



# E-Blast

E-Blast :: Cool Space Locator :: February 2007

## Welcome!

Take a moment to thaw out from the recent winter blast and check out what we've been able to uncover from the snow. We'll tell you about our next Right Size It workshop, held this Thursday. We have more findings from the Cool Deals report, focusing this month on cool space consumer behavior. Finally, we'll leave you this February with two things we love about the region: featured community Ambridge and helpful neighbors.



**Next Workshop: Right Size It  
Find the Right Space for Your Small Business**  
Thursday, February 22, 4:00-5:30 p.m.  
Cool Space Locator Office

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? Need to know whether you should purchase or lease a space?

Cool Space Locator offers a workshop for start-up and/or existing small businesses, artists, and arts organizations that will provide you with basic and essential tools necessary to find the right office or studio space for your business and will help you identify your true space needs to make effective and financially healthy space planning decisions. Typically small, these workshops offer the opportunity to get your questions answered by a real estate professional and will help you determine next steps in the process of finding space for your business or organization.

**\$35/organization**  
(up to 3 people/organization)

The Right Size It registration form is available on our website:

## Contents

- [Next Right Size It Workshop 2/22](#)
- [Capturing the Cool Space Market](#)
- [What's So Great About the City? Neighbors](#)
- [Featured Neighborhood: Ambridge](#)

## What's So Great About the City?

### Neighbors



Winter has finally arrived in Pittsburgh. The snow and cold are here in full force, but warmth abounds in neighborly deeds. Kind, unassuming folks, who don't expect much more than a "thank you," shovel sidewalks in front of many neighbors' homes in the region. Students at the Trinity Episcopal School for Ministry, in Ambridge, PA, turn into snow angels on many snowy days, appearing in full force to shovel the walks of senior citizens in town.



## Capturing the Cool Space Market: Cool Space and Self Selection



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Top: [seekaltroutes](#)  
Bottom: [matt.ohara](#)

### What makes your community great?

Let us know! Your opinion could be featured in a future E-Blast. Email us at [info@coolspacelocator.com](mailto:info@coolspacelocator.com).

After six years of working to place businesses and organizations in cool space, we've been collecting incredible amounts of data. All of this work with customers and clients, along with some economic data from the Carnegie Mellon Center for Economic Development ([www.smartpolicy.org](http://www.smartpolicy.org)), have helped us determine who makes up the core market for creative, urban space. The product is a report called *Cool Deals: Capturing the New Market in Urban Commercial Real Estate*.

The *Cool Deals* research report details the businesses and organizations interested in cool space, the offices they require, the location decision process, and the market's collective spending power. The E-Blast will feature a key finding each month through April.

The full report is available as a PDF download from our website: [www.coolspacelocator.com](http://www.coolspacelocator.com).

### Consumers Self-Select Into Cool Space

Among Cool Space Locator's customers and clients, we've found that most come to us looking specifically for cool space - workspace in a walkable urban neighborhood. This underserved market, small enterprises needing less than 2,000 square feet of space, led to the creation of our organization. Two major indicators from our research suggest that many enterprises specifically want - and therefore self-select into - cool space.

First, both internal client data and a survey of office seekers show that businesses looking for new space seek a location similar to their current space. Many Cool Space Locator clients were already located in cool space, and they were seeking assistance to find a larger space for their operations.

Second, many of our customers and clients have been referred to us from allied organizations, including local governments, Pittsburgh's Urban Redevelopment Authority ([www.ura.org](http://www.ura.org)), and community development corporations. Businesses often contact these organizations because of their commitment to serving walkable and urban communities with significant commercial space. These organizations then refer these enterprises to us, with the hope that we can find them a space in their constituent neighborhood.

Therefore, we say that the enterprises that seek out Cool Space Locator, specifically to locate in cool space, *self-select into cool space*.

## **Opportunities to Market Cool Space**

Although our customers and clients already know they like cool space, there are many other enterprises that haven't been previously exposed to it, and therefore don't know the option exists, when looking for new office space. While our research has suggested the types of enterprises that could be potentially interested in cool space, we find that even the self-selecting consumers are underserved by the traditional brokerage community. Many will perform a self-guided search without a broker if they can't find one that will provide the necessary assistance.

By presenting cool space as an option to businesses seeking new space, real estate and development professionals can encourage the placement of more enterprises in cool space. Our research shows that these placements can create dedication to cool space, because those that have located in cool space will more than likely self-select into it for a future search. It is interesting to note that those businesses that were previously located in suburban locations are more likely to choose cool space for a future location than those previously located in cool space are to choose a suburban location in the future. In fact, two *Cool Deals* case study businesses, Matrix Solutions and Testa Consulting, switched to cool space after locating earlier in office parks - one using the services of Cool Space Locator, the other using a conventional broker.

