

Introduction to Coven and Spirit expansion plans
2/10/2022 Community Development Activities Meeting notes:

About 24 people attended.

- LC was represented by Director Lauren Connelly and Business District Manager Abi Gildea.
- LU was represented by Director, Dave Breingan, and Community Engagement and Program Manager, Helen Gerhardt.
- Coven Brewing was represented by owners Caiti Sullivan and Trevor Grier
- Spirit was represented by owners Leigh Yock and Thomas Barr, with their architect Vince Vinizio present to help answer questions and clarify some parts of the presentation.

Introduction to Coven Brewing

Caiti Sullivan and Trevor Grier presented their plans for their new business Coven Brewing, to be located at 4901 Butler Street, formerly the location of Roundabout Brewery. Caiti and Trevor originally talked to owners of Roundabout about taking over the brewery which means that there's no lengthy liquor license application process. This is a change of ownership, with liquor license transfer, and they are hoping to open in mid-March. Their hours will be the same:

- Weds/Thurs 4-10pm
- Fri 4-11pm,
- Sat 1pm-10pm,
- Sun 12-5pm

They don't plan to make many changes in the building and overall format, but they will brew their own beer. For food options, they will be teaming up with food trucks and pop ups, a mix of familiar faces and some new to the scene. They will begin by serving beer and hope to add wine and spirits over time, with a focus on PA produced alcohol. They have no plans at this point for regular entertainment, music, or a DJ. They will have an occasional party with music, following the example of Roundabout by obtaining a permit to close down part of the street.

In response to a number of questions from residents about their menu, they answered that:

- They are starting with a small menu and they won't be offering gluten-free and non-alcoholic beers from the beginning since they are harder to brew, but they may phase them in later.
- Caiti is interested in brewing kombucha.
- They will offer some IPAs, with all options increasing over time.
- They will not be keeping some of the food storage equipment that Roundabout did, so won't be carrying Leona's ice cream.

Asked about the origin of the business name, Caiti said that Coven seemed like a special gathering word, and as a female brewer seemed a little feminine. Asked about what happened to Roundabout,

they answered that the owners closed the brewery location due to long-term plans to move back to Australia, but that they continue to own the brand and will operate a pop-up location in Manchester. Asked about COVID safety protocols, that answered that:

- There will be outdoor seating.
- They won't require vaccination cards
- They will follow CDC recommendations and state/local codes when deciding their masking policies.

Review and discussion of Spirit expansion plan changes

Projects that trigger our process



- Going through an existing public process: Zoning Board of Adjustments, Planning Commission, URA, PA Liquor Control Board, City Council, Air Quality Permitting, and...
- Meets one of these criteria:
 - ☐ 4+ residential units
 - ☒ New structures or expansions over 2,400 square feet
 - ☒ Requires use variance or zoning change
 - ☐ Liquor license application or transfer
 - ☐ Has potential community-wide impact

In the case of Spirit expansion plans, the conditions that trigger the process are:

- New structures and expansions are over 2400 ft
- Requires a use variance or zoning change

LU Director Dave Breingan covered the contextual history of today's presentation and discussion, with many community meetings and dialogues over the years.

- **2014** - Moose closes
- **Sept 2014** - Spirit goes through LU/LC community process, resulting in Conditional License Agreement (approved by City Council, with additional stipulations attached to the license as mutually agreed upon by community and Spirit.
- **Spring 2016** - 3 meetings about noise issues with neighbors
- **May 2017** - community meeting on soundproofing improvements & modification of CLA with Spirit
- **July 2018** - community meeting on proposed rooftop deck
 - Plans include 50-person patio, insulated roofing to address noise, green space, solar panels, apiary, and rainwater catchment system
- **June 2021** - community meeting held on proposed patio enclosure

Dave also shared this info on the March 10th Zoning Board of Adjustment hearing on Spirit's expansion.

