

6th Ward Block Watch | 3.26.2018, 7 p.m.
St. Augustine's Church, Lower Room

33 people in attendance.

Agenda:

1. Public Safety Update
2. Presentation from PWSA + Q&A
3. Community meeting on proposed liquor license – the Vault Taproom

Public Safety Update – Zone 2 Community Resource Officer Antoine Davis

Crime stats report provided. 1 aggravated assault. There was an arrest. 1 robbery.

Safety Tip: Secure your firearms. A lot of crime has been occurring where guns are the weapons of choice. A lot of guns are being stolen out of cars; not the safest practice. Lock the firearm in the trunk or otherwise hidden in vehicle. About a month ago, someone was breaking into cars in Lawrenceville and guns were stolen out of cars. The number one crime in Lawrenceville last year was theft from vehicle.

People have gotten lots of complaints with people picking up garbage outside of normal hours. It's difficult to ride up to the area where it is occurring because if police are around, they won't do it. When someone calls, they leave before police get there and it's hard to enforce. It is a \$300 fine to pick up garbage at illegal times. Police have to see the act take place. They are aware; it is just very difficult to stop. Call 911 or Lawrenceville United with reports of when it's happening.

City wide public safety meeting is coming up on Wednesday, April 18-related to mental health and public safety, focusing on the impacts of trauma.

Other resident concerns?

- Yellow crossing signs at 39th and Butler
- Traffic mirror at top of 38th and Penn Ave. 311 already made.
- Something to make 39th and Penn safer – buses turning off Penn onto 39th are going too fast and it's unsafe for pedestrians

Always remember to 311 things; especially potholes.

PWSA Presentation – Bob Weimar, Executive Director

This last year, obviously a failure of the system. Investing 10 and 20 million dollars a year and the value is up to 15-20 billion dollars. Spending 200 million a year updating is ideal. Piping is over 75 years old; some pipes are 150 plus years old.

They're still in service, although they have broken in the past. It cost almost \$3 million to fix a broken pipe.

They need to get ahead of it. There have been a number of audits over the last 15 months. 5 of those this past year. State and city offices. They all come to the following conclusions:

- 1) not enough investment in system
- 2) we have an extremely high amount of debt compared to size of investment. Half of debt is related to funds taken from PWSA and given to the city when the city was having financial problems. PWSA was essentially sold to itself. Now PWSA is refinancing most of that debt. 1.8% interest rate. Saving us several million dollars a year.
- 3) cost of leadership changes. 3 or 4 longest ED of the org and it's been a year. In the process of agreeing to stay for a couple more years to help move forward. Staff changes have made it hard to keep org steady.

There are 3 things to recommend: 1) stabilize staff 2) provide funding 3) look for ways to improve quality of careers at PWSA; provide training and opportunities for staff to become professionals in water business. Talented people, but doing as much as they can with nothing. Because city was so large, system can operate at a 1/3 of its former capacity. System is overbuilt in some respects. A pump working to meet needs of population of 700,000+ is no longer needed now, and can use spare parts to repair current pumps.

Current plan (working with EPA, DEP, etc.) to develop program that's going to improve the water production facilities and the distribution system. 175 breaks in one month won't happen again. Or almost 100 service line breaks in one month as happened in January 2018. Highest amount before. We've got a lot to do but improvements will happen.

Improve water supply system. No boil water advisories. Get to a point where all requirements will be met. Optimized water system. Not minimum requirements, but improvements all around. Staff wants to do things right. Raise the rates. We are taking any \$ from rate increases toward putting improvement toward system: equipment, man power, and training. Watermark University, which is for all staff to learn how to do jobs efficiently. Encourage everyone to implement ideas. "Get stuff done" is the new motto. The public utilities commission will become guardian of rate payers; they have a business and consumer advocacy group. Be a resource to customers. If you can't reach a reasonable agreement with PWSA, then you have every right to the PUC and they have to act on it. PWSA has to respond in 10 days. Contacting customer service is first priority. Phone system is also antiquated, but will be improved. Management of customer service group has made significant changes and people are having a better experience. PUC oversight means new customer service rules. Established a customer assistance program for low income people. Subsidize rates to low income populations. 1500 people that have qualified; 1700 for water winter moratorium.

