

Development Activities Meeting Report (Version: 06/24/2020)

This report created by the Neighborhood Planner and included with staff reports to City Boards and/or Commissions.

Logistics	Stakeholders
Project Name/Address: Pins/16-Bit, South Side Works at 407 Cinema Dr (Renovation)	Groups Represented (e.g., specific organizations, residents, employees, etc. where this is evident):
Parcel Number(s): 29-J-00120	South Side Community Council (RCO)
ZDR Application Number: DCP-ZDR-2021-14042	Local Review Committee of South Side Community Council Friends of South Side Park
Meeting Location: Zoom	Residents Applicant Team
Date: January 20 th , 2022	City Planning
Meeting Start Time: 6:00pm (due to other presentations, applicant began presentation a little before 8pm)	
Applicant: Pins Mechanical Co. Cori Medley (Design Collective) Randy Roberty (Design Collective) Matt Dunlap (Rise Brands) Sondra Beitel (McCarthy Consulting)	Approx. Number of Attendees: 25
Boards and/or Commissions Request(s): Planning Commission briefing (Feb 8), and Planning Commission Hearing (Feb. 22)	

How did the meeting inform the community about the development project?

Ex: Community engagement to-date, location and history of the site, demolition needs, building footprint and overall square footage, uses and activities (particularly on the ground floor), transportation needs and parking proposed, building materials, design, and other aesthetic elements of the project, community uses, amenities and programs.

Over the course of their presentation, the applicant team shared an Exterior Review Package displaying background info on the project, a location map, context photos, a site plan, existing conditions of floor 1 and 2 and schematic plans for floors 1 and 2, landscape plans for floor 1 and floor 2, patio plans for floor 1 and floor 2, exterior elevations (west, north, and east) and exterior renders from ground level and aerial views. The initial background sheet showed that the existing total area (Square footage) is to remain unchanged per scope of fit-out. (Note – the project presented its parcel ID# as 010-298014 on the presentation slide’s background sheet showing building information.)

The applicant team began their presentation by discussing the specific location where the new tenant, Pins Mechanical Co. (Pins) and 16-Bit plans to locate: the building was the old AMC theater in the South Side Works district, which is being reworked under separate permits and separate approvals. There was a previous Cladagh Irish Pub space as well as a former wine bar space on the first floor (both closed and vacant). Pins will occupy what was the Cladagh and wine bar spaces on the first floor as well as half of the building’s second floor.

The applicant shared background on the tenant business, Pins Mechanical Co. It is an entertainment venue and bar with locations in other cities. It has duck pin bowling (shortened bowling, smaller balls), arcade games, pinball games, fire pits, and more, and it seeks to create a lively and fun atmosphere for guests. The applicant shared visuals of existing conditions and proposed conditions for the floors. The first floor will maintain the same patio as Cladagh had on the northwest corner, and adding a fire pit, with extents largely the same.

On the second floor, the landlord had previously approved a floor 2 patio on a previous roof terrace, but removed the equipment and had installed some patio pavers. Applicant will be installing furniture, built-in planters, and decorative elements, etc.

For the first floor entry, the applicant plans to remove one of the storefront bays and recess the entry to create more of an entry experience. Users would walk through the existing opening and in through the double doors into the entry space. The existing entrance is long and narrow and it's a long walk, and so this change lets people enter through a more central point, it also fixes some problems, and there is also an entry canopy proposed.

The applicant shared that the façade is staying quite similar, with some differences. The four windows on the previous entry tower will have the storefront removed and replaced with operable windows -- aesthetically when they're closed it will appear the same visually with new functionality added. There will be a canopy with a sign at the opening where they will demolish the storefront and create the storefront entry. The goal is to allow the tower space to be more dynamic. On the second floor patio, the applicant plans to add a garage door for an indoor/outdoor bar that will address that patio. They are also proposing a blade sign at the corner of the building, and a couple of garage doors for the length of much of the building.

