



# BULLHORN

The Newsletter of Chicago Neighborhood Initiatives

## Innovative Brewery/Pub Coming to Chicago's most Innovative Community

With State and City funding in place, Pullman is set to be the home of the nation's first free-standing, integrated coffee roaster, beer maker and brew pub. With an anticipated spring 2023 groundbreaking, the 16,000-square-foot Veteran Roasters, with its on-site coffee roaster, brewery and beer pub will rise on 111<sup>th</sup> Street, across from the 5<sup>th</sup> District Police Station.

Veteran Roasters is the latest endeavor of Mark Doyle, an entrepreneur who, after spending a year in Afghanistan and meeting the men and women serving in the armed forces, began to create businesses committed to hiring veterans and meeting community needs. Known best for his successful "Rags of Honor" veteran-hiring screen printing apparel social enterprise, Doyle said that he chose Pullman for his newest venture because the community embodied the commitment and caring that he found among vets.

"Over the past several years, I've been drawn to Pullman by the successful, unparalleled leadership," said Doyle. "The engaged community groups and residents fought together for decades, attracting new businesses that have created thousands of jobs. It shows what a community and passionate people can do, when they don't let others define their future but shape it themselves.

Ninth Ward Alderperson Anthony A. Beale noted that Veteran Roasters, "with its commitment to 'the impossible' and its 'can do' attitude is a perfect fit for Pullman, a community that many said would never recover from the exodus of the steel industry."

Doyle was referring to the fact that, when the exodus of "Big Steel" and the closing of the Pullman Wheelworks cost the area as many as 40,000 jobs, many wrote off the Pullman and Roseland communities as unviable. Instead, over the last decade, the partnership between the community, its elected leadership and Chicago Neighborhood Initiatives (CNI), led to more than \$500 million in private investment in the community, new manufacturing and distribution facilities, essential services, attractive amenities, restaurants and nearly 2,000 well-paying jobs.

Doyle emphasized the point that, while veterans historically have been neglected by housing and social welfare systems in the very country they fought to protect, Pullman’s rapid growth and rehabilitation, and its welcoming nature make it an ideal place for veterans to find the jobs and support they need.

One local veteran opened up to Doyle about his relationship with Pullman, “This coffee shop is the first time in a long time that I’ve felt supported by a local community. I’ve been a Chicagoan all my life, but Pullman is the place for me.” Another Chicago vet told CNI, “Any town or business that pays special attention to veterans deserves all the praise in the world. Pullman is setting an example.”

“For years, the community has struggled to convince a restaurateur to come to the Pullman/Roseland area,” said Alderperson Beale. After the creation of over two thousand new jobs in the last decade, thanks to policy-level change and plain old Chicago doggedness, Pullman is now a destination for aspiring and established entrepreneurs. It seems that the citizens’ history of dedication to their neighborhood is really paying off.”

CNI President David Doig said, “This news demonstrates that our strategy of creating retail and industrial jobs, building and renovating housing, recreation, and educational opportunities is working.” After so many history-making efforts to maintain and revitalize their city, Pullman residents are rightfully acknowledged by their representatives.

By this time next year, as Pullman residents are comforted by a warm or hearty drink at Veteran Roasters, they can be heartened by the legacy of resident-driven community leadership and support and innovative investment that led them to this cozy spot on 111<sup>th</sup> Street and Doty Avenue.



