

I. ABSTRACT

We are trying to open a highly unique business to Paulding County and specifically locate in “historical downtown” Dallas. This area currently is in transition away from traditional retail and services that relied on the Courthouse which, when relocated away from the City Center, left a void in the viability of the downtown area. Prudent long-term planning repurposed these courthouse related buildings to public education with long term positive effects. Currently, Paulding’s growth has been so rapid that it fits the definition of a “bedroom community” for Atlanta where most people must travel outside the community for jobs, services, and dining & entertainment. It is important to mention this also describes neighboring West Cobb, and specifically the affluent zip code 30101 which downtown Dallas could easily rely on for business if it had trendier higher quality dining and entertainment choices. To put it simply, Paulding County and West Cobb County is referred to as “franchise row”.

A Restaurant/Brewery is considered not only a business that will fill a void in the type of entertainment people are looking for, but, also has shown historical evidence of being the type of business which is a catalyst for redevelopment in decaying downtown areas across the nation. In September 2017, the State of Georgia amended its laws to allow these types of businesses to finally operate on what is called a “level playing field”. This new legislation should bring opportunity to entrepreneurs willing to take moderate risk. This would describe the author and Johnnie MacCracken’s business model.

Our model and vision for Dallas, Georgia is a hybrid of several businesses which we feel encompasses the conservative values found in this area. The first floor of this sprawling building will be “family friendly” and will contain an old-fashioned drug store soda fountain where ice cream can be purchased and will also serve as a “Tasting Room” for the beer we will brew on site. On the second floor of this business will have a separate 21 and over Tavern not visible from the first floor. One other building not open to the public will be the production area. The history of this building has been incorporated into the design as this building served as a Drug Store/Lunch Counter/Ice Cream Shop for over 75-85 years.

We feel we will have something for everyone without the intimidation of a bar driven business.

II. DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILING

According to The Paulding Economic Development Office; Paulding County is the 2nd fastest growing county in both Metro Atlanta and Georgia with a population of 155,000+ with a 75% growth rate since 2000.

Its demographic profile is: the population was spread out with 30.70% under the age of 18, 7.60% from 18 to 24, 38.40% from 25 to 44, 17.40% from 45 to 64, and 5.90% who were 65 years of age or older. The median age was 31 years. ... Paulding County Georgia is ranked 7th (2007 Census) in population growth among the United States. The racial makeup of the county was 90.59% White, 6.96% Black or African American, 0.30% Native American, 0.40% Asian, 0.03% Pacific Islander, 0.57% from other races, and 1.16% from two or more races. 1.71% of the population were Hispanic or Latino of any race. The median income for a household in the county was \$52,161, and the median income for a family was \$56,039. Males had a median income of \$38,637 versus \$27,341 for females. For reference sake, the median household income for Paulding’s neighboring County, Cobb, is \$64,657.

We draw your attention to the market areas we hope to attract to our business;
30132 Dallas Hiram Paulding County
30101 Acworth Kennesaw Cobb County Cherokee County Bartow County

In 2001, this is what we knew of the Median Lover of Craft Beer:

- Male
- Age 39
- White
- High education
- Relatively high income
- Geographically concentrated

In 2018, this is what has changed;

Geographically

- Almost 75% of legal drinking age (LDA) adults live within 10 miles of a brewery

–Economically

- Market penetration (11%?)

All Trends Point Toward Increasing Diversity

- Young women coming

into craft beer

- More geographic diversity

- Increasing diversity of craft beer lovers
- Still skews toward higher (SES) Socioeconomic status

Young women (21-34) now over-index on craft, account for 15% of total craft volume

Still skews toward higher SES,

but:

–The bottom 60% of households (by income) now consume 40% of craft volume

– Some evidence Hispanic population has increased craft engagement

III. CURRENT STATUS

In our initial meeting with the City of Dallas, we described our intentions and specifically at this meeting we discussed infrastructure deficiencies and challenges that may come up in several areas. Over the course of the construction we used Licensed Contractors for all Major systems, and all our pre-inspections with Dallas Planning & Zoning were approved. Early on in this project we learned this building had challenges with structural elements and we contracted the services of a Professional Engineer to propose our course of action to not only stabilize, but to exceed current code in most cases. We feel the building is structurally solid and our plans were stamped by this Engineer and submitted, inspected, and approved by the City of Dallas. It is important to mention that this building was not “modified” from its original design, it was “over designed” back to its original floor plan.

