

Seeing Santa at Brookfield Square



Ava Lobo, 7, right, lifts her cousin Charlie Porter, 2, onto Santa's lap at Brookfield Square last month.

Photos by Mary Catanese, Special to The Freeman

Noah Biersack, six months old, hangs onto his dad, Josh. They visited Santa for a photograph at Brookfield Square.



Two-month-old Haven Wood sat with Santa as they waited for their photograph at Brookfield Square.

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Faith Rae/Freeman Staff

Shoppers wait in line at Lululemon around noon at The Corners of Brookfield, 20111 W. Bluemound Road, during the 2022 Black Friday sale.

Black Friday in Waukesha County

By Faith Rae
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WAUKESHA — Crowds of people filled the stores and cars filed in and out of shopping mall parking lots on Nov. 25 for the 2022 Black Friday sales.

According to Menards General Manager Mike Pacocha, there was already a long line at the door and people were waiting in their cars around 4:40 a.m. Menards, 2315 W. Bluemound Road, was set to open at 6 a.m. but allowed waiting customers to come in 10 minutes early.

“This year’s probably even better than last year,” said Pacocha, who added that last year was still a great turnout.

Pacocha believes Black Friday numbers are starting to make a comeback following the slow build up after the pandemic.

“It has changed over the years and seems like this year it’s back in force,” said

Pacocha.

The pandemic also changed the way Menards conducted their Black Friday sales. Last year, they started their 10-day sale which starts on Black Friday and goes until Dec. 4 with the supplies they have in stock.

By 10:30 a.m. Friday morning, Pacocha said, they were selling out of select items including shop lights, toys, grocery items and gift sets. Around 11 a.m., binoculars, a number of electronics, more toys and games, Laffy Taffy’s, sausages and holiday goods were sold out.

The store had a number of deals available and Pacocha said he was asked about nearly everything listed for sale in their store advertisement.

Shoppers and strollers

Over at The Corners of Brookfield, 20111 W Bluemound Road, small lines of customers gathered at select stores, but many

of the people strolling about were enjoying the sights and the extended holiday weekend.

“My daughter enjoys coming out, so her and I do it together,” said Kristine Kaye, who was shopping at The Corners of Brookfield with friends. Kaye and her daughter make it a tradition to go out around 9 a.m. and shop for clothes every year.

“(It’s) a fun day of shopping,” said Kaye. “Bonding with my daughter even though I’m not with her right now,” Kaye said as she laughed with friends who had come from out of town. Her daughter was waiting in line at a different store close by.

A few people were walking around downtown Waukesha on Black Friday, many of whom said they were just out for a walk. While Black Friday is a day reserved for deals and ready-to-go shoppers, many took this year to enjoy the nice weather and strolling following Thanksgiving feasts.



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Courtesy of Podcast Town Academy
The inside of Podcast Academy, 15850 W. Bluemound Road, an extension of Podcast Town, a podcast agency that started in 2016.

Podcast Town founder looking to expand business through new academy

By Faith Rae
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BROOKFIELD – Elzie Flenard, founder of Podcast Town, a podcast agency that started in 2016, has opened a podcasting academy as the newest expansion of the business.

Flenard started Podcast Town to help people find their voices, and the academy will do just that through training courses and workshops.

The Brookfield location, 15850 W. Bluemound Road, is the second location. The first studio opened in 2019 in Wauwatosa, 11220 W. Burleigh St.

Flenard said he had a desire to learn business but didn’t have an outlet to do so. The podcast started as a way for him to learn from other business entrepreneurs and pick their brains. Originally the podcast was called Enterprise Now and rebranded to Podcast Town about three years ago.

After exploring a number of different business ideas over the years, Flenard started looking for ways to make the transition from part-time to full-time entrepreneur.

“I just couldn’t get anything to work, and so the podcast was my way to bridge the gap between what I was doing and

some of the business knowledge I needed to make that transition,” said Flenard.

The academy will train people on the different aspects of podcasting.

“It’s really our way of extending the brand so that we can help other people get into podcasting,” said Flenard.

Flenard immediately fell in love with the Brookfield location. The space was laid out just the way he envisioned it. He added that Brookfield is a great location for after-school programs for youths and kids, to whom he can help teach important life lessons through podcasting.

Some of those lessons Flenard hopes to teach include how to be on time, how to be prepared, how to have a conversation, how to listen, how to gain insight from having those conversations, how to work together as a team and how to understand different roles within that team. Overall, he hopes to teach them to kids in a cool, fun and interesting way.

“I recognize that there are challenges with young people and in our community,” said Flenard. “I think part of what I can do about it is taking some of those lessons that I’ve learned and pay it forward.”

For more information, visit <https://bit.ly/3Ef07QX>.

