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Pinecrest Aims High

New upscale lifestyle center brings unique retail, dining, office and lodging to Orange Village



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Pinecrest Aims High

New upscale lifestyle center brings unique retail, dining, office and lodging to Orange Village

By Doug Bardwell | Photos courtesy of Pinecrest

If you've noticed the additional traffic at the Harvard exit off I-271, it's probably due to the area's newest, mixed-use district – Pinecrest. This 53-plus-acre development on Park Avenue in Orange Village, is home to 400,000 square feet of retail and dining, 162,000 square feet of office space, 87 luxury apartments, a 145-room hotel, cinema, 2,100 parking spaces, and a host of outdoor activities.

A new center is always a draw for a community, but Pinecrest is even more of an attraction in that it is composed mostly of retail, dining and entertainment venues unique to the area. Many tenants are entirely new to Ohio, while others can only be found in distant corners of the state.

Bring us something different

Originally conceived as a power center (defined as an unenclosed shopping center between 250,000 and 750,000 square feet), Pinecrest has been in the making since before 2008. Kevin Cooney and Kevin Holdash, of Realty Marketing Associates, were the first to see the potential of this Chagrin Highlands

area on the northeast corner of Harvard Road and Interstate 271. They spent years acquiring 37 individual homes, built in the '40s and '50s, along

"The idea was to create a livable destination that would encourage not only shopping, dining and recreation, but community engagement and growth."

Keith Campbell
CallisonRTKL

Pinecrest Drive. With the acquisition of almost all the property at the south end of that street, they sought a developer and David Lewanski responded.

Working with RDL Architects, Lewanski also brought in the DiGeronimo Companies for design assistance and site work capabilities.

"We were brought into the project in the design phase," says Josh Decker, senior project manager for Independence Construction, "and that was one of our main contributions, being able to fine tune construction materials and techniques to meet budgets. It's much preferable to guide design instead of doing a retro value-engineering process."

Lewanski initially proposed a big-box power center to the mayor of Orange in 2011; but, the plan was summarily rejected.



OVER VIEW Situated right off of I-271 at the Harvard Road exit, the new, 53-acre, mixed-use Pinecrest development is home to 400,000 square feet of retail and dining, 162,000 square feet of office space, 87 luxury apartments, a 145-room hotel, cinema and more.

“During the entitlement process, the project evolved into a master plan for a high-end, mixed-use development,” recalls Mark Poltorek, principal and commercial director for RDL Architects. “Dave’s vision grew as he better understood the market and the tremendous visibility that the site offers. Working

closely with Dave and the City, RDL prepared the master plan and took it through the entitlement process.”

Lewanski went to the City in early 2013 with schematic plans for a lifestyle center and was then given preliminary approval. The instructions from City Hall were simple: “Don’t bring us any

stores or restaurants that exist within a 20-mile radius.”

With the larger investment needed to develop the lifestyle center, in 2013, Lewanski sold off the package to a partnership of Fairmount Properties and the DiGeronimo Companies.

In early 2014, Independence Excavating was able to begin preliminary sitework. “That was our challenge, to get as much work done as possible on the site, without getting too far ahead of the designers,” explains Decker.

“One of the big unknowns on this site was what was underground. It turned out to be solid rock on the north end of the development,” says Decker. “Fortunately, we had the advantage of having our sister company, Independence Excavating, who was able to crush the rock onsite. We then used it for all backfill – more than 165,000 tons worth. That saved money both ways, not hauling out as well as not hauling in.”

“Having worked together with [Fairmount Properties Principal] Adam Fishman on the Flats East Bank project, there was a close alignment of interests between us and Fairmount,” says CallisonRTKL’s Keith Campbell, vice president in the global architecture,

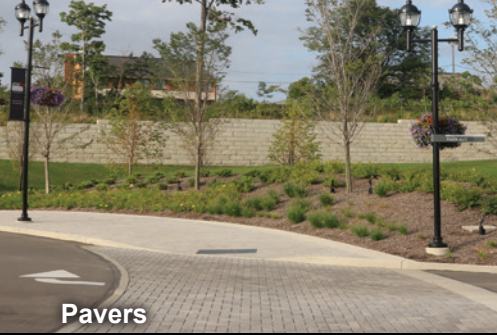
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CENTRAL PARK Located just outside of SilverSpot Cinema is a grassy public area where guests are invited to relax and play. Many mornings, one may even encounter yoga classes taking place on the green.

design and planning firm's Chicago office. "They brought us in during the fall of 2014, to create synergy between all the different uses. The typical suburban mall master plan is focused on the leasable footprint of its buildings rather than the spaces between them."

"The idea behind Pinecrest," says Campbell, "was to create a livable destination that would encourage not only shopping, dining and recreation, but community engagement and growth. We worked closely with the mayor, the planning and zoning committee and Orange Village residents to conceive of a master plan that makes the most of every usable space."

Case in point, at the north end of the development, a one-acre triangular Central Park serves as a town green and is used daily for special activities and events. Mature, two-story-tall and larger trees along Park Avenue make the development seem like it's been here for some time.

