

CLEVELAND BUSINESS

BOWLED OVER

■ CORNER ALLEY BRINGS THREE ENTERTAINMENT OPTIONS TO EUCLID AVENUE. PAGE 4



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Corner Alley gets ready to roll

Three-in-one destination at Euclid and East 4th offers games, drink, food

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Ari Maron's vision of a revitalized downtown Cleveland corridor includes this snapshot: "You'll walk down Euclid Avenue," the partner at developer MRN Ltd. said, "and see bowling balls rolling past."

The project that will make that vision a reality is set to be unveiled Dec. 7, when The Corner Alley and the 4th Street Bar & Grill opens after more than a year of work at the southeast corner of Euclid Avenue and East Fourth Street. The 25,000-square-foot combination bowling alley, martini bar and 100-seat restaurant will employ between 95 and 110 workers and seven salaried managers.

The three-in-one destination concept is the brainchild of California-based Trifecta Management Group, a restaurant development



company that announced the venture in October 2005. Trifecta's chief executives previously worked for GameWorks, which operates a chain of arcade-and-bar venues, some of which include bowling lanes.

"Bowling is just something exciting, something that everyone knows how to do," said Trifecta managing partner Ron Lam. He sees the Cleveland venture as a good choice for people "who don't really want to go out and dance," and it "doesn't feel like a 'pick-up place.'"

Fellow Trifecta managing partner Mike Auger estimated the project's cost at around \$250 per square foot, which would give it a price tag of roughly \$6.2 million. Three buildings — the former Wendy's and McCrory department store among them — were subjected to interior overhauls to accommodate the 16 bowling lanes and their surroundings.

"There is an essentially new foundation and new steel structure that is holding up the building where we had to take out the bearing walls,"

Mr. Maron said. "But in as many places as we could, we kept the walls that separated the spaces from one another, so that as a visitor, you can tell that these were at one time separate spaces."

That means in some places, columns will stand between bowling lanes, and original sections of wall will remain suspended from the ceiling. Some molding and other old architectural features also have been restored.

Local architect John C. Waddell, president of Waddell and Associates, oversaw the design.

A dozen of the bowling lanes will run from east to west, visible from outside on Euclid Avenue, with four more set in a private party room themed to reflect the street's heyday as "Millionaires' Row."

"What we try to do is customize the experience to specific locations and communities," said Trifecta managing partner Bruce Nussbaum. "We have no plans to build 20 identical boxes and go public."

Buzz about The Corner Alley already has produced tangible results, according to Mr. Auger.

"We've already contracted over 25 (bowling) parties from the local business community," he said. "The idea is very powerful. That's something that's really the best indication of why it's going to be a success." ■