Upcoming ZBA hearing

- Zone case 233 of 2021
- 912.04.C - Side setbacks for accessory structures
- 3/10/2022 at 9:40 AM - virtual hearing
 - Join the **Zoom** meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85171125255>
 - Join by **phone**, call +1 301 715 8592 with Webinar ID: 851 7112 5255
 - If you're not planning to testify, please **watch via YouTube Live** stream: www.youtube.com/c/PittsburghCityPlanning/featured

Spirit Owners Thomas Barr and Leigh Yock presented their plans, beginning with this drawing.



Site Plan

Spirit - 2021

242 51st Street Pittsburgh Pa 15201

YAFArchitecture

Vincent A. Finizio Architect 412-486-1682 vafarchitecture@aol.com

Site

1-1-22

2019.03.11.10.17

The changes are meant to help solve a number of issues that have come up over the years, especially accessibility issues and noise complaints. They also want to add a cozier dining room than currently available, rooftop dining, and garden space. "This is a huge endeavor for us: we are putting everything we can into this, trying to make this as much of a neighborhood institution as we can for decades to come."

There are very few zoning issues being considered: dumpsters and parking spaces are the two main zoning issues. Noise and accessibility issues will come up later in the process, during building. Currently

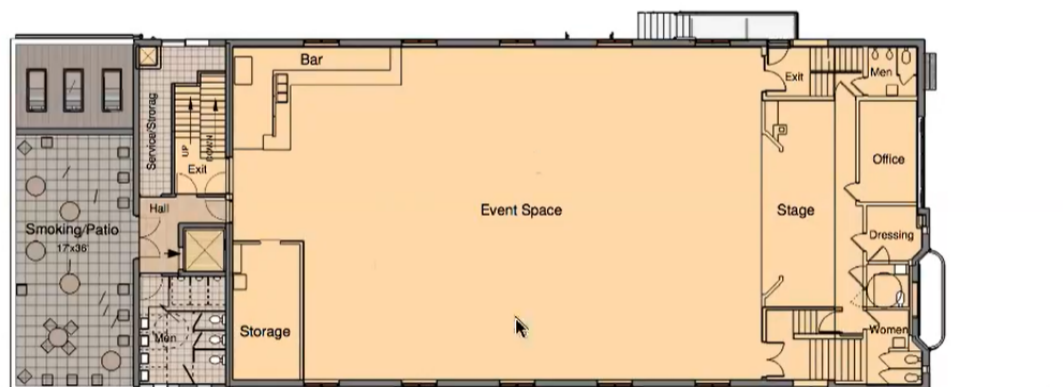
they have 24 spots for their parking lot, and 15 in Sunoco for a total of 39 spaces, which exceeds the minimum required by zoning. They want to move their bike parking to allow 24 bikes total (12 spot with 2 bikes per space). Spirit's architect, Vince Vinizio, clarified that the other zoning issues that will be considered at the hearing are the setback variance that will be right on the property line, abutting 50th street, and continuance of the side yard setback facing the paper street, and a side yard setback for the dumpsters, which will be behind a fence.

Lower Level

Dining spaces will be in a new excavated space, below where the current patio seating is, brought down to the level of the lodge dining floor. They will add an accessible entrance and hallway that will bring people into the dining room. All will be new build with a lot of block and drywall. The yellow box on the right will be an elevator to bring people down half floor to dining or up to the hall event space or all the way to the garden level.

To address the concerns about noise, the new space will be subterranean, enclosed in cinderblock and drywall. When open, the garage windows on sides will allow only current background speaker noise there to be heard. The noise should be less than previously.

