

# Serendipic

A new type of place making Pine Bluff its home.

Serendipic is an experiment. It does not fit into any pre-existing category of business, industry, or residence. It will be a shared space where people can come to collaborate and learn from each other, build ideas and things, and stretch the limits of their bodies and minds.

## Property description and current condition:

The subject property is the old Varco Pruden manufacturing facility and headquarters at 2622 W 17th Ave. It is located on the south side of 17th avenue, between the railroad tracks and SEARK. Access is via a private road from 17th Avenue to the south alongside the Railroad tracks. It is surrounded on all sides by empty, abandoned or mostly vacant property. To the east, a canal and tree line separate the property from SEARK.

The site consists of approximately 218,000 square feet of indoor space, and covers approximately 17 acres. The outside space is level and graded, almost all paved or covered with gravel.

Most of the interior space is composed of long, open manufacturing bays with concrete floors, high ceilings, and overhead cranes. There are also large warehouse and storage spaces without cranes, and a few shops and more conventional office style areas. The north side of the site has an attached 2 story office building of approximately 15,000 sqft. with sprinklers throughout. It contains 35 private offices, 9 bathrooms, several large open office areas, reception areas, conference rooms, break rooms, and dedicated server and telecommunications rooms.

The site has been abandoned since about 2005. It has been the target of extensive theft of wiring and steel, and no maintenance has been performed since it was abandoned. Despite this, the site is in remarkably good condition and there is very little damage to structural components of the buildings.

## History:

Ever since I was a child, I dreamed of being an inventor, living in a science museum and giant warehouse, and having access to a large workshop with tools and equipment. I wanted to become a Tesla, an Edison, or an Einstein, and needed a space to do experiments and build prototypes. As a step toward that dream, I started and ran a 501c3 non-profit Makerspace in Provo, Utah for several years. During that time, I attempted to acquire an abandoned jail from the city to expand into, but was unable to convince them to allow me to build the place I dreamed of.

I found this property in late 2019 after doing a nationwide search for properties with the largest square footage, and sorted by lowest price first. I thought the price was a typo, and was amazed to find that it was actually in my price range. After doing research on the area, and coming to visit, I was convinced that the place I envisioned could be a benefit to the community here, and decided to go ahead with the purchase. I finally arrived here to begin taking stock of the place at the beginning of April.

The plan is tentative, and will develop over time, but includes 3 main components.

1. A Science Museum using the San Francisco Exploratorium as inspiration.
2. A world class Makerspace where people from near and far can come to build things.
3. My own, private, research and development facility, and warehouse space for my businesses.

The above uses will likely involve several sub-uses that compliment them:

- A special business incubator to take advantage of the unique opportunities this site offers.
- Sculpture garden, sculpture studio and school, molding making, and bronze fine art foundry.
- On site living space for Makers, Entrepreneurs, and Artists.
- Convenience store and cafeteria
- Gymnasium for Boxing, Fencing, Dance, Gymnastics, Acrobatics, Obstacle training, etc.
- Robot combat arena.
- Garden

Some additional uses that have been proposed and are under consideration for the site include:

- Event center
- RV park
- A recreation and fun-center with arcade games, laser tag, mini-golf, etc.
- Paint-ball arena
- Go-kart track
- A dinner theater/lounge.
- Drive-in theater

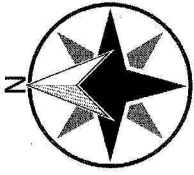
Existing structures will be repaired and restored, but other than repairing water damage and vandalism, no expansion, demolition, or heavy renovation is anticipated.

The plan is to gradually occupy the site, and allow each use to move, expand and contract as needed, and as appropriate within the larger context.

I hope that the City of Pine Bluff will allow me to "Go Forward" with my dream.