Biggest problem that we've had is lead. That consent order requires lead line replacements based upon the fact that we have not met water quality requirements of federal government. Have been over the line, and until we get under 15 ppb, that will increase the lead service lines. We are required to replace 2,100 before the end of the year. 12 construction crews out replacing lead service lines. Anyone w/public lead line replaces can have their private side replaced at the expense of PWSA.

People can refuse line replacement, but the goal is to replace them all. Timeframe is to be determined because of funding and figuring out where they all are. 12 and 15 thousand lead service lines. Curb box inspections happening. Hired a new crew. Some work has been done in Lawrenceville. Curb box inspection work is on website. The address and condition and materials of construction will be shown. www.pgh20.com/CBI

Pay for the whole line; hoping that some methods will work. Pipe bursting method. Pull comb through existing pipe, splitting pipe and creating new pipe behind it.

Q: Digging up lines, is there a chain of communication between PWSA and city so you're not digging up streets that have just been fixed?

- Coordinating with city for 3 years. The city comes in and rebuilds streets; method they're using disturbs the water pipes sometimes. The goal is to do street repair at same time water main is replaced as well as household service. Preparing a systematic program which will replace between 7 and 10 miles of pipe per year in household distribution network. They are coordinating. New management at DOMI. Meet with director of DOMI once a month and discuss those things.

Q: Why is it all of a sudden now that there's lead in the lines?

- The lead issue started to become critical in 80s; the city embarked on a special study and proved they could use chemicals to minimize lead corrosion. Quite successful up until early 2010s. For whatever reason, it's changed and now we're bringing in new chemical. Getting state approval. Chemical is used in hundreds of communities around the world. Being used by American water in south side. Benign chemical that creates thin layer on top of lead so water can't corrode it. It not only deals w/lead service lines but also lead pipes in some houses. Provide most immediate-3-6 months and non-detectable level of lead. Best way for quickest response. Those most harmed are under age of 6. ACHD has been working to access that population and address concerns. Eliminate the lead for that population.

Q: Can you walk us through what residents can expect to receive if lead lines needs to replace?

- 45 day notice saying we know our side of the line is lead, your side of the pipe is lead. You can send back saying you agree or you can say no to accept replacement of your line. Currently getting 40% back. More involvement, more service lines. Next phase is notices of 10 and 2 days. Also have ability to communicate w/lead service team. Each of the homeowners will get opportunity to say yes or no, if yes then they come and evaluate how it will happen and conditions in basement. Under county code, have to install new meter. Doing all of that at PWSA cost. Board is still debating how we're going to pay for it in future years. 2,100 more lines at end of year.

Q: Would the homeowner incur any cost?

- This year, no. Only cost would be if lead service line required excavation of front yard, driveway. We will pay to restore the grade, but not for ornamental bushes, other things that might be disturbed for us to access the private line. It is our goal to minimize outside damage: we don't have to follow same route, we can go around things, etc and avoid damage. Biggest fear is those locations with substantial retaining walls. Going to be difficult to get around those.

Q: Any difference between residential and commercial?

- 4 unless it's residential. Those will be covered by current program. A total of 71,000 available. 40,000 known commercial. Not required to do commercial but curb box inspections and same routine will be happening for commercial space. Most commercial lines are going to be the size where lead is not the primary material. We've hired 6 contracts that have been let; 4 designed on areas of lead service lines, a little bit in every part of the city. 2 other contracts let. Looking at individual lines but did not replace private side. Service lines last 50-100 years. Other questions, contact staff. Call 311 but recommend calling PWSA's dispatch line if emergency. Lead issue: call lead line.

Community Meeting on the Vault Taproom

Review of community process and ground rules.

Presentation from Vault Taproom: Kyle Wolfe. Another business partner who is away.

Why Lawrenceville? Love the support of unique, small independent business and support for the community. Entire team is made out of people who love Pittsburgh. Be a part of the community it lives in. Opportunity to give back.

