



'no more empty buildings'



E-Blast

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

Welcome!

The past few months have been exciting for us at Cool Space Locator, and we'd like to let you know what we have coming up this spring. First, read about the return of Cool Space Awards for 2007, and how you can honor your favorite workspace. We have two workshops coming up: the first is our monthly Right Size It workshop, and the next is Managing Your Location Decisions, a joint program with Duquesne University's Small Business Development Center. You can read more findings from the *Cool Deals* report, with this month's focus on public policy. Finally, check out our sidebar for some new ways to get outdoors this spring and explore towns in the region's valleys.



CSA07: Nominations Due April 20!

It's that time again - we're hosting the [2007 Cool Space Awards](#) to recognize unique and innovative commercial spaces in the southwestern Pennsylvania region. If you know a cool space located in a walkable neighborhood, we want to hear about it.

Join us in celebrating revitalization and adaptive reuse by nominating your favorite cool space or person that makes cool space happen.

Contents

- [Cool Space Awards 2007](#)
- [March and April Workshops](#)
- [What's So Great About the City? Rails-to-Trails](#)
- [Capturing the Cool Space Market](#)

What's So Great About the City?

Rails-to-Trails

Connecting Cities, Towns, and Neighborhoods to Each Other



A taste of spring in Pittsburgh brings with it the inclination to spend more time outdoors. There are several riverside trails in and around the Pittsburgh region, many of which follow along railroads - some still frequented by trains - like the Three Rivers Heritage Trail along the Monongahela River in Pittsburgh's South Side neighborhood and the Eliza Furnace Trail across the river (a.k.a. "The Jail Trail" because it runs next to the County Jail Downtown). If you're looking for

Our judges will select up to two winners for each of the following five categories:

Cool Space...



...Connects with the Community

This award will be given to a space that has created a stronger community.

...Inspires Creativity

This award will be given to a space that promotes creativity and inspires productivity.



...Incorporates History

This award will be given to a space that embraces the building's original construction.

...Reclaims Urban Space

This award will be given to a space that has revived a previously disregarded or mistreated space, and embraces sustainability.



...Requires Passion

This award will be given to a person who makes cool space happen.

Nominate online at www.coolspacelocator.com or call 412.683.5790. *Deadline for nominations is April 20.*

Save the Date: celebrate cool spaces with us at the Cool Space Awards Party on June 1, 2007 at The Meter Room.

CSA07 sponsorships are now being accepted. Contact Robyn Barber at 412.683.5790 or robyn@coolspacelocator.com for more information. Sponsorships start at \$500.



Upcoming Workshop: Managing Your Location Decisions A Workshop for Business Leadership

*Wednesday, April 11, 9:00 a.m. - 12 noon
Duquesne University Small Business Development Center
600 Forbes Avenue, Rockwell Hall, Room 505*

Commercial leases and real estate purchases differ from residential transactions in ways that impact your bottom line and

a fun way to explore historic towns, check out the Youghiogheny River Trail (YRT) - a 70-mile trail created from an underused railroad line.

The YRT follows the Youghiogheny River from McKeesport in Allegheny County to Confluence in Somerset County, just beyond Ohiopyle State Park. Along the trail, you can see towns of all sizes, like Buena Vista, Connellsville, Dawson, and West Newton. The 43-mile portion from McKeesport to Connellsville recycles an underused P&LE railroad right-of-way, and many of the railway mileposts are still in place along the trail. Bikes are allowed on the entire YRT, and in many places north of Connellsville horseback riding is also permitted!

The YRT is part of a larger, 150-mile trail system: the Great Allegheny Passage, connecting the Pittsburgh region to Cumberland, Maryland. A number of smaller trails in the system are finished or nearing completion. The Steel Valley Trail in the Monongahela River Valley, when finished, will connect the northern terminus of the YRT in McKeesport to the Three Rivers Heritage Trail on Pittsburgh's South Side.

Check out these links for more information on the YRT, the Great Allegheny Passage, and Rails-to-Trails. Happy trails to you!

Youghiogheny River Trail:

www.youghrivertrail.org

Great Allegheny Passage:

www.atatrail.org

Rails-to-Trails Conservancy:

www.railtrails.org

What makes your community great?

Let us know! Your opinion could be featured in a future E-Blast. Email us at

info@coolspacelocator.com.

business performance. The process for choosing a location can take time and require a serious investment of time and money. "Location, location, location" is not the only thing to consider. The success (or failure) of your business may ride on managing these transactions well. This workshop will help you understand critical aspects of finding commercial real estate, managing the process and the time it takes, understanding both the critical financial aspects of the deal and the important legal issues involved, and help the small business professional find the best space for their company. This workshop is presented by Kyra Straussman, President of Cool Space Locator, and June Swanson, a real estate attorney with Geraghty & Associates.

