



For Immediate Release

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CUPLES TEA HOUSE OPENING THIS FALL AT 409 HOWARD STREET

One of Two Winners of the Howard Row Small Business Storefront Competition

BALTIMORE, Maryland – May 20, 2020 – Starting this fall, visitors to the 400 block of Howard Street in Market Center will be able to enjoy a healthy cup of tea in a comfortable urban environment. Cuples Tea House has over 40 tea blends on its menu of premium loose leaf teas, and also offers tea accessories, tea education classes and tea tastings. Cuples Tea House looks forward to opening a retail shop and tea bar at 409 N. Howard Street in the Fall of 2020.

Cuples Tea House is “not your momma’s tea house.” Owners Lynnette and Eric Dodson plan to combine culture, music, art, and tea education in a socially connected atmosphere, with tea as the connection that makes it all possible. They want to inspire healthier communities by educating people about the many benefits of drinking tea, a beverage rich with antioxidants and the power to boost mental clarity.

The Dodsons envision a relaxing urban atmosphere with plush seating, a wrap-around bar, large floor-to-ceiling windows, high shelves, and live plants to reduce noise and visual pollution – a space where people naturally experience the “basic goodness of being in the moment.” They hope that guests will visit for a delicious, healthy beverage and leave with their spirits elevated, nourished, and re-energized.

Currently, fans can find Cuples Tea at farmers markets including 32nd Street/ Waverly, Boordy Vineyards, and Havre de Grace, restaurants including Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA) cafés and dining halls, Uber Bagels and Deli (all locations), Dough Run Bakery (Monkton) and stores including Reginald F. Lewis African American Museum Gift Shop and Knit and Soy Metal Candle Shop. Cuples Tea House was featured in the November, 2019 People Magazine (online) as one of [Jada Pinkett Smith’s 10 Favorite Holiday Gifts](#). The Dodson’s also host monthly tea education workshops at Enoch Pratt Library branches.

The Market Center Merchants Association (MCMA) and Charles Street Development (CSD) facilitated the Howard Row Small Business Storefront Competition at Poverni Sheikh Group’s (PSG) request, to attract new businesses to and increase foot traffic in the burgeoning Market Center district of Downtown Baltimore. Cuples Tea House is one of two winners to be announced.

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The judges appreciated Cuples Tea's quality products, business savvy, track record, commitment to inspiring health lifestyles, and vision for creating a welcoming, soothing urban atmosphere for Tea House guests. The judges also highlighted the Dodson's commitment to engaging with the community to establish meaningful relationships and create shared value for the long term. People want businesses that deliver goods/services that are important to their needs.

"Cuples Tea House promises to bring a desired new amenity to Market Center," said Kristen Mitchell, executive director of the Market Center Merchants Association. "Through surveys and one-on-one conversations, we know that residents and employees want more healthy food and beverage options in the neighborhood, particularly in welcoming, socially-conscious spaces. We look forward to working with the Dodsons to foster a community in which their business will thrive, where people value local businesses, personal connections, and different cultures."

About the Market Center Neighborhood

Once the retail epicenter for Baltimore, the 27-block Market Center is a diverse community of commerce, arts, entertainment, anchor institutions, and residential buildings. Its location in the heart of downtown is rich with history and landmarks and is home to world-class live theater, the famed Lexington Market, long-time businesses, and major employers.

Market Center is roughly bounded by Baltimore Street to the south, Greene to the west, Cathedral/Liberty to the east and Madison to the north.

About Poverni Sheikh Group (PSG)

Poverni Sheikh Group is a 30 person vertically integrated sponsor with in-house development, construction, bridge debt and property management platforms with a key focus on development, lending and construction in the prime high growth Baltimore & Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Area. The PSG leadership team includes Eugene Poverni, Ibrahim Seikh, and Greg Kostrikin.

About Market Center Merchants Association (MCMA)

The Market Center Merchants Association focuses on supporting commerce, retaining and attracting businesses, and improving the consumer and residential experience in one of Baltimore's most historic neighborhoods.

About Charles Street Development (CSD)

The Charles Street Development is a non-profit organization, 501 (c)(3), whose mission is to support and promote the businesses, cultural attractions, entertainment venues, restaurants and retail establishments along the Charles Street corridor. HCSA serves as a problem solving and information resource for its members, as well as provides a forum for networking, communication and collaboration.