

County to build new community center in Brunswick

It will be the first center designed after a consulting company assessed the county's centers for older adults

By **CALEB OGILVIE**
cogilvie@newspost.com

Frederick County will turn a cornfield into a new Brunswick community center for people who are at least 50 years old.

It will replace Brunswick's current 50-plus Community Center, a small building where people have been sharing lunches, socializing and playing Wii Bowling. Carolyn True, the director for the county's Division of Aging and Independence, said during an event on Tuesday announcing the new center.

The current center is about 900 square feet, True said Friday in an interview ahead of the event. The plot of land for the new center is 13.3 acres.

"It's time for a modern, accessible and even more welcoming facility for the residents of the area," True said on Tuesday.

People used to farm corn on the land, according to True.

The county bought the property for \$800,000, county spokesperson Hope Morris wrote in an email to The Frederick News-Post.

True said in an interview af-

ter her Tuesday speech that she thinks the center will open in 2028 or 2029. Construction is set to begin in fiscal year 2028.

The county's five 50-plus Community Centers host fitness classes and recreational programs, according to a Division of Aging and Independence web page. People must fill out a form before attending their first event at one of the centers.

The announcement of a new Brunswick center comes after a consulting company assessed those centers. The consulting company, MGT, concluded the centers need to be in buildings designed to help older adults, True said on Friday.

The county published recommendations from that study after Tuesday's announcement.

In addition to a new center for Brunswick, the consulting company recommends a new center for the Walkersville and Woodsboro neighborhoods.

It also recommends renovating or redeveloping a center for the "Frederick Urban Core" and adding more capacity or building an additional center for the Ur-



Staff photo by Ric Dugan

Brunswick Mayor Nathan Brown talks about the location and details of a new Brunswick 50-plus Community Center during the announcement of the center in Brunswick on Tuesday.

bana and New Market neighborhoods, according to a summary of the study.

Brunswick's new center will be the county's first housed in a building designed for its services, said Lance Richards, an MGT director who spoke at Tuesday's announcement.

"This is the first purpose-built space in the county, so we want to make sure what we have in this space is an example of what future centers will look like," Richards said in an interview after the event.

Having a health clinic and rooms that can serve multiple

functions "are almost basic components of a strong, purpose-built space," he said.

True said the Brunswick center's features are not set in stone. The Division of Aging and Independence is looking at design options for the center, she said.

"Certainly, fitness classes are huge. Education classes are huge," she said. "But then it all goes back to what the Brunswick community is specifically looking for. I mean, that's what we've been offering in the past, but there may be other opportunities."

Mary Anne Williams, who teaches line dancing through the Brunswick center and lives in the city of Frederick, said she wants the new center to have a café and well-paved walking trails. The walking trails would help people walk easily and the café would help people socialize, Williams said.

"And then having the café is going to be really wonderful for people to associate and socialize with one another, which is hardly available at any of the other facilities here at Brunswick that they use," she said.



Staff photo by Ric Dugan

People applaud after hearing the announcement of the new 50-plus Brunswick Community Center that will be built in Brunswick.



Staff photo by Ric Dugan

Brunswick's current 50-plus Community Center will be replaced by a new center.