

# CONSTRUCTION ON APARTMENTS FOR TEACHERS TO BEGIN

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WELCH, W.Va. (WOAY) - The Reconnecting McDowell public-private partnership to revitalize schools moved forward with a groundbreaking ceremony at Renaissance Village, the centerpiece of the project.

"For McDowell County, Renaissance Village is not just about the green shoots of economic development but something more important—hope," said Welch Mayor Harold McBride. "It's been a long time since the people of Welch and McDowell County have had a reason to feel hopeful. Reconnecting McDowell's work in the schools and communities has given us a new lease on life."

Renaissance Village will be the first multistory construction in Welch in over 50 years. The building will give McDowell County teachers access to housing in a convenient location. The American Federation of Teachers says teachers have expressed interest in living closer to their workplace and students.

The building will be managed by the new nonprofit, Renaissance Village Inc. Rent has not yet been set.

Construction should take about a year and is focused in the town center. Officials hope the project will double as a revitalization opportunity for downtown Welch.

Reconnecting McDowell was launched in December 2011 as an unprecedented partnership to strengthen public education and rural communities by tackling poverty and saving the area's biggest

industries.