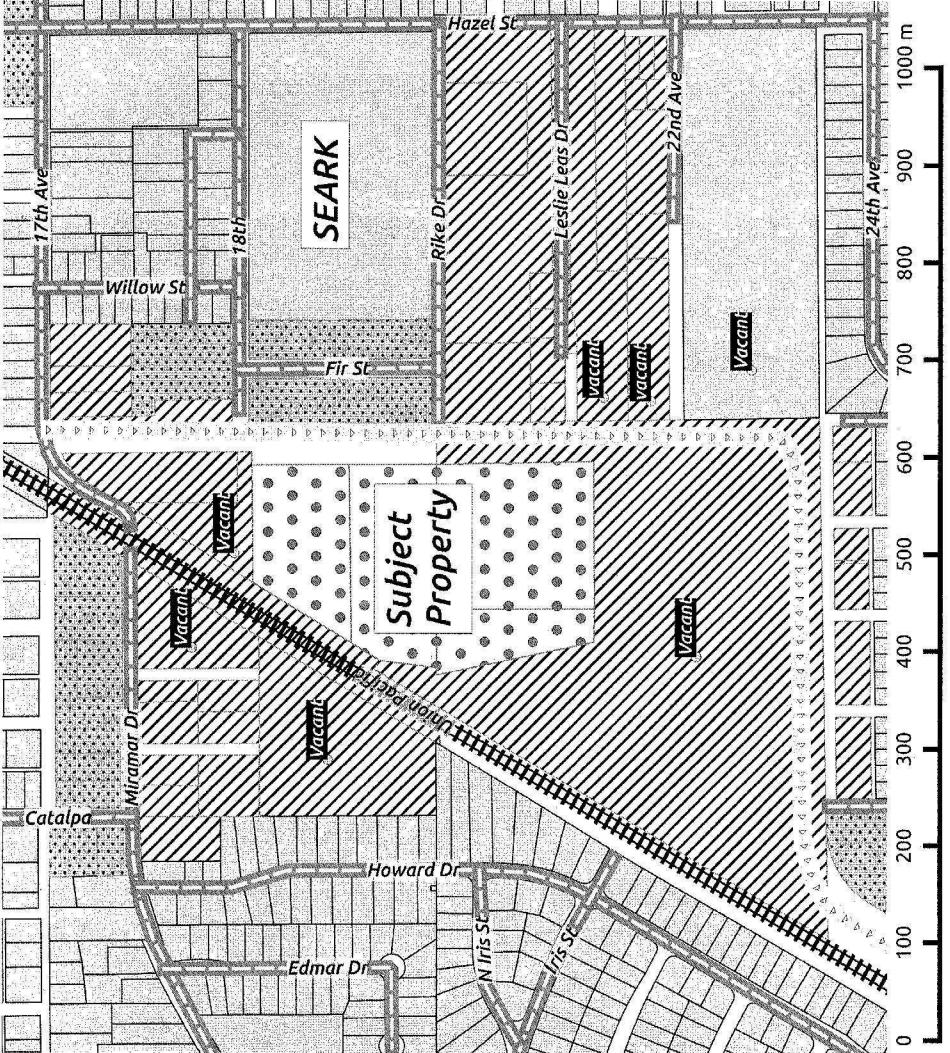
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John Fenley



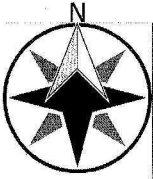
### Legend

- local\_parcel
- Industrial
- Business
- Residential
- Subject Property
- roads
- rail
- road
- canal



Created in QGIS by John Fenley May 2020  
Parcel Info from Arkansas GIS:  
dsdl.PLANNING\_CADASTRE.PARCEL\_POLYGONS