First floor



First Floor Plan
3/32" = 1' 0"

Spirit - 2021
242 51st Street Pittsburgh Pa 15201

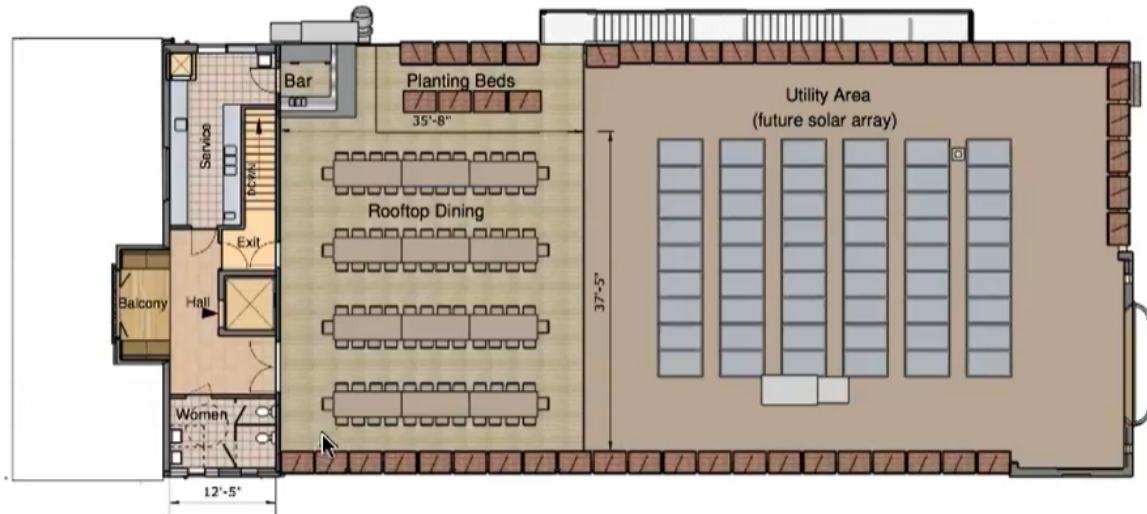
VAFarchitecture
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Looking at the next floor up, the space between the event space and the smoking patio will be separated by what they are calling the tower, including staircases, service and storage areas, and bathrooms, creating a mass with air gaps for sound protection for the neighborhood. They are basically constructing a building between the existing buildings. The smoking patio is also part of the event space, people will go out through the hallway out to the patio. They intend on having triple plate glass for sound insulation, which will only be an improvement on the existing situation. On the patio there will be an 8 ft block wall on the other side. Skylights will go down into the bar below. They are adding

one more toilet, next to the current women's room - all restrooms will be unisex. The storage area will have a giant walk-in cooler which will also add sound insulation, in place of current plywood.

Second Floor/ Roof Deck plans



Second Floor / Roof Plan

3/32" = 1'-0"

Spirit - 2021

242 51st Street Pittsburgh Pa 15201

VAFarchitecture

Vincent A. Finizio Architect 412-486-1692 vafarchi

For the roof deck: decking on the dining space, table mass, and planter boxes one-third filled with soil will help block sound along the parapet of the dining space. Along the balcony, there generally won't be amplified music in that space, except occasionally for weddings there may be violins, or small party DJ set ups, as background music. The tower space will also block noise from the rooftop dining. A few years ago they completely renovated the roof, adding as much density as possible to block noise. Their goal is to have the displayed solar array on top, which may take more time, but eventually also will help block more noise.

Front and side of building

In front of building, there will be a ticket office. On the left hand side near the back will be the entrance to the dining area, separate from the event space. Bike parking is shown to the left, when facing the front of the building.



Back of building

- The smoking patio in the rear will be completely screened off by an 8-ft concrete wall.
- There will be four roll up garage windows in the back for the dining room. The dining room generally will have no live music, only background music, except for special events, in which case the windows will be rolled down.