Again, keeping this simple, we finished construction 6 months ago and applied for our final “CO”, certificate of occupancy, and we had to submit drawings that had been previously been done by a Professional Engineer (Structural drawings) accompanied by drawings of the “Fire Safety Plan”. As requested at that time, a Certified Architect redid all drawings. Our Architect was instructed and given

the information that our success to gain a "CO" was predicated on a "lite" occupancy load to compensate for the fact that the nearest available water main was located 200-300 feet from our back door. This water main was deemed "economically challenged" due to the fact of its location as well as having to cross through public and private property to reach our back door. Further, a "vault" with pump would have to be considered as an option to have adequate pressure to be able to deploy a sprinkler system.

Plans were submitted to the Fire Marshalls office and we were immediately informed in writing that a sprinkler system was necessary. Since we had already consulted with a Fire Safety Expert and knew the deficiency of the Dallas infrastructure, we were told on an initial pre-bid it was a \$70,000 cost and the challenges were numerous at best to even get an adequate water source to the back door. We currently do not have our formal bids back, once they are available, we will share this information. Just for information sake, of the list supplied by The State's Marshall's office of 15 vendors for this service in the Northwest corner of Georgia, only 5 install sprinkler systems. Of the 5 contacted only 2 were interested at this time to bid this project. One other Vendor informed us that his business was covered up and he was declining on that basis.

We then went back to The Paulding Fire Marshall and requested a "Plan B" proposal where we would remove access to the second floor and gain approval as a one-story structure which in most jurisdictions would be allowed. Again, we discussed lower occupancy to reduce danger from a Public Safety point of view. This "Plan B" proposal was denied. Our thinking was that we could expand laterally by purchasing another building to satisfy our square footage requirements.

Once again, I went back to Fire Safety Experts and that is when we discovered almost every decaying downtown area had set up an "empowerment zone" so to speak, where codes could be modified to accommodate assemblage businesses such as bars and restaurants. Of the towns I visited such as Augusta, Ga, not only did they not require sprinklers on the ground floor where the restaurants were located, there were up to 4 story structures with residential zoning above the businesses. These businesses were mostly open in the last 2 years.

Statistically, for each year from 2011 to 2013, an estimated 5,600 restaurant fires were reported to fire departments in the United States, resulting in fewer than five deaths, 100 injuries, and \$116 million in property damage. Of those fires, the higher percentage started in the kitchen and a good deal of these could be avoidable with aggressive inspection practices. For the record, our hood system was inspected and meets current code requirements.

IV. SOLUTIONS

We are requesting, jointly between City of Dallas/Paulding County a development effort be proposed for downtown Dallas that does a few things to make this area desirable as a restaurant or entertainment destination. I believe this short "Abstract" demonstrates the attractiveness of this area to not only Paulding County, but also Cobb County and adjoining counties West and North of Paulding.

This redevelopment zone would be defined and building code and fire safety requirements could be defined just for this area.

Now, please let me stop here and make a key point based on practicality and common sense. What I am going to put forth is based on me owning and developing several businesses in similar circumstances over the last 25 years.

If the proposal includes bringing fire sprinkler "Tap Ins" into proximity to these potential restaurant sites, that most likely should be done. However, in most of these redevelopment areas the building is seldom "owner occupied" like us. The likelihood of a Tennant paying for a sprinkler system to open their business would be rare. And the likelihood of the Landlord paying for a sprinkler system on a building already empty, typically decaying, or even with a lease, would be impractical as the clear majority of these buildings have been in the same hands for years and the Owners have no desire to make improvements to that extent because the rental market is so distressed and the cost is so high.

I propose "low entry point" for the redevelopment of this downtown area. Based on experience, this area would be very desirable to an entrepreneur who would be willing to improve a Landlords building in exchange for concessions (I can assure you that they will not install a sprinkler system for the reasons I cited above). This "low entry point" is the business model for the success stories around Georgia.

In conclusion, I want you to know I am completely committed to your County, but more important, I am committed to helping the joint governments of Dallas and Paulding bring back the historical downtown area, so it could once again symbolize vibrancy and economic strength. What better visual than a Realtor driving a prospective homeowner past downtown Dallas where signs of a great quality of life are right in front of them! Growth is inevitable so let's give your citizens quality restaurant and entertainment options. As history shows this can begin one business at a time. Help me get opened!

I would like very much to take up your invitation to discuss this further and please allow me to say that nothing in my agenda would be to criticize Paulding County or any challenges I have made you aware of. Your County Fire Department is properly administrating the standards and policies you have set forth for them, however, if you are interested in helping me open, please let's consider what I have presented in this paper.

LET'S BRING HISTORICAL DOWNTOWN DALLAS BACK TO IT'S GLORY!