1:5000 scale

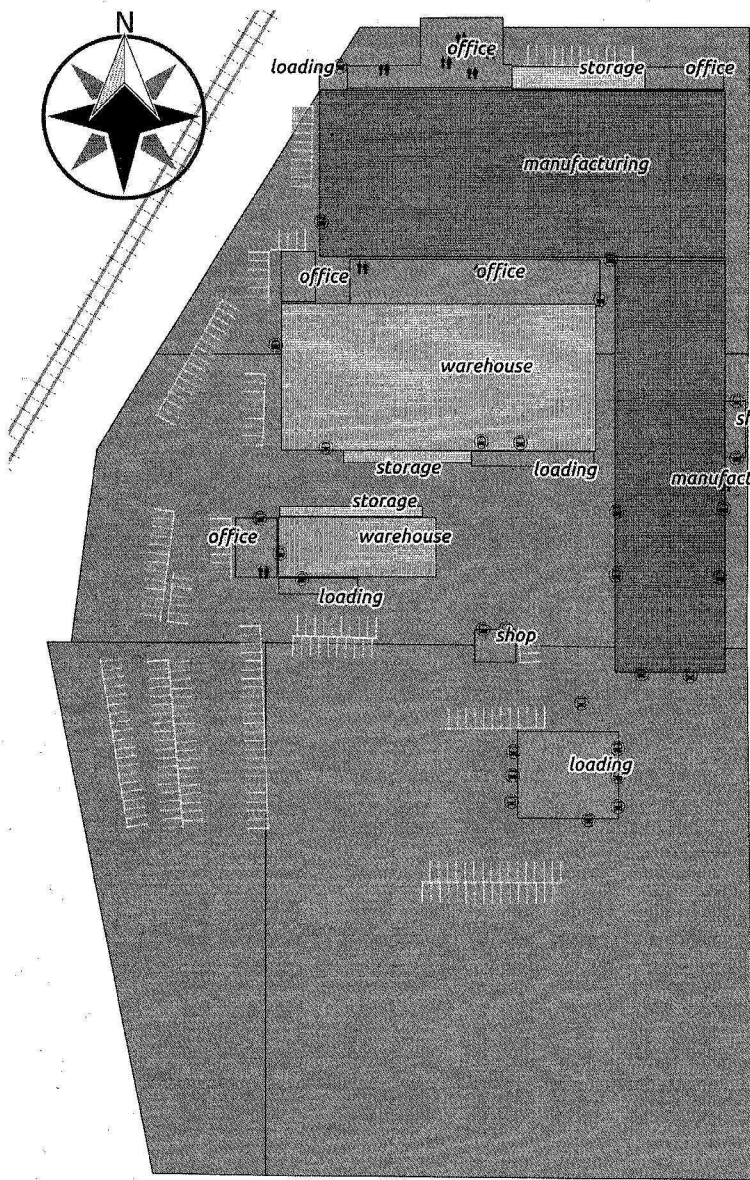


100 0 100 200 300 400 500 ft



1:1500 scale






*Created in QGIS by John Fenley May 2020  
Imagery from Arkansas GIS*



Existing structure types at 2622W 17th Ave  
Created in QGIS by John Fenley May 2020

### Legend

Previous Usage

-  loading
-  manufacturing
-  office
-  shop
-  storage
-  warehouse

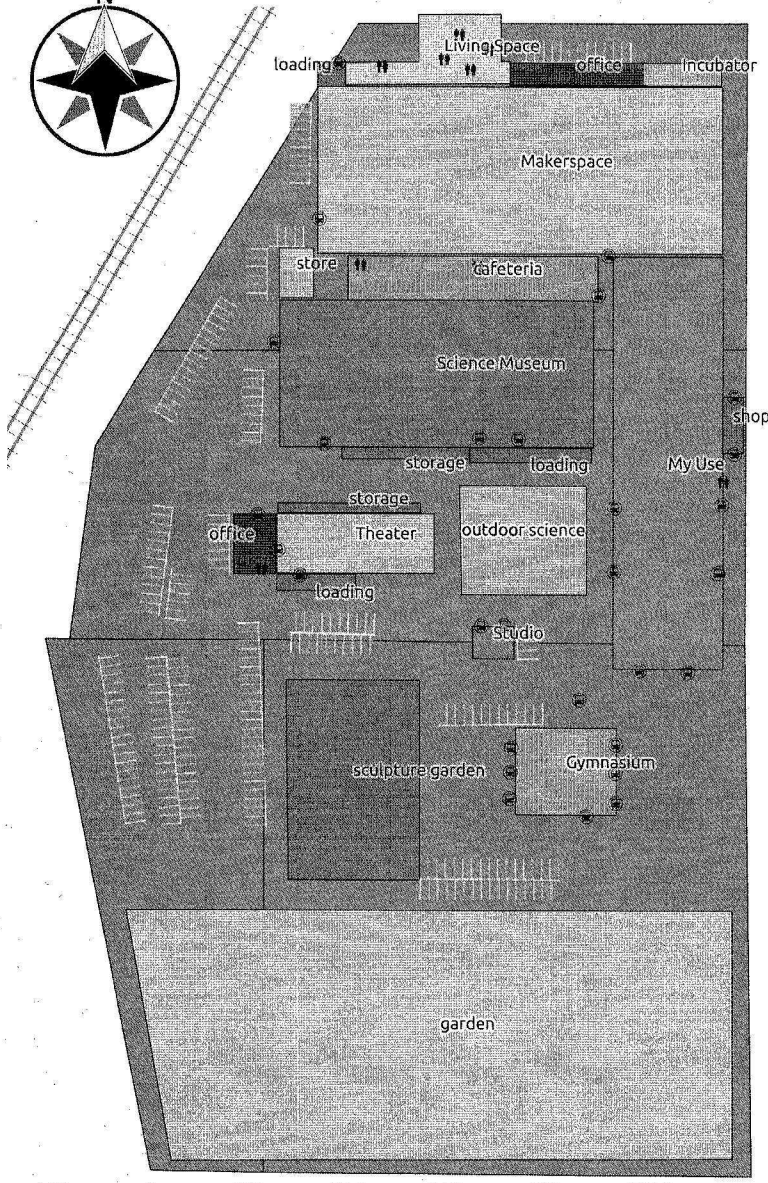
Features

-  Vehicle door
-  Restroom

100 0 100 200 300 400 500 ft



1:1500 scale



Possible Future usage map  
Created in QGIS by John Fenley May 2020

**Legend**

- Possible Usage
- cafeateria
  - garden
  - Gymnasium
  - Incubator
  - Living Space
  - loading
  - Makerspace
  - My Use
  - office
  - outdoor science
  - Science Museum
  - sculpture garden
  - shop
  - storage
  - store
  - Studio
  - Theater

100 0 100 200 300 400 500 ft

1:1500 scale