Concept: Self serve taproom, bar and full service kitchen. Full service w/beer and wine and full service bar. Kitchen is small plates/tapas. Each of our customers have

power of choice. If you want to try different types of beer and food, you can. Self service is not new to PA or USA, 225 locations around the country (of which iPourIt makes up 103 locations and PourMyBeer 85) locations around the country. iPourIt, PourMyBeer are two big providers. This concept provides flexibility and uniqueness. Co-founders developed it because they were sick of waiting at bar and they spread it against a tap wall. More access to customers, no fighting at bar. RFID to give access or restrict. Must be carded to receive wristband. Tech tracks every single ounce that's poured. Gives unique power to employees and any station can see in real time each individual customer how much they've poured and how long they've been drinking. Have real time data of how much people have consumed. 32 oz limit for beer, 10 oz limit on wine at which you are closed off and forced to see attendant. Attendant evaluates whether or not you can be served again. 63 million ounces of beer have been served through iPourIt taps alone (45% of market) to 5+ million iPourIt customers since 2012. Those customers only consume average of 26 ounces of beer for each visit.

Site details: In the Arsenal 201 development. On the Rite Aid side of the commercial space. 50 common parking spots for retail use only provided by Arsenal 201. Those 50 spaces will be shared. 11 public parking spots on street in front, too. 3,800 sq feet of indoor space. Outdoor seating on Rite Aid side. 2 garage doors on Butler Street (goes to knee-high, like Franktuary), and 1 garage door on the right side that will lead to an enclosed and raised patio with curb wall and railing. Will direct the flow of customers into main entrance. Kitchen occupies $\frac{1}{4}$ of space. Hitting very heavy on the food; serve people who have interest in both. Family bathroom w/changing table. Tap wall in the middle of the space; accessible from whole restaurant. Full service bar area. Communal seating for tap wall. Intimate dining area also available. Glass on side and glass on Butler Street: open, airy and inviting feel. Create as inviting and welcoming of a space as possible. Welcome anyone who wants to participate.

Q&A

Cory: Will serving staff be RAMP certified?

- A: Full compliment of wait staff, hosts, etc. You will see as many wait staff as a normal restaurant and they will all be RAMP certified.

Clara on Foster & 38th: the notice on window for the liquor: it states something about Franktuary in Market Square.

- A: We bought Market Square Franktuary's liquor license so this is a double-transfer of an existing liquor license (person-to-person and place-to-place)

Erica, 38th: Kitchen hours are consistent with bar hours?

- Kitchen hours will be consistent; still debating hours but bar and kitchen hours probably until midnight, then 2 am on weekends. Likely during week

11 or 12, end of night, will limit food to more of a limited bar menu. There will be food. Intent is to give people food while drinking.

Amber, 39th: This just looks like a huge bar. When you say why Lawrenceville did you look elsewhere?

- A: Yes, we looked at the South Side, East Liberty, Squirrel Hill, North Side, looked into the suburbs like Ross Township, etc. Stayed away from the South Hills. Narrowed down to East Liberty and Lawrenceville. Chose Lawrenceville over South Side, because feel that South Side is attracting a customer base that we're not interested in. This is not a party bar scene. This is a bar, as proven by technology and data, that the intent is to try samples of different beers. More people that come here aren't looking to stay out and get really drunk -- mostly looking to eat and drink and have communal experience.
- Amber: I could see this better in East Liberty. This is a lot of people and you're downplaying it like they're not there to get drunk but it's a lot of people drinking in the same area. Waterfront or Waterworks might make more sense where there are large bars. This is a lot of people to just bring in one tight community.
- For us to be successful, the local neighborhood will have to sustain the business. Statistics show that businesses succeed or fail based on Sunday-Thursday business – anyone can be successful on weekends. Having a strong base of local residents is crucial to our success, so we don't want to make this a destination attraction.

Phoebe: Technology regulates by ounces, not ABV content, which is more telling. The garage doors are also a concern – how will you regulate people coming and going?

- It comes back to diligence. Whether or not person serves themselves or by a bartender, comes down to whether the staff can be attentive.
- Phoebe: you're not going to restrict ABV?
- We can look into that with the technology companies. Software platform can be built into with safeguards. Based on percent of alcohol, perhaps they only serve you 10 vs 16 ounces. These are the concerns we're looking to address and we can bring it up with technology provider to bring it up.

Matt: has your architectural team looked at your occupancy permit? Public space vs back of house space?

- 3,800 is the entire gross square footage. Haven't determined calculations for occupancy yet, but 80-90 minimum. There are about 120 seats inside. 50 parking spaces, but they're reserved for all the retail space.

