

KONAR PROPERTIES

# CONNECTION

FALL 2023

*Brand new warehouse in CooperVision's new expansion on Thruway Park Drive in West Henrietta. Photo Credit: CooperVision, Inc..*

## WHAT'S NEW AT ERIE STATION BUSINESS PARK

It's not uncommon for any major expansion or construction project to experience challenges or changes to plans along the way. From unpredictable Rochester winters to marketplace dynamics that impact how a space will be used, the key to success lies in teamwork and open communication. The recently completed CooperVision expansion is a textbook example of both.

The global growth of CooperVision over the last several years compelled the company to expand its packaging and distribution facilities. Based on its commitment to the Rochester region, they decided to expand their existing facility at Erie Station Business Park by adding 163,000 square feet of space. This was coupled with substantial investments in technology and systems for packaging, storage, and order picking.

From the design phase through construction, Konar Properties and the team at CooperVision met weekly to ensure the project's success. Reflecting on those meetings, Jim Fiorino, Sr. Director Distribution Operations at CooperVision shared, "The strength of our relationship with Konar Properties and the transparency we had in those meetings really kept us in line. If there was something that was potentially slipping, we were able to get ahead of it quickly."

Fiorino appreciated how Konar Properties' relationships with the Town of Henrietta, New York State, and a diverse range of vendors – from lighting to



*Exterior of CooperVision's new expansion. Photo Credit: CooperVision, Inc.*

landscaping – helped ensure CooperVision's plan for its new facility became a reality. That includes the special requirements needed for LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification for the facility, which is powered by 100% renewable energy.

Between the June 2022 groundbreaking and August 2023 when the Certificate of Occupancy was granted, CooperVision experienced changes in its global **CONTINUED INSIDE >**



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business that led to a shift in how the new space would be used before it was even completed. Originally planned as a blended packaging and distribution facility, increased consumer use of daily wear contact lenses led the company to quickly pivot and devote a larger portion of the space to packaging than originally planned. The frequent and open communication between Konar Properties and CooperVision helped ensure that any changes needed throughout construction would never cause delays.

In addition to expanding its facility, CooperVision took the step of acquiring both their building and land. When the company first moved to Erie Station Business Park in 2005, Konar Properties built the 241,600-square-

foot packaging and distribution center and leased the facility to CooperVision. With the decision to expand, they determined that full ownership fit best with their strategic plan. The transfer of ownership was finalized in September 2023.

Change is a part of every company's survival; Konar Properties works to anticipate those changes and help companies plan for continued success. From the amount and type of space needed to lease terms and purchase options, Konar Properties partners with businesses to help them change as their needs do.

Erie Station Business Park has sites available for sale or build-to-suit solutions, ranging from four

to 22 acres. You have the flexibility to purchase land and develop it yourself, or purchase both your land and building in a turnkey package where Konar Properties shoulders the responsibility for all approvals and construction. The Park also has Class A office space available in the Williams Mill Office Center and flex space from 6,000 to 40,000 square feet that can be customized and ready for occupancy in under three months.

If you are looking for a convenient, flexible, and welcoming place for your business, contact Michael Trojjan, Director of Commercial Properties at (585) 334-4110.

# FLEXING FOR GROWTH

## ERIE STATION BUSINESS PARK: Vuzix Expands into Second Flex Space

Vuzix, an industry leader in augmented reality (AR) technology, has seen explosive growth since they first moved to Erie Station Business Park in 2015. As it became clear that they were outgrowing their existing space, they made the decision to take on additional square footage in a neighboring flex space building and create a world-class specialty manufacturing facility.

Vuzix designs and manufactures optical components, waveguides, smart glasses, and AR solutions for defense, security, and enterprise clients around the globe. The nature of their work demands environments where temperature, humidity, and air filtering are highly controlled.

The expansion was completed in September and features offices as well as cleanroom space for manufacturing. According to Kream Bradley,

Sr. Manufacturing Engineer, "The new building will not only meet Vuzix's current needs, but will also provide the opportunity to take on additional space as the demand for waveguide production increases." Optical waveguides bend and combine light in a way that creates the virtual images someone wearing smart glasses sees overlaid on the real world. Building out a space that accommodates that level of specialized manufacturing requires careful planning and a highly skilled team.

Throughout the planning and build-out of their new space, Konar Properties met with Vuzix and the various contractors involved at least weekly to ensure open communication and collaboration between everyone. Bradley shared "They were professional and organized. I appreciated their input and felt

they always asked smart questions, based on their experience with other similar build-outs."

Flex space is the perfect fit for Vuzix because a single building can be configured for multiple functions, like cleanrooms, offices, packaging, loading docks, and more. Konar Properties now has four flex space buildings at Erie Station Business Park. Available in sizes beginning at 6,000 square feet, your suite can be fully customized, built out, and ready for move in just 90 days from lease signing.

