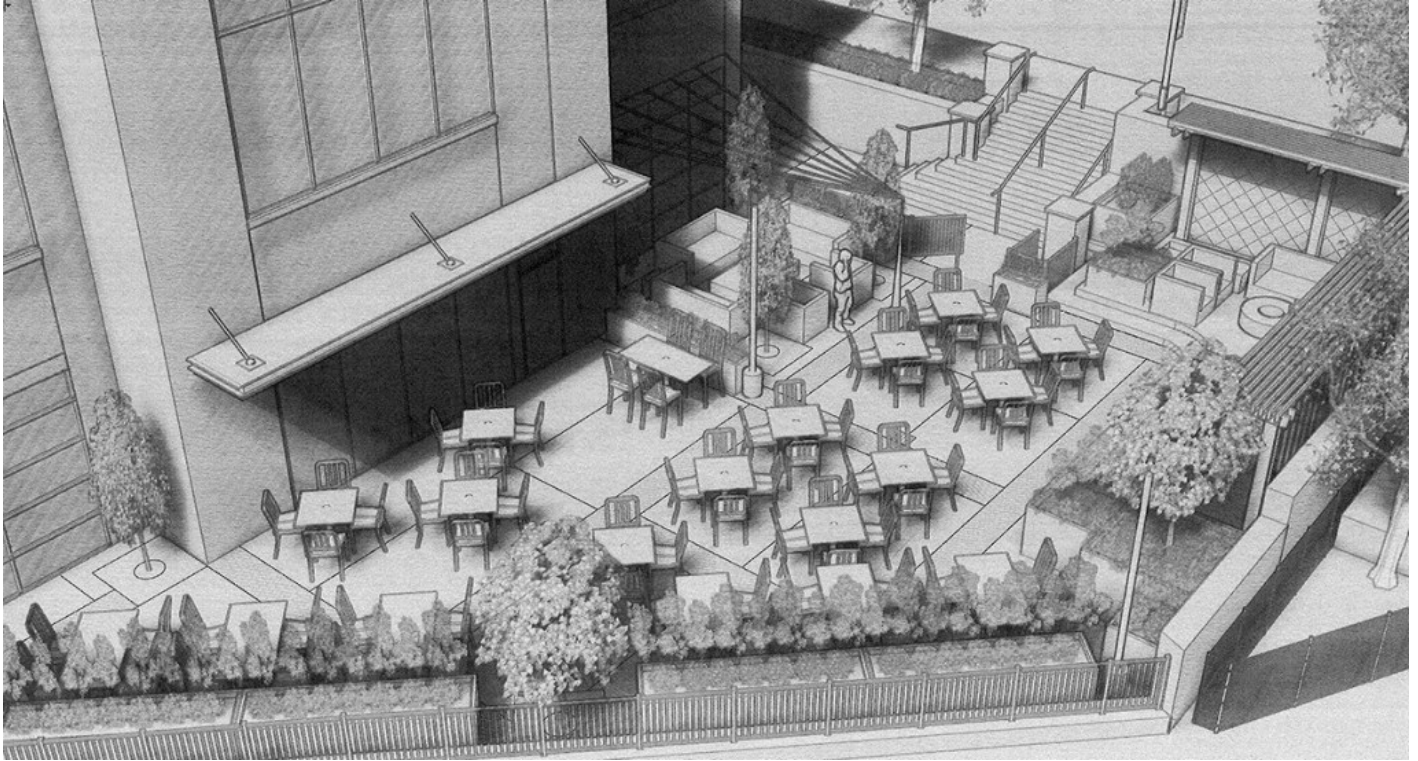


World of Beer plans to support, engage local scene
written by Newspark Team | April 15, 2014



A bar and restaurant that wants to be a partner in the community and is slated to open on West Main Street this fall moved closer to reality Tuesday.

The Charlottesville Board of Architectural Review granted approval for World of Beer to have an outdoor patio seating area with a stage for live music.

"We feel very comfortable with the design," said Dan Bednar, general manager of World of Beer, an East Coast chain with franchises. "We've decided to move forward with a plan to add a lot more trees and vegetation."

The restaurant is the first of three businesses to announce they will operate on the ground floor of the Flats at West Village, a student apartment complex currently under construction.

Restaurant officials said they hope to open at the same time as the Flats, a 595-bedroom apartment complex also pushing for a fall opening.

Consideration of plans for the outdoor patio was deferred in March so the applicant, project architect and designer Greenberg Farrow, could address the board's concerns.

Issues raised at the meeting last month included the location of a pergola, the landscaping plan and the width of the stairs from West Main down to the restaurant.

"The design changes in particular to the landscape address our concerns from before," said architectural review board member Michael Osteen. "I really like the pergola going away from the building. I am comfortable with the design as it has progressed."

While the updated plans satisfied some of the previous concerns, further questions came up about the size of signage on the building.

The proposed sign was larger than the maximum allotment of 40 square feet and included a World of Beer logo at each end.

Some board members were uncertain with such a big sign on the façade facing West Main and the precedent it would set for the rest of the retail spaces in the building.

"This is a nine-story building," said board member Brian Hogg. "It is not a little two-story house. We just approved three enormous buildings that will want lots of signage."

"The scary thing is that when you don't have control over the size, then you have some really big, bad signs," Osteen said.

The board decided to recommend that a comprehensive signage plan for the building be created, which will provide more details in regards to signage uses. The plan eventually will need approval from the City Council.

The board unanimously voted to grant the project a certificate of appropriateness. That clears the way for the restaurant to be open when University of Virginia students return in the fall.

"We're not coming in to town to just be a bar," Bednar said in an interview. "We're here to be a part of the community. We want community involvement to be a first priority."

In addition to a national and international selection of beers available, the restaurant hopes to include local beers, wines and also locally sourced food on the menu.

"Our entire goal is to be a place for the neighborhood," Bednar said. "That ties into our ability to support local breweries and local wineries."

In addition to offering local drinks and food, the restaurant envisions more ways of involving the community.

"We want to be able to support the local musicians in their efforts to be more well known," said Bednar.

"I was able to meet some great people at the Tom Tom Founders Festival," he said. "It has been an amazing few weeks in Charlottesville, absorbing the great vibe the city has."

Before the bar-restaurant opens to the public, World of Beer will host an event to support and raise money for various organizations.

"We want to be upstanding citizens," Bednar said. "Charlottesville has a great handle on what it means to be doing that. We're just lucky enough to be able to join that."