They are proposing painting the building. There is currently an orange colored dated brick, and the building is built at scale of movie theater, which is quite monolithic. The applicant's understanding of the goals for the area is to create a more energetic space and "walkable urbanism" where tenant spaces play off one another and have visual differences/appearances between one another in the building. The "monolithic" building as existing today, per the applicant, conflicts with the applicant team's vision for a more walkable streetscape experience full of character and dynamism, so the team is proposing to paint their portion of the building a darker paint color to differentiate it from rest of building, to make the building "pop" and break it down into multiple scales, and the dark paint color also creates a contrast with the vegetation.

The applicant team showed renderings with the entry canopy and the dark building paint color, with white stripes around the perimeter to break up the black pattern. They pointed out the patio on the second floor with the trees and the indoor/outdoor bar, windows on the entry tower, and a patio that follows existing extents on first floor.

This rendering also showed two tenant spaces on the first floor – "Blue" and "Late Taco" – which are adjacent tenants, but not in the applicant team's proposed development scope; they stay as is.

Input and Responses

Questions and Comments from Attendees	Responses from Applicants
On the Tunnel Blvd side of the building, do you have an elevation of that side? It appears there is a giant sign behind the second tree?	Yes, that part of the building has two egress doors that come out of the stair tower. Previously there were big billboards with movie theater signage showing which movies were "coming soon." We propose to pull down that signage down and replace it with a hand-painted graphic on the brick, swapping out the billboard-style graphic with something more naturally applied to building.
At the side doors that open up, on the left further down with the larger openings, will you have a railing to stop people from moving in and out?	Yes, they do not go all the way to the ground; the railings will be in front of you. You don't circulate in and out of those doors. They would be at knee height to stop people.

Questions and Comments from Attendees	Responses from Applicants
And further down there isn't more further to the right?	No, on the ground floor there are four openings you can see on the plan – the two on the tower and two on garage doors on the side. And then there are two on the tower on floor 2.
Is the whole place licensed for liquor?	Yes, or it will be if it is not now. That's the intent.
What are the planned hours of operation?	Pins Mechanical Co would open at 4pm from Monday-Friday and open on the weekends at noon. They would close generally no later than 2am. It is a very interesting concept because it is as much a family joint as a bar. It transitions better than any place I've seen, filled with 8-10 year-olds all day long and then transitions later in the day.
So if you open at 4pm, I can't go with kids during the day?	At weekends they open at noon.
What is the occupancy count?	About 1,200 or 1,300 or so.
How is parking handled?	Parking is existing. It was handled previously with the landlord scope of work. The space used to be a movie theater which had greater occupancy count. The rest of the floor was office space. So the overall occupancy as proposed is less than what it was when it was a movie theater.
Is the choice of black paint for the tenant space part of Pins' branding?	It is a little bit branding – the dark color fits with their aesthetic and brand, but we also think it's a striking contrast to some of the architecture there. When we researched past approvals for the drawings done for the development as a whole, we saw that one goal was having different types of tenants and aesthetics that promote walkable urbanism. Creating contrast in color was a way to differentiate the building and make it feel more like a number of different buildings, instead of one large and failed movie theater.
Have you received all your zoning approvals or is that your next step?	We are in for permit, we submitted and received comments and resubmitted a few days ago. We are on the agenda for Feb. 8 th meeting and Feb. 22 nd hearing/zoning.
When you say movie theater, the movie theater wasn't really there, it was the Claddagh, right?	You are correct, there was Claddagh on the corner, the wine bar on the northeast corner, and the upper floor – which is half of our space – was the movie theater.
Does the black paint go around the corner onto 27 th Street as well?	I believe so, to the extents of our leasable space, it wraps the tower and goes to the edge of the tower, I believe.