Key to the partnership between Fairmount Properties and CallisonRTKL was Fairmount's internal vice president of design and planning, Brice Hamill, who led the design efforts and provided instrumental thought leadership

throughout the entire process. Together with CallisonRTKL, his vision came to life.

If it was only that simple

Creating a compelling design and acquiring the right tenant mix went exceedingly well, but there were other matters to consider as the development wanted to blend into the residential neighborhood. These included controlling sightlines, managing sound and potential bright lights shining into the surrounding homes.

"We ended up taking 10 acres of the site and creating a 30-foot-high earthen

mound separating the center from the homes to the east," explains Eric Louttit, chief investment officer with Fairmount Properties. Even with natural plantings and trees on the residential side of the mound, they ended up adding extra fencing and trees to the top of the mound.

Unseen by the residents to the east, the hill encases the three-story parking garage which runs the length of three of the buildings on the east side of Park Avenue. Skywalks connect the garage to the apartments and to the office building.

Addressing the tenant mix requirements from the village, Louttit says, "In our agreement with the village,

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LUXURY LIVING Situated above first-floor retail at the corner of Park Avenue and 4th Street are 87 apartments, each with a walk-out balcony overlooking the development.

65% of our retail has to be from outside a 20-mile radius. Luckily, we found many that were interested, like REI, West Elm, Pinstripes and Silverspot. In addition, many of our new smaller tenants are all new to market.”

“We’ve got an excellent leasing team in-house,” adds Louttit, “and we drive around trying to identify potential tenants. Actually, lots of our tenants were firms we identified that we wanted in the center, and then we convinced them that this was the right location for them.

“It’s old-school leasing, holding people’s hands, showing them the location, the visibility, the design and the demographics.”

The results combine to make this a truly “live-work-play” community. All the components are here.

Live

Those who want to live where the action is should look at the 4th & Park Apartments, aptly located at 400 Park Ave., at the corner of 4th Street and Park Avenue. Apartment hunters can select one-, two- or three-bedroom apartments on the second, third and fourth floors. Only about 25% of the 145 units are still available.

Each of the units feature deluxe kitchens with quartz countertops and stainless-steel appliances. Wide plank, wood-grained flooring in the living and

kitchen areas contrast nicely with the light kitchen cabinets and countertop. Walls are light grey throughout with white woodwork.

All apartments include in-suite, full-size washers and dryers, and walk-in

closets. Bathrooms feature porcelain tile. Each apartment has a walk-out balcony overlooking the development.

All residents can also use the community room, with fireplace, TV, bar and billiard table. A 24/7 fitness center



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LIVING IN STYLE Apartment units feature open living rooms with wide plank flooring (top), comfortable bedrooms (middle) and well-equipped kitchens with quartz countertops and stainless-steel appliances. Residents also have access to common areas (bottom), including a community room with a fireplace, bar and billiard table.



is available for residents, as is an adjacent Bark Park for pets. Car parking is available in the attached garage and bike parking is provided indoors within a special storage room. Additional on-site storage is available for those who haven't downsized completely yet.

Additional perks for residents include exclusive store and restaurant promotions. A short walk provides access to an outdoor five-mile recreational trail which loops around Oakwood Village.

Work

Two office buildings with 160,000 square feet of space are filling quickly. Three floors of office space are located

"In our agreement with [Orange Village], 65% of our retail has to be from outside a 20-mile radius. Luckily, we found many that were interested.... In addition, many of our new smaller tenants are all new to market."

Eric Louttit

Fairmount Properties



over street-level retail, at both 100 and 200 Park Avenue.

In addition to the close proximity of all the retail and dining options, office workers enjoy easy access to the attached parking garage behind both buildings and a small, dedicated fitness center. Both office buildings also have controlled access in the lobbies.

"Having to minimize the height of all the buildings required the use of post-tensioned construction for all the multi-story buildings," explains Decker.

While more expensive in the initial costs, it will give office tenants more flexibility for future remodeling.

Currently, nearly 70% of the office space is committed, and the team looks





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WIDE-RANGING RETAIL Pinecrest offers a wide range of shopping experiences, from high-end home decor at West Elm (top) and gourmet cookware at Williams Sonoma (middle), to camping supplies at REI (bottom) and more.

forward to finalizing the balance of the work spaces in the near future.

Stay

If you are in town on business or just visiting friends, Pinecrest offers the latest in upscale accommodations at the new AC Hotel Cleveland Beachwood. In the center of the development, hotel guests are just steps away from shopping and entertainment. (See full story, pg. 69.)

Dine

Nine restaurants are currently open with three others scheduled before the end of the year and two more coming online in 2019. Firebird Wood Fired Grill offers upscale dining at moderate prices. Shake Shack serves up dynamite burgers with great fries and shakes, along with beer or wine selections. Bibibop Asian Grill is the delicious Korean take on a Chipotle-style restaurant where you can pick all the ingredients for your meal.

The balance of the restaurants cover just about every conceivable dietary delight possible from donuts to tacos and from ice cream to barbeque to seafood.

If you're a "pick it up and take it home" type, Whole Foods offers a plethora of choices in raw or prepared foods.