Clara: Project sheet says only providing security on Friday and Saturday night. Need on other days as well. It's already bad now and more security is needed. Visible security. Especially needed during summer. We like to feel secure in our homes.

- OK, we can work on that. The info sheet is best estimation for opening, as we progress if we find we need more security or not successfully restricting access, we can address the issue.

Eric (4635 Butler, owner of The Abbey): What made you decide to open a restaurant? Background?

- A: Interested in owning own business for a while. Came into Pitt for chemical engineering. Worked in breweries, worked at Church Brew Works. Hoped to open up brewpub but model never shook out. Been interested in service industry for a while. Worked in it in high school.
- Eric: have you managed a restaurant?
- No, but Ron Sofranko has been hired, a 25 year veteran of the industry. We brought him onto the team to drive areas where we have limited experience.
- Eric: He's working on site also?
- No, only as a support.
- Eric: Have you ever bartended?
- No.

Emily: any sections full service only?

- A: All will have options for self service.

Allison: certain full time employees, do you see some of those roles as being different, more monitoring roles?

- A: more about education; what this model does for us is we're going to have wait staff obviously, but big part of this concept is going to be education. Our wait staff are going to be intimately involved in helping customers w/tap wall. The self-serve concept frees wait-staff up to do more monitoring than serving.
- Allison: getting in the weeds as a server is hard. I like idea of education but it could also be a monitoring. How many sidewalk café seats? How many taps?
- 20-30 seats and 36 taps.

Janet, 38th Street: Where are your 50 spots going to be? I walk in Arsenal 201 and I don't see where they're going to be.

- A: Building is an "L" shape, back behind building. Accessible from 39th. Right now, tenants use that. Tenants will have their own parking spot. Each of the tenants will have a spot. Not going to use Rite Aid spots. Discourage highly from using Rite Aid spots.

Bob: Will there be self-checkout as well?

- A: checkout will be with hostess. When you're done, they will take your info, etc.

Julia: How much is 32 ounces gonna cost?

- A: 4-8 dollars per 12 ounce beer.

Jim: Closest place you can see one?

- One in Youngstown called Pig and Whistle, down in Charlottesville, Virginia is Draft Taproom.

Q: There's the taps, but also a full service bar. Liquor served at bar? Will bracelets be used there as well?

- A: bracelet is just for taps, not full service bar. There will be no self-serve of drinks at the bar.

Q: Communication between cut off from bracelet and bar?

- A: Yes.

Cathy: Why didn't we know about this sooner?

- Dave from LU: We monitor liquor license applications every week. As soon as we got the email, we reached out to Milhaus and sat down with Kyle. We try not to bring things out to a community meeting before they're fully baked, and they didn't even have a lease secured at that point. The placard went up last week because of Kyle unexpectedly having to go out of the country for the next month, so we scrambled to get the community meeting here since the 30 day public comment period has already begun, we want people to have an opportunity to provide feedback within that time.

Allison: How does the server know who each person is and if they're intoxicated?

- A: Can't track their physical location, but they swipe their ID with purchase. It doesn't collect photos. Each bracelet will have a unique ID number, can use this to identify which bracelet/customer to cut-off from tap-wall. Software allows us to view rankings of who has drank the most in the past time period. You can flag people that have been drinking a lot.

Phoebe: Is it a wristband or a card? What is to prevent people from passing around the Wristband?

- A: Wristband. There's no way to prevent people from sharing wristbands just like there is very little means to prevent people from passing drinks around. Each wristband is linked to a customer's ID and credit card, so you'd be picking up someone else's tab if you gave them your wristband

Q: Will you be the primary managing partner, day to day? Or intending to hire manager w/more experience?

- A: I am the primary manager but hiring left and right hand, seasoned Front of House Manager and seasoned Executive Chef/Kitchen Manager. Relying on their experience and plan is to hire in someone with at least 10 years of this experience. Customer service will be my concern and maintaining business.

Q, Emily: pay model for front of house?

- A: tips. Other places that have this show that people are actually tipping on the full check amount, inclusive of drinks they served themselves. Shows that it's more a force of habit with customers. My main goal as a business owner is to create sustainable business model. Looking at models of paying workers livable wages, sharing profits, believe that's a win-win situation.

Q&A closed. Thanks to Kyle. Project team excused. Additional questions collected.

