

## Confluence Square

Vacant lots pock mark our city and beg for solutions to our most vexing problems.

Vacant lots compound issues of economic decline, social destabilization, and environmental degradation in some of our most historic and treasured neighborhoods and must be addressed.

The lots on Warren Street, situated at the south end of the 14<sup>th</sup> Street Mall, are the perfect location for the project that we envision—Confluence Square. The lot will be cleared and graded to address drainage concerns. Using the iconic red brick of the city, salvaged from dilapidated buildings, the lot will be paved and painted with the image of the flag of Saint Louis. The flag, which honors St. Louis' historic location at the juncture of our region's great rivers, also inspired the square's name: *Confluence*. The site at which two or more rivers meet, we envision Confluence Square as a true "place of meeting" for St. Louisans from across the city. Confluence Square will create new reasons to come to Old North St. Louis by hosting many unique events.

Imagine Christmas time in Old North: Folks are milling around, picking out Christmas trees and wreaths, sipping on hot chocolate from a food stand, purchasing boxes from a Crown Candy stall and looking at the wares from other local businesses.

Imagine summer nights at Confluence Square: movies playing on an inflatable big screen while families set up camp chairs and blankets to watch. A couple of food trucks parked along 14<sup>th</sup> Street sell dinner to the viewers. There's a stand selling Schlafly beer.

Imagine the early fall: A home brew competition for the city of St. Louis. A hundred brewers fight to be crowned the home brew champion of the city. The winner earns a coveted partnership with one of our city's fine microbreweries, with the resulting product to be sold during the Oktoberfest celebration held on Confluence Square a month later.

This formerly vacant lot can become a true landmark for the neighborhood. Confluence Square can become as important as the gazebos of Tower Grove Park are to the Tower Grove neighborhoods, as well-known as Ted Drewes is for St. Louis Hills, and as vital a gathering point as Kiener Plaza is to Downtown. The landmark will be visible both from the Arch and from overhead by plane. It will serve as a giant welcome mat for the city and a landmark for a neighborhood that is emblematic of the city of St. Louis as a whole: a place rich with history now facing new challenges, seeking a new source of community pride to call their own.

Our team is currently composed of two men. Dane Buschling, a JD/MBA student at Saint Louis University, brings practical skills. Basic business knowledge, accounting, marketing, building a budget, cutting costs, are his areas of expertise. To this partnership Joe Wilson, also a law student at Saint Louis University, brings a vision of a vibrant and populated North St. Louis. Wilson is interested in property development, urban affairs, and the nuts and bolts of the local political scene. The two share a vision for something big in Old North and the enthusiasm and determination to make it happen.

