

New generation wants 'fresh York'

Younger crowd wants events, music and restaurants.

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Daily Record/Sunday News

Article Last Updated: 11/05/2007 06:26:18 AM EST

Nov 5, 2007 — Maryland resident Pat Sells and his friend looked everywhere when hunting for a spot to put a metal shop and studio. They looked around Washington, D.C., Baltimore, Seattle, Portland and throughout the countryside.

On Nov. 8, they'll settle a deal to buy part of the old York Ice Machinery property at the corner of Hartley and Philadelphia streets in York. Then they'll turn it into a metal sculpture shop, showroom and living space, complete with an outdoor sculpture garden.

The city suited their taste in old buildings but showed room for change.

"There's just so much potential for creating a really neat community," he said. Sells, 26, considers himself part of the "fresh York" movement. The term has been splashed around the city, mostly in connection with the planned Codo apartment complex. But those involved say it's more about a younger crowd moving in and bringing new ideas with them.

"The idea of it has been around. Now it's been given a name," said Julie Lando, a 35-year-old Spring Garden Township resident who also counts herself among the "fresh." She and her husband moved their family back to the area a year ago.

"It's a group of people that want to see downtown prosper and flourish," she said. A loosely formed group brainstorms at Granfalloon or other spots, she said. They talk about what they want to see in downtown York and how they could make it happen.

It's about "getting it a little bit more hip," she said.

Lando would like to see events such as bands or shows that are more age appropriate for a 20-40s crowd, she said.

Jessica Brubaker, 30, would like more mid-priced restaurants.

Brubaker's a confessed "city person." She and her husband lived in Boston for 10 years before buying a home to renovate in York for them and their 2-year-old. She thinks a fresh York is less about age, and more about having a diverse mix of things to do.

"It's more to do with attitude than age," she said.

Spreading the word is also key, they said. Word of mouth is good, but a list of area restaurants, events and more has been placed on Codo's Web site.

The fresh Yorkers know some naysayers will point out crime in the downtown area. "I kind of find it funny," Sells said. He's spent time around some bad areas of Baltimore and D.C. He thinks people just need to spend more time downtown York and see what it's like.

Brubaker said that, if there are more activities attracting more people, it'll help make the city safer and more "liveable."

"I don't think you can have one without the other," she said.

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