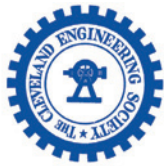
Shop

Pinecrest abounds with unique shopping opportunities that feature some of the best national, regional and local brands. From backpacking supplies to beauty treatments, to fitness studios and one-of-a-kind retailers, shoppers will find more than a couple dozen compelling places to exercise their credit cards.

Among those establishments now open are Apricot Lane Boutique, Blackbird Fly Boutique, Brighton, CandleStudio, Citizen Yoga, Club Pilates Pinecrest, Color Me Mine, Eye Candy Optical, Homage, J. Bellezza, Laura of



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SHOW TIME Regularly scheduled activities take advantage of the development's unique outdoor spaces. For instance, outdoor movies are shown on the giant video screen outside Silverspot Cinema every Wednesday night, weather-permitting.

Pembroke, OrangeTheory Fitness, Pottery Barn, REI, Scout & Molly's Boutique, Sweeties Big Fun, Ameritrade, Verizon, Vernacular, Vineyard Vines, Warby Parker, West Elm, William Sonoma and Zen Nail Spa, and others.

Play

Outdoor movies are shown on the giant video screen outside Silverspot Cinema in Pinecrest's Central Park every Wednesday night, weather-permitting. Yoga classes are held on the lawn six days per week and attended by dozens of residents, office dwellers and shoppers alike. On the weekends, children of all ages can enjoy corn hole boards and giant Jenga and Connect Four games. If you want to get things rolling, there's Pinstripes, right across the green. (See full story, pg. 75.)

Walking around the project, selfie locations abound, including within all the center's digital directory kiosks. There is a sculpture featuring red "O-H-I-O" letters for Ohio State Buckeye fans. At the opposite end of the center, there's a giant "CLEVELAND" sign in a massive State of Ohio sculpture crafted by a nearby Willoughby artist.

As a good percentage of retail shifts to the likes of Amazon, the developers were keen to introduce their own brand

of interactivity to the experience of being at Pinecrest.

Pinecrest's own 'Spanish Steps'

Addressing a topographical challenge became an unexpected amenity to the project. To connect the upper-level cinema with the ground-level Central Park, CallisonRTKL designed an architectural feature with combined stairs and seating, inspired by Rome, Italy's famous "Spanish Steps." With indirect lighting below the wood bench seats, it's a virtual piece of art in the evenings.

"The level change offered an opportunity for a grand stair," explains Mark Lawrence, senior associate with CallisonRTKL, "and the second-floor terrace has great views of the village green. With an 18-foot height difference between the upper cinema entrance level and lower retail/village green level, the monumental stair was designed as a pivotal 'third space' for gathering. Following the historical precedent of the 'Spanish Steps,' the Pinecrest stair has been highly successful in enticing people to linger on site. Complementary food and beverage tenants such as Graeter's Ice Cream, City Works Eatery and Pour House (see full story, pg. 87), and Pinstripes all work together to provide a 'full entertainment' experience."



FINDING A WAY Solving a topographic challenge, the design team incorporated grand stairs leading from Silverspot Cinema to an upper terrace 18 feet above. The architectural feature has become a popular space where people can lounge and enjoy the views.

Come at different times of day and you might find office workers taking a break and checking their phones, shoppers enjoying lunch outside, or significant others lounging and waiting for their partners to complete their yoga class. It's a stairway, but it's also the city's largest sofa.

"That's a feature that makes me happy," expounds Campbell. "In all my visits there, that's a place people

intuitively know is a good spot to sit and hang out. It's become more than just a stair."

If it's relaxation you prefer, grab dinner and a movie at Silverspot Cinema. (See full story, pg. 81.)

Come one, come all

Opening the entire center all at once was a challenge, recalls Decker, but it's a grand new neighborhood

in an already affluent and successful village. "It was quite a partnership, working with our own subs, not to mention having multiple, simultaneous national tenant buildouts; making sure that the process worked for everyone involved," states Decker.

"As a firm, we are interested in not only the buildings, but we also pay a lot of attention to what the experience is like," says Campbell. "We spend a

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PARK PLACE Visitors and residents enjoy a variety of well-placed landscaping throughout the development.

lot of time thinking about the things that most people don't even consider, such as widths of the sidewalk, distance between the planters and the storefronts, and the width and length of the streets. It's about balancing the design of the buildings with flexible, compelling public space. So, for us, it's been most gratifying to see all the activity on the streets and even the stairs."

Pinecrest seems to have fulfilled everyone's expectations, from City Hall, to the community, to the developers, and to the merchants. Many of the retailers and restaurants are performing at or near the top of their chain. Public reception has been terrific with many saying it is "the" place to dine and play.

"Serving as legal counsel for the Pinecrest development was extremely rewarding," says Kevin Murphy, a partner at Walter | Haverfield. "We are honored that Pinecrest Project Partners chose Walter | Haverfield to help them transform the area from a residential subdivision into what is now a thriving mixed-use district."

June 7, 2018, exactly seven years from the original proposal to the city, Pinecrest had its commencement event. With 25,000 people driving by the center each day and parking lots filled many of those days, it appears to already be a success – and there's even more to come. **P**