



**Design Review Board (DRB)  
Staff Report**

New Construction

Case # 18-137:                      Wisacre Brewing Company  
   0 Abel Street  
   Memphis, TN 38103

Applicant:                              Mr. Jason Weeks  
   LRK  
   175 Toyota Plaza; STE 500  
   Memphis, TN 38103

Owner:                                      Kellan Bartosch  
   2783 Broad Ave.  
   Memphis, TN 38112

Background:                              DRB review is required for this project because it received a 15-Year PILOT at the December 11, 2018 CCRFC Board Meeting. The applicant will build a new 43,000 SF facility on vacant land located south of the intersection of South BB King Blvd. and Vance Ave. The current Wisacre location on Broad Avenue will remain in use as a small specialty brewhouse. The new Downtown location will accommodate significantly more production and will also include a sizable taproom and retail component.

The development will include a tap room for beer service, covered outdoor entertainment area, kitchen, brewhouse, cellar, packaging area, cooler, warehouse space, and offices. Each of the spaces are designed to maximize efficiency and allow for future expansion so that Wisacre can grow into this building as the business continues to expand.

Project Description:                      The construction looks to the character of some of the industrial buildings in the neighborhood context of South Main. The proposed massing and material palette feature a pitched roof and ribbed metal panels resting on a concrete plinth. The southwest corner of the site will include the entrance to the taproom as well as the porch and landscaped garden. This corner will feature perforated ribbed metal panels, translucent polycarbonate, glass storefront systems, and wood siding. The remainder of the southern elevation will incorporate an artistic treatment.

The west elevation continues this material palette with an additional opening that will allow a key viewpoint into beer production. It will also include bike parking and a ramp that will lead to the taproom and porch facing BB King Blvd.

The northern elevation, which will be used for production and loading, will primarily be comprised of ribbed metal panels with a similar corner feature of the south and west elevations with a logo and artistic treatment.

The eastern elevation will face the parking lot which will be accessible from Butler Ave., and will include access for operations and production. Additional entrances to the facility, an overhead door, and a loading dock will all face the parking lot and create some additional views into production.

Collectively, the exterior of the building includes high visibility to different components of the brewery to create transparency into the brewing process.

Public art and architectural lighting are crucial design components to the buildings character both day and night, allowing the building to embody the Wiseacre brand. Rachel Briggs, the artist who works with the Wiseacre team on designing their cans and brand specific art, will incorporate her art into the building's architectural design. This project will come to life with the integration of Rachel's art as it activates each façade and creates moments of exploration throughout the site.

Making use of the 2.42-acre site, the project will feature a large outdoor room to activate the corner of the site on Butler and BB King that will serve as the entrance to the taproom while addressing the significant grade change. The outdoor space will be activated when the taproom is occupied and transform at night when the art and architectural lighting comes to life. This area will include a landscaped garden, entertainment area, outdoor furniture, and artistic installations.

Public art, enhanced architectural lighting and signage will be submitted with a separate application.

Staff Report:

The property is located in the Neighbor Center Design Context and is not located in a Historic District. The proposed new construction is consistent with the Downtown Memphis Design Guidelines and DMC priorities of designing to fit within the context and promote creativity.

The design of the building looks to warehouses and industrial examples in the South Main neighborhood. As a development

primarily to be used as a production site, the industrial character of the building is appropriate and further enhanced with creative and human scale features. The material palette is consistent with its industrial use and warehouse design while being similar to construction in the neighborhood. Additionally, the integration of art into the façade allows Wiseacre to outwardly assert their brand to the neighborhood while also speaking to the artistic heritage of the district.

The site is oriented towards BB King allowing the building to visually connect with the South Main neighborhood and activate the corner of BB King and Butler. This corner will incorporate signage, art and open glass walls to signify the entrance to the taproom. Despite the scale of the structure due to the requirements of the space for brewing, human scale design is incorporated into all elevations with integration of art and translucent polycarbonate openings. This creative approach of dense glass expanses and strategic viewpoints enhances a structure principally used as a production facility into a statement of its brand and a strong addition to the South Main neighborhood.

The large expanses of glass throughout the exterior allow the building to interact with the street and create an inviting and attractive environment for the brewery. The approach to landscaping also creates a unique public space on the primary corner of BB King and Butler that will allow for a variety of experiences on site and collectively create a new landmark of the South Main neighborhood.

The proposed construction puts a critically located vacant lot back into active use, strengthens the connections between South Main and South City and enhances the pedestrian experience for BB King, a main corridor of Downtown.

Staff is supportive of the proposed design and believes that it will serve as an appropriate example of creative industrial design that prioritizes transparency and vibrancy while creating a new destination downtown.

**Staff Recommendation:**

**Staff recommends approval with the condition that the applicant return with a separate application for public art, architectural lighting and signage.**