View looking into Dining Room Spirit - 2021
242 51st Street Pittsburgh PA 15201



Aerial View of Addition from Parking Lot Spirit - 2021
242 51st Street Pittsburgh PA 15201

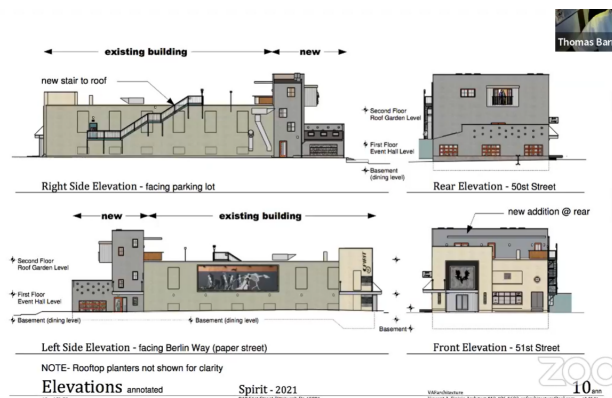


Aerial View from 50th Street Spirit - 2021
242 51st Street Pittsburgh PA 15201

Views of elevations



Elevations Spirit - 2021
1" = 10' 0"



Elevations annotated Spirit - 2021
1" = 10' 0"

Resident questions for Spirit owners: Questions are in bold text and answers are in italics.

Where will the women and men's bathrooms be located on various floors?

All additional bathrooms in the new build will be unisex, with floor to ceiling stalls. They are still working out logistics with the City. Our current bathrooms will remain the same.

What is on the 50th St side of smoking patio?

An 8ft block wall

Will the third floor be public space during bar or music nights or will that only be for special events?

Rooftop will be for regular outdoor dining unless rented for a private event, in which case the dining will be moved to the smoking patio.

Is there a commitment that there would be no loud or amplified music on roof?

If there is a wedding, there might be two speakers on stands as we currently do for weddings, "not party-time USA."

Will you be closed during renovations?

Hopefully not: goal to only have certain parts closed off temporarily.

What is the timeline for completion?

The goal to break ground in April and be done a year later.

Will the concrete wall be 8 ft higher than the seating area?

It will be 8 ft from the floor of smoking deck. For the roof, the tower building will be 10-12 feet higher than outdoor roof top dining space.

Where will the bus go? *Probably Craigslist where we found it.*

Will the smoke from the smoking patio go out into neighborhood? Is there going to be a fire pit? The resident expressed concern that cigarette smoke will waft into houses, especially in summer when breeze will carry it into open windows.

The smoke will go straight up. Currently the smoking area and fire pit produces more smoke than will be experienced with this new plan. There will no longer be a fire pit in the current location, but maybe in the parking lot.

Where are the trash bins?

Trash bins will be where they currently are. Hopefully we will build a container. Have to have six different buggies for recycling that take up much more space than a dumpster. Currently there's a fence there, but we will need to install a new fence, or maybe repurpose some of the old fence.

We see some trees in this rendering? Have you been in touch with the City Forester? What kind of trees will be planted along 50th St?

The plan currently shows existing hardwood trees that will be thinned out and pruned.. The architect is proposing flowering dogwoods recommended as a low profile tree to fit underneath wires. Whatever is eventually chosen will be off City's approved list, for sure. Dogwood have white flowers in spring/summer and red berries in fall.

Currently the area next to the dining room entrance in the back looks flat. Will it be flat after construction?

The architect replied that it's not totally flat, and has to match the level of grade that exists. They will put the appropriate number of steps down, less than a foot. Currently there is a 3 foot wide sidewalk, which we are planning to probably widen, up to 6 feet. We are not going to regrade the area.

Sound is a huge area. Booming bass has been a real noise issue. What are the remedies that you have presented?

The tower is a big block building that should provide a substantial barrier between the bass noise event space and the neighborhood. The second measure will be the planter boxes and decking on the roof. They've been in contact with an acoustical engineering company, NV5, which has helped them with building materials for walls to make sure they are as sound deadening as possible. NV5 will do a noise survey, setting up in front of people's homes and collecting data from sound metering, as well as from collecting noise data from inside the building. They will provide a report with recommendations for as much corrective action as possible, including tweaking and placement of speakers, including where they sit, where the subwoofer is placed, etc. The engineers will find points of weakness during their analysis, so that all these points will all be covered during construction.