Closed Door Discussion

Explanation of what positions the community groups take, how LU reaches a decision. Explanation of how stakeholders can engage in the PLCB public comment process, which lasts 30 days from March 20, 2018. Can file a protest or a petition to intervene. Protests are for people with automatic standing: residents within 500 feet, licensed establishments within 200 feet, schools/parks/non-profits within 300 feet. If you don't meet this criteria but can show you have direct interest and will be aggrieved if PLCB decides against your wishes, can file a petition to intervene.

Feedback from residents/stakeholders in attendance:

- Concerns around saturation of neighborhood, overconsumption, security, hours of operation, parking, lack of experience. Generally overwhelming.
- Why did the community groups not know this was going to come earlier, in the original community process with Milhaus? Wasn't there already an expectation for something like this?
 - LU: Milhaus was up front in the original community process that they intended to lease multiple restaurants with liquor licenses. There was always an understanding that any business with a liquor license would have to go through this additional community process. The concern we've heard is whether this is more of a bar than a restaurant with a liquor license.
 - LC: Folks may recall the process around Industry and this was a similar concern that was vetted through that process. Original plans called for just a convection oven, so there was a question again of is this a bar first or a restaurant first? Worked with them to have actual food. [Response from the Vault: cannot compare The Vault Taproom apples-to-apples with Industry Public House: ¼ of The Vault's gross square footage is dedicated to full-service kitchen, we are investing well over \\$100,000 in the Kitchen alone with a plan that our revenue will consist of at least 50% food sales.](#)
- Concerns that this will become a future college bar.
- Concern about hours: proposed to be open until midnight during the week. [Response from the Vault: our hours are estimates based on the typical operating hours of similar establishments in Lawrenceville.](#)

- Concern about experience of owner with the size. It's hard to find good front of house managers. [Response from the Vault: I'd like to refer Lawrenceville United to Ron Sofranko to address these and other concerns particularly around Kyle Wolfe's experience](#)
- Questions about what can be done
 - LU: Have opposed liquor licenses before and been successful. Also have created Conditional License Agreements that are attached to the liquor license and create extra conditions that the owner must follow. Have these for a lot of the larger bars: Cantina, Spirit, Industry, etc.
- Proximity to school: shouldn't that automatically disqualify b/c of 300 foot rule? School has already reached out and expressed concern about children leaving from afterschool programs during happy hour. [Response from the Vault: Please refer to attachment "300 FT Radius Arsenal Middle School & Arsenal Park.pdf" – there are currently 4 operating liquor licenses within a 300 foot radius of Arsenal Middle School and Arsenal Park: Franktuary, Belvedere's, Arsenal Cider House, and Take a Break.](#)
- The technology and the concept seem more suited toward a stadium and not a neighborhood bar. [Response from the Vault: please refer to 225 operating restaurant locations that are currently utilizing this technology.](#)
<http://www.ipouritinc.com/our-clients/> (iPourIt clients),
<https://pourmybeer.com/> (PourMyBeer, under About -> Find a Location)
- Question about parking/zoning.
 - LU: The site is on Urban Industrial, so they won't need to go through zoning for the use, like many other restaurants/bars of this scale would. Per zoning, they will have to provide 1 parking spot per 125 square feet over 2,400 square feet, but that will likely be less than the total square feet because can take out back of house operations, etc. Will likely have to provide 8 or 9 parking spots after the bike reduction and if can't provide that would have to get a variance from zoning.
- Will all the other retail sections have to get own occupancy permits? –Yes.
- Concern that this is about creating an asset to sell in a couple years, as opposed to becoming a real part of the neighborhood. [Response from the Vault: please consider The Vault Taproom's conduct and since first interaction with Lawrenceville United and Lawrenceville Corporation.](#)
- Parking: there are already tenants parked in that lot. Where are they going to go when they can't do that anymore and reserved for retail? [Response from the Vault: as discussed during the open Q&A – Arsenal 201 is currently under construction and some tenant parking is unavailable as a result. Retail parking is being used as overflow parking until construction is complete which is estimated to be well in advance of The Vault Taproom's opening. Please contact Thomas Bost of Milhaus with any further concerns or questions regarding this matter.](#)
- Does anyone here support the project? [No responses.]

LU will follow up with everyone on sign in sheet once a decision by LU's Board is made.