In this workshop you will:

- Learn to understand key terms in commercial real estate transactions
- Learn the best process for determining your space requirements
- Determine a framework for the budget for your move and operating your new space
- Understand the process of looking for space
- Learn how building and zoning codes affect your choices
- Learn how commercial leases work, and some of the important aspects of leasing that can affect your business decisions in the long term
- Understand how to make a decision between leasing or buying commercial property for your business

\$45/person

(or \$35/person if 2 or more from your organization attend)

Register online at Duquesne's SBDC at <http://www.sbdc.duq.edu/training/events60.cfm> or call 412.396.6233.

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

*Wednesday, March 28, 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:

http://www.coolspacelocator.com/csl/what_we_do/seminars.htm



Capturing the Cool Space Market: Promoting Cool Space with Public Policy



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), 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.

The Role of Public Policy in Attracting Businesses

The original research we conducted for the *Cool Deals* report shows that public policy decisions can appreciably affect the way businesses make location decisions. Thirty-one businesses were surveyed about their recent location decision, whether it was to remain in their current location or to move to a new location. The survey gathered information on the preferences businesses have on their workspaces. A scenario in the survey had respondents make a hypothetical location decision, choosing

between a space in a walkable neighborhood and an office park space.

The survey revealed that the presence of parking could be an important factor to many businesses making location decisions, and that few businesses are ambivalent about its availability. In a ranking of 10 factors in a location decision, businesses placed the availability of parking in the upper half of all factors. Businesses that already have ample free parking typically desire it in a new office, and businesses without free parking are often unwilling to pay for its provision in a future office.

To judge the impact of tax incentives, businesses were asked whether those incentives would cause them to switch their preference from the walkable community to the office park, or vice versa. When offered abatement from all state and municipal taxes for five years, businesses initially choosing either location were just as likely - more than half the time - to switch their location preference to the other. And after looking at other cost incentives, we found businesses in suburban locations replying to the survey to be somewhat more price-sensitive.

Recommendations: Smart Infrastructure and Financial Incentives

The *Cool Deals* report reveals that parking improvements and tax incentives could possibly attract businesses to walkable communities, although both of these policies should be implemented with care.

Providing ample amounts of parking in various forms could help to attract businesses from office parks to walkable communities, because opportunities for parking are important to most respondents of the survey. But according to recent recommendations by a recent feature from [Planetizen](#) on tech-based infrastructure ("[How Cities Compete in the Media Economy](#)" by Neil Takemoto and Mike Lydon), infrastructure that takes advantage of urban density - such as public and bike transportation and wireless networking - will be more effective at attracting technology-based enterprises.

By the same token, the same tax abatements that could attract businesses also have the potential to rob governments of tax revenues that maintain financial stability and sustainability. Additionally, when the abatement expires, the business no longer has that financial incentive to stay. Tax incentives do have the added advantage of being powerful when attracting office park-based businesses to walkable communities. It's important to remember that real estate costs can have a major impact on a business' bottom line - no matter where they locate.

Next Month's Topic: Market Potential of Real Estate in Walkable Communities

To view the full *Cool Deals* report as a PDF download, visit our

website, www.coolspacelocator.com.

Resources

"How Cities Compete in the Media Economy" from Planetizen.
Available at www.planetizen.com/node/21866.

The Rebirth of Older Industrial Cities: Exciting Opportunities for Private Sector Investment from the Northeastern University Center for Urban and Regional Policy. Available at www.curp.neu.edu/publications/reports.htm#uir.



Cool Space Locator is a non-profit commercial real estate organization supporting small business owners and non-profit leaders seeking cool space for their operations. Cool space is the commercial real estate in walkable neighborhoods, where sidewalks and the urban grid promote pedestrian travel and density. These properties may be older buildings that have existed since the founding of the neighborhood; spaces converted from other uses, like warehouses or factories; or new properties that fill gaps in the original urban fabric.

We offer property search and site location services in southwestern Pennsylvania; workshops to businesses and nonprofit leaders on real estate related topics; support in evaluating location opportunities; and financial planning as it relates to a move. We support clients by connecting them to local organizations, municipal regulators and service providers (zoning, safety, building code, etc.), in addition to supportive community-based lenders. By assisting our clients as they relocate, we work to cultivate vitality and creativity in historic towns, neighborhoods, and city centers where walkability is the norm.

Cool Space Locator is a project of the Tides Center (PA). Our non-profit organization is funded in part by

- Richard King Mellon Foundation
 - The Heinz Endowments
 - Surdna Foundation
 - Garfield Foundation
- The Pittsburgh Foundation
- Roy A. Hunt Foundation
- Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh

Copyright 2007 Tides Center/Cool Space Locator, a project of the Tides Center (PA)

Cool Space Locator

279 45th Street

Pittsburgh, PA 15201

412.683.5790

info@coolspacelocator.com