What is the timeline for the engineers report to be completed?

That analysis has to be presented before zoning approval. They have just received the report and need to work through it. The engineers will work directly with the architect and the contractors.

Dave Breingan requested to receive the engineers report to share with the community on the LU website and by email to the meeting attendees.

Spirit owners agree to do so as soon as possible. The architect clarified that the current building was constructed without codes that required insulation or other sound mitigation measures. For the new construction plans, the current standard building code requirement STC (Sound Transmission Coefficient Rating Requirement) is 50 for exterior walls, and their plans should exceed that code requirement by 20%.

What are the lighting plans for the building?

There will be new lighting around the entire building. The architect notes that the light poles on the dining area portion of the building will shine down on the roofdeck and the lights shining down onto the

smoking patio are designed so that they shouldn't throw glare into the neighborhood. On the front, lighting will be on the canopy.

What is the current occupancy rate? 50 upstairs, 190 ? downstairs.

Current it's an A2 entertainment occupancy, which won't change. They are adding about 102 seats for restaurant occupancy dining indoors and on the roof. The current occupancy is 450 upstairs and 195 downstairs, including patio. Important to consider that It's almost impossible to have all occupancy filled at once. We will be setting up different spaces to be filled at different times. The overall total will probably will remain around current occupancy.

Dave: Will hours for the new areas be consistent with current hours?

The rooftop hours will be the same as the patio. The smoking area will be a little bit later if possible, since shows go much later than dining hours. But if it becomes an issue, then they will keep the hours the same.

Dave informed the participants that the conditional license agreement had restricted hours of the outdoor serving area (currently the patio area) to 11pm on weekdays, midnight on Fridays and Saturdays.

Will speakers be permanently installed in outdoor areas?

Nothing more than currently installed on our patio. For recess events one or two times a year it might nice to have a DJ, when we have stages in multiple locations.

Will there continue to be outdoor events, not on the roof?

If we do, we'll let LU and residents know. COVID has led to more outdoor events this year. We think we will have outdoor events probably just a few times a year in the parking lot and the paper street.

Attendees raised concerns about bass being turned down for outdoor events: *Owners committed to informing residents of events and continuing to be responsive to resident complaints and working to get bass turned down.*

Support and gladness were expressed that Spirit has survived the pandemic

Closed door portion of meeting.

Residents expressed appreciation for what the owners have done in terms of the construction addressing noise issues but several residents expressed that in the past the noise has been really bad and that the bass has been a real problem. Cleo Zell encourages other residents near Spirit to get in touch with her if they are concerned - she and other neighbors have been working directly with Spirit to support their growth but to protect the neighborhood.

Dave asked about direct connection between residents and owners and if there's been improvement. Neighbors replied that "When the water in our glasses is shaking, we call them directly" and the owners have been willing to speak with them, but the response has been inconsistent and some said that it's hard to trust them now that all issues will be addressed. In the past residents have called 911 but that and other measures have all been ineffective.

Other comments and concerns:

- Residents are encouraged by the construction of the tower.
- Concerns expressed about smoking balcony and roof.
- Outside hasn't been a problem in general, except for special events.
- Dining has been fine.
- There will probably be noise from a bunch of people going in and out of a performance.
- Why isn't the entrance to the dining area in the front where there is no residential section? Stage should be moved to front of room.
- Strong concern expressed by one resident about calling the police: "...Lots of queer and BIPOC people use the space and I would hate to see escalation that could harm high risk people."
- Another resident says calling police does nothing constructive
- Resident keeping a log when the noise is too loud. In general, such logs can be submitted to the State Police and liquor control board, which may then issue a fine. After several times, an establishment would lose their liquor license for a year.
- Concerns were expressed about crowding and noise in the possible lines of people waiting at the entrance to the dining in the back.