinking companies with cool urban spaces to create a sustainable future. Aside from working directly with companies to find space, we work with government, economic and community development agencies, and commercial property owners to help boost the growth of office based jobs in the great urban commercial districts of Pittsburgh. We are supported by:

- Richard King Mellon Foundation
- The Heinz Endowments
- The Pittsburgh Foundation
- Roy A. Hunt Foundation
- The Urban Redevelopment Authority of the City of Pittsburgh
- City of Pittsburgh, Mayor's Office
- Councilman Bill Peduto