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## Greene commissioners says Wal-Mart will be built

By Josh Krysak, Herald-Standard  
07/05/2005

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**FRANKLIN TWP.** - Despite some grumbling from county officials and concern from Greene County residents about the slow progress on the proposed Wal-Mart, the project is still a go, according to the county commission chairwoman.

And Pam Snyder said that, despite setbacks and delays, she hopes that gas line installation for the proposed super center will begin by the end of the month.

Snyder said the county has worked to "put the heat" on all sides involved in the development, trying to advance the project.

Officials met last week to try and iron out a final agreement between site developer Norm McHolme of McHolme Construction Co. and Wal-Mart.

"This was the first time I have been in a room face to face with someone from Wal-Mart," Snyder said.

"And I can say that I am very confident that they are coming here. The hope is that Wal-Mart will sign a final agreement very soon."

Snyder said she, like many Greene residents, is ready for the store to be built.

"This project is not just good for the local economy, but it is convenient for the Greene County people," Snyder said. "They are tired of driving to Washington and Uniontown, and this would be a great asset to them."

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McHolme could not be reached for comment on the project.

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In April, McHolme said the project remains in the hands of the lawyers on both sides, but said that aside from signatures, the deal is nearly complete.

McHolme said not all the prep work is completed at the Franklin Township site, but he added that the remaining work is minor, awaiting approval from the state Department of Environmental Protection.

According to Robbie Matesic, director of the Greene County Department of Planning and Development, the project is continuing to move forward, with the county working to upgrade roadways at the site and provide support in any way necessary.

In 2003, Wal-Mart officially committed to locate a 145,000-square-foot store in the county, just off Interstate 79.

Then construction was expected in 2004, with the store opening scheduled for this year, but battles over environmental issues at the site have set the timeline back. Now, officials are hoping for a 2006 opening.

Officials estimate that the entire development will create 500 new jobs in Greene County and increase state and local income tax revenues by \$1.57 million annually.

Officials also project another \$250,000 in annual tax revenue to the county, township and Central Greene School District from the land.

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