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Sketchbook Brewing confirms expansion plans Quickly growing Evanston brewery enrolling new members in September



Cesar Marron and Shawn Decker in front of 821 Chicago Avenue

EVANSTON, IL (August 25, 2015) – Sketchbook Brewing Company received the go-ahead from Evanston’s City Council last month: a special use permit was approved which will allow Sketchbook to expand production and shift retail sales from their current alley entrance to the streetfront at 821 Chicago Avenue. Slated to open in late fall, Sketchbook’s tap room will also be open extra days and longer hours, pleasing their many local fans.

Increased beer production also translates into an opportunity for Sketchbook to grow their innovative membership program. Currently, about 350 individuals belong to the brewery’s CSB (Community-Supported Brewery). Members pre-pay for 1 or 2 growlers per month (at a discounted price), enjoy discounts on merchandise and additional beer, and attend special events. For example, Sketchbook will soon be doing a limited release of 22 oz. bottles of their strong scotch ale, aged in barrels from neighboring FEW Spirits. CSB members will get the first chance to buy this long-awaited brew.

The window for new member enrollment opens on Friday, September 4, and continues through the month of September. Interested parties can sign up online or at the brewery, choosing the option that works for them. CSB memberships start at \$80. Info: www.sketchbookbrewing.com/csb/

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Sketchbook's Cesar Marron and Shawn Decker (head brewers and owners) are ready for the challenges of expansion. "We are designing a simple, special space—one that preserves the DIY informality of our current tasting room, but with a little more comfort," says Decker. Marron adds: "We're planning a neighborhood gathering place that takes beer seriously. But not too seriously."

When the new Tap Room opens, Sketchbook customers will enjoy the same routine currently on offer in their alley location. Craft Beer cognoscenti and newcomers alike conduct beer 'research' by trying limited free samples from a menu of 6-7 beers and cider, and then take some Sketchbook home in glass jugs (64 oz. growlers or 32 oz. howlers.)

The future 821 Chicago streetfront location is right across from the Main St. CTA station, and just a few steps further from the Metra stop. And customers will find parking much easier than in Sketchbook's current situation. Right now, the brewery's public entrance is in the alley behind 821 Chicago, running north/south between Main and Kedzie. Several of Sketchbook's popular beers are inspired by their unusual location: No Parking is a session pale ale and Orange Door IPA refers to the brightly colored alley entrance to the brewery.

In the eight months since their public opening, Sketchbook has gained a loyal following. Boosted by appearances at Custer Fair and other Evanston and Chicago festivals, walk-in traffic from new fans is brisk during the current opening hours (Thursday and Friday, 4 to 8 pm, Saturday noon to 6 pm, and Sunday noon to 4 pm). Wholesale sales to more than 20 area restaurants and bars are thriving, and the brewery has created a special beer for the new Whole Foods Green Bay Road, brewed from organic ingredients and called Bio.

And the beer? Sketchbook invites all those craft beer fans who have been meaning to come in to wander down the alley and check out what's on tap this fall. And, Decker clarifies: "You don't have to be a member to buy our beer, you just have to find us!"

Sketchbook Brewing Company opened to the public on November 21, 2014. Dedicated to creating and sharing fresh, locally-produced craft beer, Sketchbook is also committed to its neighborhood—the thriving Main/Chicago area in southeast Evanston. To learn about what's on tap, visit Sketchbook's website or facebook page, or call 847-859-9051.

<http://www.sketchbookbrewing.com/> <https://www.facebook.com/sketchbookbrewing>

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