

BUILDING SUCCESS

on the restaurant scene

by Teddy Durgin

What happens when a noted property developer and one of Maryland's most reliable plumbers team up? They're hoping the end result will be "two new great places to eat and drink!"

John Roe has partnered with **Len Bush** (a.k.a. "Len the Plumber") and are hoping a building they own and are renovating at 37 W. Cross St. in Baltimore's Federal Hill will be 2019's newest hotspot for wining and dining.

Roe, who began his professional career managing his father's tavern in Laurel before transitioning into commercial real estate brokerage in Baltimore during the late 1990s, had ironically been trying to reach the owner of this particular building for a couple years. But he could never get a return call from him. "It appeared to be vacant, and it was one of the larger buildings in Federal Hill," he recalled. "Finally, an agent we knew asked if we'd like to take a look at 'some building in Federal Hill.' When she drove us up to it, I couldn't believe it! It wasn't formally on the market, but she was good friends with the owner so she arranged a tour. After that, we knew we

had to have it."

Bush described the structure as "love at first sight." He added, "This property had all the character and charm of an old industrial building that I knew we could breathe new life into. Sitting in the heart of Federal Hill, it's one of the last remaining historic properties left undeveloped in the area."

So, what makes it ideal for restaurant/brewpub use? First and foremost, Roe noted, there are numerous food and beverage establishments in the Federal Hill submarket that are operating successfully in converted rowhomes. They tend to be long and narrow – anywhere from 12 to 14 feet wide, which can present its own challenges. Roe noted,

"Our two spaces are much more conducive to modern food and beverage operations in that they are much more open – roughly 50 x 90 and 50 x 120. Location is another great advantage for us. Cross Street Market is currently being redeveloped one block to our east, and the Stadium Square development, comprising 300 new luxury apartment units and over 300,000 square feet of Class A office space, is directly behind us."

Roe and Bush are actually developing a mixed-use project on the site, with the two restaurant spaces (6,080 sq. ft. and 4,446 sq. ft.) on the ground floor, and 23,000 sq. ft. of offices on the second and third floors. Their team includes such local pros as Chris DeLu-

FOR LEASE

HISTORIC FEDERAL HILL | 37 W. CROSS STREET
2 RESTAURANT/BREW PUB SPACES AVAILABLE



Space 1: 4446 sq ft
With Outdoor
Courtyard Seating

Space 2: 6057 sq ft
With Outdoor
Rooftop Deck Seating



Industrial chic restaurant spaces available in the beautifully restored 1930's era historic Union Brother's Furniture Building.

Both on first floor with dual street and lobby entrances.
Occupancy available mid to late 1st Quarter 2019.



UNION BROS. BLDG

JOHN ROE | 410 960 9554
john@unionbrothersfurniture.com
www.unionbrothersfurniture.com



Chris DeLuca of McHenry Project Consultants is but one of the many local professionals John Roe (pictured right) and Len Bush have on the team.

BUILDING SUCCESS

ca (project manager) of McHenry Project Consultants, interior designer Kelly Ennis of The Verve Partnership, and FH Harvey Construction as general contractor.

The partners are hoping to secure restaurant tenants that will complement each other in some way. At the same time, two very different food and beverage concepts would likely work just as well. Roe remarked, "In a perfect world, we don't necessarily want two restaurants with the same, or at least similar, concept. There are a number of different food and beverage concepts currently enjoying great success. We feel confident we can secure two restaurant tenants that can feed off of each other's success."

Roe and Bush have secured both Federal and State Historic Tax Credits for the project, which was a challenge. "There are very strict guidelines with regard to renovations on the existing building, and so the challenge has been trying to create a modern office and retail project out of a 1930s-era industrial building," stated Roe, who spent 10 years of his career brokering commercial property transactions on behalf of buyers, sellers, tenants, and landlords.

Bush chimed in, "The biggest reward will be realizing the energy at the property that has been envisioned from the outset. I've always been passionate about rebuilding an older property, particularly industrial, and breathing new modern life to it."

Through the process, both men have kept a steady head and "had each other's backs." In addition, both relied on past counsel. Roe stated, "I'd say the most important deal-making advice I've tried to follow is simply making certain I understand how the other side views a proposed transaction. If I understand what the critical components of the deal are, I can better manage expectations on both sides."

Bush, who started Len the Plumber in 1996 at the age of 30, agreed. He added, "I think it's the same philosophy that has guided me through my business career. Be passionate about details and deliver the best product possible."

Roe and Bush are aiming to deliver the base building in March 2019.

For more info visit www.unionbrothersfurniture.com. You can reach John Roe at john@unionbrothersfurniture.com or 410-960-9554. ■

THE LEASING LEADER IN ICE MACHINES



- 100% FREE SERVICE
 - 100% FREE DELIVERY
 - 100% FREE PARTS
 - 100% FREE TAX DEDUCTIBILITY
 - 100% FREE INSTALLATION
 - 100% FREE INSURANCE
 - 100% FREE EMERGENCY ICE REIMBURSEMENT
 - STEP UP OR DOWN PRIVILEGE
- AS LITTLE AS \$3.00 PER DAY!**

Call us at the number listed below and join the many who already benefit from leasing. Mention this ad and get your first months rent **FREE**.



TOLL FREE 800-895-1201

OR Email us at: info@credentialleasing.com

AUTHORIZED DEALER

KOLD-DRAFT