To learn more about Konar Properties' flex space and how it can accommodate your needs, both now and into the future, contact Michael Trojjan at (585) 334-4110.



Exterior of Vuzix's expansion at Erie Station Business Park in West Henrietta.





## RETAIL BUSINESS: Marilla's Mindful Supplies Expands to the South Wedge

# TAKING THE NEXT STEP

When Marilla's Mindful Supplies realized their Geneva-based store had a significant customer base coming from Rochester, they took the opportunity to expand.

Frustrated that her favorite eco-friendly brands and shops relied on single-use plastic packaging, Marilla Gonzalez decided in 2019 to open a store where you could shop for bulk food, personal care items, and home supplies without plastic packaging. Customers of Marilla's Mindful Supplies use their own containers, or the plastic-free ones provided by the store at no cost, making it easy to be planet-friendly.

From the moment her Geneva store opened, Marilla hoped to open a second location in a more populous area. Even though the arrival of the pandemic slowed those aspirations, the store experienced a steady increase in sales that gave her confidence in the business concept. A significant part of that growth came from customers in Rochester who were visiting the Geneva store at least monthly. When the numbers looked favorable for expansion, she began searching for possible locations.

While Marilla considered a long list of locations around Rochester, she ultimately settled on the South Wedge because it closely resembled the neighborhood where her Geneva store is located. Both are livable, walkable neighborhoods that share similar demographics and values. And both are dominated by small, local



*Top: Marilla Gonzalez, owner of Marilla's Mindful Supplies, at their newly opened second location. Bottom: Merchandise display at their store in South and Hickory Place in the South Wedge.*

businesses that are collaborative and supportive of each other. The only difference is the size, which leads Marilla to joke, "it's kind of the grown-up version of our Geneva location."

Throughout lease discussions and the build-out of the store, Marilla found Konar Properties to be "very helpful, responsive, and kind." It meant a lot to her that they were genuinely excited about the store's concept and what a good fit it was for the South Wedge. And on the day of the ribbon cutting when she accidentally

locked herself out of the store with news crews and a line of customers ready to come in, the folks at Konar Properties jumped in to help turn a possible disaster into a funny story she'll always remember.

If your growing business has expansion plans in its future, Konar Properties' portfolio includes retail, Class A office space, commercial / industrial space, and flex space. For more information, contact Michael Trojan, Director of Commercial Properties at (585) 334-4110.



# RETAIL TENANT HIGHLIGHTS

Rochester's Neighborhood of Play is booming and a swanky new cocktail bar is coming to the South Wedge.

This June, the Strong National Museum of Play opened its 90,000-square-foot expansion and the Indus Hospitality Group is now welcoming guests at their new 125-room Hampton Inn & Suites. Konar Properties' VIDA has fully leased its 238 apartments and townhomes, and as its first two retail tenants are celebrating one-year anniversaries, they're enjoying the neighborhood's year-round residential and tourism traffic.

Fathey Beer Company – a dog-friendly bottle shop and tap room, that also happens to serve an incredible chicken sandwich – has benefitted from the mix of regulars and visitors the Neighborhood brings. Owner Nik Fathey shares, "On a Saturday, there's tons of families out here that spend the day at the museum and then come over to Fathey."

Likewise, gaming-themed restaurant and bar Nerdvana is the perfect complement to The Strong Museum's new Digital Worlds exhibit celebrating electronic games. "You couldn't choose a better neighborhood for us," says Nerdvana's director of operations, Cathy Brown.

As a successful restaurateur and self-identified cocktail aficionado, Charles Cerankosky knew exactly what he wanted to do when he learned the former Solera Wine Bar space at South and Hickory Place in the South Wedge was available. On the heels of his other successful ventures Good Luck, Cure, Jackrabbit Club, Lucky's, and Radio Social, Cerankosky wanted to open a bar that celebrates all aspects of cocktail culture – Martine.

In preparing for their fall opening, one of the things he loved about working with Konar Properties is that they understood his vision and supported him in every way they could. Cerankosky shares, "Despite being a large company that has a lot of commercial interests, you could feel that they really cared about a project like this one."

To explore retail options for your business, contact Michael Trojjan at 585-334-4110.



75 Thruway Park Drive  
West Henrietta, NY 14586



*Nerdvana, a freestanding establishment in the center of VIDA's five-building residential and retail complex in the Neighborhood of Play.*



WEST HENRIETTA  
585.334.4110

[ERIESTATION.COM](http://ERIESTATION.COM)



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585.334.4110

[ERIESTATIONRETAIL.COM](http://ERIESTATIONRETAIL.COM)



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