

Design plans for Renaissance Village in McDowell moving forward

By **BLAKE STOWERS**
Bluefield Daily Telegraph

WELCH — Construction could begin this spring on a long-planned teacher's village in McDowell County.

Design plans on the project are moving for-

ward, according to American Federation of Teachers President Randi Weingarten.

Weingarten said the Reconnecting McDowell executive committee is scheduled to meet on Jan. 11.

“(We’re meeting)

with our developer and building contractor to make design decisions,” Weingarten said. “That will allow us to prepare a final financing package that will hopefully lead to groundbreaking later this spring.”

Weingarten said the

Renaissance Village will be the first multi-story building to be constructed in McDowell County in 50 years.

“Its intent is to improve teacher recruitment and retention and spur economic development in the county,” Weingarten said.

“One of the biggest obstacles to filling teacher vacancies is the dearth of decent, available housing. The apartment building is expected to have about 30 units, a common area for residents, off-street

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Village...

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parking and a street-level retail shop, such as a coffee café. There will be about 30 units. We will give, obviously, first priority to teachers, but other folks are welcome to submit rental applications.”

Weingarten said there is a lot of anticipation about the project in McDowell County.

“We always want things to proceed faster than they do, but it’s very important to get all the pieces in place before we break ground,” Weingarten said. “There is so much anticipation in the county for this project, but we want to do it right.”

Weingarten said officials are still looking at cost estimates for the project.

“The Reconnecting McDowell executive committee will be looking at the cost estimates

this week to determine if it is possible to cut some costs, but we expect the project to end up in the range of \$7.5 million to \$8

million,” Weingarten said. Weingarten said officials have been told that it will take about seven to nine months from the

groundbreaking to complete the project.

— Contact Blake Stowers at bstowers@bdtonline.com

Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Early Advertising Deadlines

Publication Date

Deadline

Friday, January 13th

Wed., January 11th 12:00 pm

Saturday, January 14th

Wed., January 11th 12:00 pm

Sunday, January 15th

Thurs., January 12th 9:00 pm

Monday, January 16th

Thurs., January 12th 12:00 pm

Tuesday, January 17th

Fri., January 13th, 10:00 am

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Our offices will be closed Monday, January 16, 2017 for Martin Luther King Jr. Day

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