Questions and Comments from Attendees	Responses from Applicants
How does the transition from families to adults work? Is there a time when people under 21 have to be out? Times when people under 21 can still be there but with a parent?	We have a hard cut-off time at 8pm that no one under 21 is allowed in there. Guests under age 18 who are present during the day need to be accompanied by a parent.
I just remember when it was the movie theater, and we had issues in past with kids riding the hours. I like your policy, thank you.	Yeah, we have locations in districts that are similar like Columbus, Ohio, in Charlotte, and we're going into Cleveland, and places that are high-end and family-oriented. And it works well from different times of days and perspectives, and stays safe in both scenarios.
What are the different Pins activities?	<p>There are several bars. There are classic arcade games. As part of the brand, it is Pins and 16 Bit.</p> <p>Part of the Mechanical Co is duck pin bowling (smaller ball similar to soft ball, more modern take on traditional bowling, don't have to have bowling shoes, and since balls are smaller kids can play easily, making it more accessible). Pins brand has pin ball and duck pin bowling.</p> <p>There is also 16 Bit, which is a bar and arcade, and it has classic arcade games, such as Space Invaders, Pac Man etc. There is a Console bar where guests can play old Nintendo-64 video games. There is also ski ball, ping pong, bocce courts, foosball, bubble hockey, and basically anything that is easy to play and people may remember if they're 30s, 40s or 50s years old. It's also a way for kids who are new to these games to get to experience tactile games (as compared to digital games).</p> <p>There are some over-scaled games, such as a giant Connect Four game, giant Jenga boards, a giant Lite Brite on the back side of the elevator (about 11 ft tall x 15ft wide with 2" wide diameter pegs that are one foot long). The idea is to make the space interactive and fun.</p>
So it's like a high-end Games N' At.	Yeah, kind of a contemporary take on a gaming bowling concept.
I don't know if you know Games N' At, it used to be up here on the South Side. Do you get tickets you can turn in for prizes?	There are no tickets or prizes, it's more just about encouraging interaction. Another focal point is the carnival slides (stainless steel slides) that are a fun feature to get from the 2 nd floor down to the 1 st floor.
Especially when you've been drinking.	Not to be confused with the water slide when people start pouring the drinks.
In terms of schedule, it says you've submitted for permit and you're submitting some comments back. When do you expect to open?	Correct. We haven't started construction yet, and it will be an approximately 6-month process once get approvals. Assuming zoning and building permits go well, we hope to have all approvals by March 1, and then about 6 months of construction and so probably 7 months to open.

Questions and Comments from Attendees	Responses from Applicants
<p>Are you from Pittsburgh?</p> <p>You're too young to know Pittsburghers hate to pay for parking. We raised this multiple times with Somera Roads when looking at the developments they planned there. With your occupancy of 1200-1300 people, are you offering any kind of validation for parking? A lot of people that may drive down here would park in the neighborhood, e.g. in Aldi across the street, before paying \$5 in garage behind there for parking. We want people from outside the neighborhood to come in and enjoy the area and the experience but we also wonder about where they're going to park.</p> <p>Could you get info to us about parking?</p> <p>Or if you're offering validation?</p>	<p>I grew up in Penn Hills and moved away when I was 10 and I have family there.</p> <p>Just don't know the answer on specifics of the lease for that.</p> <p>Yeah, you're asking if parking will be paid or not?</p> <p>Ok.</p>
<p>When South Side Works was booming and the theater was going, I think people may have paid \$3 after 5pm in the parking lot that is what may now be what the Rite Aid team is looking at. Someone may have been picking that up. I could park there because it was only \$3, rather than going into the neighborhood, when I didn't live in neighborhood at time. That was a few years ago. Sometimes, the attraction will bring people down, but if people pay less on parking they are likely to spend more at your business.</p>	<p>Yeah, I'm speaking from other experience, so I don't know the answer here, but a lot of town centers and developments we've been working with are eliminating paid parking entirely to try to get people in. Now, when you can watch movies from your couch and buy everything from your couch, the key is getting people out for an experiential situation, and Pins is great at getting people out of their homes and in the door.</p>
<p>Does the venue serve any food?</p>	<p>Pins Mechanical Co. will not serve food, beyond the minimal food required to be served for liquor control requirements, but they will allow people to walk in with outdoor food, walk in with bags of food, and deliver pizza there. This location may not lend it to it, but food trucks are often a big staple of their business, and encourage outside partnerships with local businesses to get food in the door.</p>
<p>Food trucks would be great, and given the empty storefronts, an operation like this could be a draw for other businesses to come in with food.</p>	<p>Absolutely, with the two leasable spaces next door, a fast casual business could do great. We have seen that surrounding businesses do great.</p>
<p>To see what the place looks like, you can go to their website.</p>	<p>Yes.</p>
<p>Is there one in Dublin, Ohio? Google streetviews of locations?</p>	<p>There are virtual tours for all the locations. They're a branding company good at presenting their spaces and making them visible.</p>

