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Press Release

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IMMEDIATE

Heartland Brewery To Open Beer Hall In Port Chester Station Building

Historic Building in Vibrant Downtown To Get Popular Eatery

The historic 1890 train station building in the heart of Port Chester's downtown is about to get a new tenant – a food hall and beer garden by the popular Heartland Brewery.

MTA Metro-North Railroad announced its plans today to lease the 5,630-square-foot station building.

"This restaurant will be a positive addition to the village's downtown business district and will provide economic vitality to the area around the train station seven days a week from morning to night," said Metro-North President Howard Permut. "This arrangement is consistent with Metro-North's ongoing efforts to operate more efficiently and to provide better customer service. It will provide cost savings to Metro-North and improve service to our customers by making the station available to them for shelter, restrooms and coffee service."

"This project is very exciting for me as I'm both a restaurateur and avid gardener. Designing a restaurant in this historic building and working with a designer and a landscape architect together on the food hall and beer garden is something I have always wanted," said Jon Bloostein, founder and CEO of Heartland Brewery.

"As a tribute to the locale, the restaurant will be named Port Chester Hall. It will offer a diverse menu and a full bar featuring a special selection of beers locally brewed in New York State. We will preserve the existing mosaic and stone floor and include the oak benches in our furniture plan. The landscaped outdoor area will be approximately 3,600 square feet," Bloostein added.

"It is exciting that Heartland Brewery has selected Port Chester for their first expansion location outside of New York City," said Port Chester Mayor Dennis G. Pilla. "Their brand has strong positive recognition and is on target with the young professionals we seek to attract to Port Chester."

Heartland plans to make \$1.2 million worth of long-term infrastructure improvements to the 19th century brick building including new natural gas service, commercial-grade air conditioning, upgraded plumbing, electric, and mechanical systems and new lighting consistent with the design of the station.

In addition, plans call for reconstructing a porte-cochere above the main door which was removed but will be recreated using old photos of the station. Heartland will work closely with the State Historic Preservation Office in developing its restoration plans.

"Heartland's significant capital investment and upgraded utilities will provide long-term benefit to Metro-North," Permut noted.

In addition, Heartland will assume responsibility for executing, at Metro-North's expense under its current Capital Program and subject to Metro-North oversight, replacement of the roof, rehabilitation of the chimneys and repointing of the exterior walls.

Last year, Metro-North completed improvement to the station platforms, shelters, ramps and staircases. All 38 windows were repaired and repainted and all 17 wooden doors were replaced in kind.

Heartland's food and beer hall will seat about 85 people and will be open seven days a week. Although Heartland is primarily a lunch and dinner establishment, they have agreed to operate a coffee concession from 6 a.m. to 11 a.m. on weekdays to accommodate Metro-North customers. The ticket office will remain open due to high usage.

Heartland owns and operates seven restaurant/brewpubs in New York City, including one at the Port Authority Bus Terminal, and is planning two others in addition to the one in Port Chester.

Bloostein's business plan calls for a unique employee incentive.

"It pleases me that Port Chester Hall also will be owned and operated by the Heartland ESOP, so every employee, mostly Westchester residents, will participate in our Employee Stock Ownership Plan," Bloostein said.

The building is eligible for listing on the New York State and National Registers of Historic Places. Heartland hopes to begin construction in January and open in June 2013.

Heartland responded to a request for proposals by the MTA Real Estate Department and was determined to be the best deal for the railroad. Rent will be \$80,000 for the first year of a 20-year net lease with annual increases of 3% a year.

The proposed lease will be recommended Monday to the Metro-North and Finance Committees of the board of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority. The MTA Board will vote on it on Wednesday.

Metro-North will create six angled, short-term, metered spaces directly in front of the building in what is now a very wide drive aisle. Under the lease, 10 parking spaces for restaurant employees will be provided in the nearby garage, where Metro-North owns an interest in one floor of the garage. Restaurant customers also can park in empty commuter spaces after typical commuter hours.