We also recommend that public policy stakeholders, including community and economic development organizations, and real estate professionals create strong relationships with each other. Enterprises looking for cool space communicate with policy stakeholders, and this connection can be a great source of new clients for real estate professionals working in walkable communities.

***Next Month's Topic: Policy to Influence Location Decisions***

To view the full Cool Deals report as a PDF download, visit our website, [www.coolspacelocator.com](http://www.coolspacelocator.com).



**Featured Neighborhood: Ambridge**



*Nationality Days festival on Merchant Street (Courtesy of Town Center Associates)  
Church in Old Economy Village*

Ambridge, like other neighborhoods in the Pittsburgh region, is no stranger to the touch of history. With its 19th century Harmony Society roots showing in Old Economy Village and a groundbreaking brownfield development on the horizon, this Ohio Valley community continues to blur the lines between past and present. New businesses, landmark architecture, and mill town character make Ambridge a diverse place emblematic of regional life.

The Borough of Ambridge sits in Beaver County, northwest of the City of Pittsburgh, and is the first community outside of Allegheny County on the eastern bank of the Ohio River. In 1824, the Harmony Society, a utopian community founded by George Rapp, formed the first settlement "Oekonomie" on the present site of Ambridge. By the early 20th century, the settlement had declined, and the Society sold off much of its land to the American Bridge Company for its company town "Ambridge". American Bridge's mills manufactured steel for buildings and bridges worldwide until 1983, when they closed in the regional steel collapse. Today, Ambridge's economic landscape, including its main commercial corridor along Merchant Street, is in a state of transition, adapting to new arrivals in professional services and light industry.

Part of this transformation is a massive mixed-use brownfield redevelopment in the community's core. Australian developer Rob Moltoni is pioneering this effort with the creation of The Bridges Village and New Economy Business Park. This development will combine new residential, commercial, and light industrial space over 60 acres. Ambridge Borough Manager Kristen Denne says this new development has the potential to transform Ambridge into a retail and entertainment destination. Future spaces are being designed in the shell of former industrial buildings to recall the buzzing markets of Pittsburgh's Strip District neighborhood.



*Laughlin Memorial Library  
Artist's rendering of New Economy Business Park*

Old Economy Village ([www.oldeconomyvillage.org](http://www.oldeconomyvillage.org)), a grouping of 17 original Harmonist buildings, is already a major destination in Ambridge. The Village sits within Ambridge's National Historic Landmark District, one of only a few such districts in Pennsylvania and the country, according to Site Director Mary Ann Landis. Many residents of the region may remember Old Economy from their grade school days for its memorable school tour programs. Throughout the year, visitors and their families travel from all over the world to visit this site, which contains examples of architecture found nowhere else in the United States. Old Economy Village is administered by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.

A newer business, the Silk House Cafe ([www.silkhousecafe.com](http://www.silkhousecafe.com)) represents the growing interest of new enterprises in Ambridge. Owner Cindy Bologna-Ridge grew up in Ambridge, and she recognized an opportunity for a community gathering place near Old Economy. She seized the opportunity to renovate the former silk manufacturing building, receiving facade rehabilitation support from the Beaver County Main Street Initiative. Since the cafe's opening in 2005, Bologna-Ridge has seen renewed interest in the area's real estate, and a stronger sense of community and support as townspeople gather in the newly renovated space. When you stop by for coffee and lunch, check out photos of the cafe before its transformation.

Ambridge residents are proud of their home, and celebrate with many community events, including its annual Church Tour, a car cruise, music in the park, and the Nationality Days festival held every May. Homemade pierogies are available at several churches on Fridays. The most popular fillings of this regionally iconic cuisine can sell by 10 a.m., unless you know someone working in the kitchen. Local lore also claims that religious services are given in up to 15 dialects every weekend. In Ambridge, pride is even wearable - Borough Manager Kristen Denne proved it with a Trinity Episcopal School for Ministry t-shirt reading "Love Ambridge."

## **Featured Ambridge Organizations**

**Ambridge Regional Distribution & Manufacturing Center** ([www.ambridgeregional.com](http://www.ambridgeregional.com)), owned by Value Properties, Inc., is one of Beaver County's largest industrial business parks, which offers warehouse, distribution, office, lab, and storage space for lease.

## **Ambridge Historic District Economic Development Board**

promotes education and opportunity for economic growth and business incubation in the historic district.

**Old Economy Village** ([www.oldeconomyvillage.org](http://www.oldeconomyvillage.org)) interprets the history of the Harmony Society, a highly successful 19th century religious communal society, and preserves and interprets the unique material culture of the Society during its period of residence in Beaver County, Pennsylvania, for citizens of and visitors to the Commonwealth.

*Thanks to Cindy Bologna-Ridge, Mike Bort, Kristen Denne, Brian Hayden, Connie Kovolenko, Mary Ann Landis, Debi Leopardi, Gene Pash, Bea Patterson, Mary Ellen Petro, and Joe Zemba for their assistance with this article.*

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