Questions and Comments from Attendees	Responses from Applicants
[question in the chat] Will there be bike racks available in this area?	Public bike racks will be controlled by the landlord, and I believe they're installing a sufficient quantity. The immediate view to the left in the visual contains a dog park and a lot of stuff put in by the landlord that I think may have been previously approved.
I am not sure on the signage guidelines for the South Side Works – I'm in the historic district -- so I would leave it up to the other authorities to review that when you go through zoning.	
There are sign guidelines in the Preliminary Land Development Plan, probably.	
There is a big projecting sign on the corner and I'm wondering if it exceeds size?	
The City has the sign guidelines on its website, including the square footage requirements, quantity caps, height caps, and all the usual stuff. In sum, we encourage you to read the guidelines and make sure you comply.	Yes.
	[Applicant led everyone in a virtual 3-D walk through of the proposed spaces once fully fit out]. All old school arcade games are free to play, though pinball is not free.
Do you have pinball machines?	Yes.
Do you plan on any leagues or organized scenarios?	We plan on duck pin leagues, which we have done quarterly at other locations.
It looks pretty cool. I'm interested to see who many people it brings in, since there is no place like it in the city.	Yeah, they're pretty unique. They become a true destination.
And it seems to fit in with what Somera Road is looking to do with the site.	Yes.
Are you going to Planning Commission, right? And then zoning you said is Feb 22 nd ?	Yes, we plan to go on February 8, and we have a hearing on Feb 22 with zoning.
How many total locations does Pins Mechanical Co have?	11 or 12 (3 in Columbus; Cleveland about to open; Cincinnati, Indianapolis, Nashville, Charlotte, etc., and some have multiple locations.

Questions and Comments from Attendees	Responses from Applicants
<p>Looking at dates, I believe you have a preliminary meeting with the Planning Commission on February 8th, and then you have an actual presentation with them on February 22nd.</p> <p>[City planner]: Yeah, usually there is a briefing two weeks before the hearing.</p>	<p>Yeah that sounds right. There is a briefing, followed by a hearing on the 22nd.</p>
<p>I don't think you have to go to Zoning [Board of Adjustment], but signage would be information for the Planning Commission since they're looking at the South Side Works Development Plan.</p>	
<p>Exactly.</p>	
	<p>Is there anything else that you need from us tonight?</p>
<p>[SSCC/RCO lead]: No, if anyone has additional questions/comments, please contact us at info@southsidecommunitycouncil.org and we know when they're presenting to Planning Commission. Feb 22nd is outside of the 30-day comment period, so we can provide them with additional comments up until that time.</p>	
<p>[SSCC/RCO lead]: Thanks for being last presenter and being with us, and you can see the work we're doing on the South Side and you can appreciate we're a great community to be in. Previous DAMs and this DAM recording will be added to the YouTube page. The next DAM is on Feb 17th – may have 2 or 3 applicants already for next month. Thanks to all for attending. Thanks everyone for being in attendance and asking great comments.</p>	<p>Absolutely.</p>

Other Notes

Planner completing report: Thomas Scharff