

Exploring Asylum Hill - Syp's Grille



Asylum Hill now has another eatery at 628 Asylum Ave. It's called Syp's Grille and it's owner, Ken Rodriguez is determined to make it work. I stopped by several times to see how the opening is going during these very challenging times, and I'm encouraged.

Ken was born and raised in Hartford and he has owned or managed several restaurants in the area so he's experienced both with the community and the business. Needless to say, he began this project before COVID became a thing, but he has adapted to it rather well. It's a good sigh that the main thing that drew him to this location was the outdoor dining potential. As he puts it "when I walked in, I loved the area, I loved the patio and I decided to lease it."

His initial hours are very ambitious, 10:00am to 10:00pm 7 days a week and his menu, which can be found on his Facebook page at <https://bit.ly/facebooksyys> includes popular American classics like hamburgers, hotdogs, subs and wings as well as Puerto Rican favorites like empanadillas, carne frita and chicharrones de pollo. Ken speaks about Syp's Grille like someone who has thought a great deal about it. He seems mostly unfazed by the pandemic restrictions and determined to move forward. His vision extends well beyond this current crisis.

"Why I do this" he offered, "is because everyday you meet new people and as we get older, there's a place where your friends can come, and we get to see them a lot more often... one of my goals is to... have an environment where people like to come, feel safe to come, when you walk through the door, you're family... I'm going to treat you like family."

On my first visit, I explained a bit about NRZs in general, and AHNA in particular. Ken was very interested, and wants to be included in our next meeting. The idea of being able to partner with a neighborhood organization to make Asylum Hill and Hartford a better place for everyone resonates with him. He quickly identified parking as a hindrance to success and has several ideas as to how to solve it, both for Syp's and the other shops at Capitol View including adding metered parking on that section of Asylum Ave.

If you get a chance when you're looking to relax with good food, stop by.