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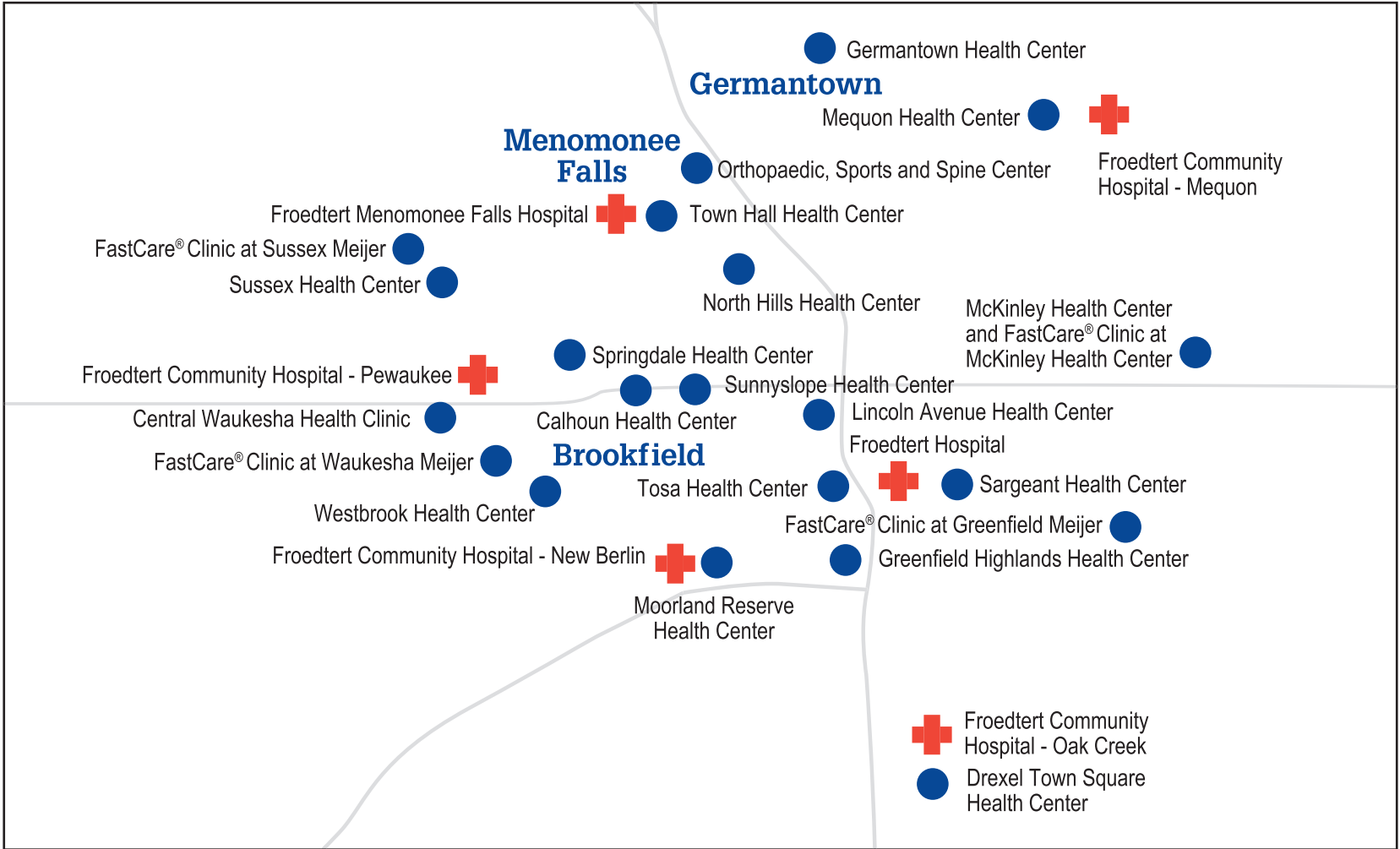
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BROOKFIELD COMMON COUNCIL

Bishops Woods workforce housing proposal approved

Council discusses affordable housing, future of development in city

By Hunter Turpin
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BROOKFIELD — After over an hour of discussion, the Brookfield Common Council last month passed three ordinances related to a mixed-use workforce housing project called the Flats at Bishops Woods over objections from neighbors and some aldermen.

Developers Lincoln Avenue Capital are proposing a four-story building with 203 one, two and three-bedroom apartment units. The proposal also includes eight live-work units, where residents can have a storefront or office attached to their apartments.

Currently occupied by two office buildings that the city has called obsolete, developers requested that the two lots at the southeast corner of Bishops Way and Bishops Lane be merged and rezoned to a Planned Development District (PDD), which is in association with their proposed redevelopment plans.

The Common Council approved the developer's preliminary concept map 8-6 at their meeting Nov. 15, sharing differing viewpoints on what type of housing should be available in Brookfield and which stakeholders they should listen to.

Workforce housing

The proposal is for workforce apartments, or housing that is for people making between 40% and 80% of the Brookfield median income—between \$43,000 and \$86,000. Developers say this is necessary as rents continue to rise in Brookfield.

Alderman Christopher Blackburn did not support the project, saying that apart-

ment buildings are essentially commercial buildings because they exist for someone else to make money off rents, unlike owner-occupied units, which are residential.

"Quite frankly, people who live in apartment buildings have rights too," Alderman Mike Hallquist said. "I don't like the sometimes majority framing that single-family home owners are the only people in this city."

But Alderman Kris Seals, who represents the district for which this project was proposed, compared this type of unit to a freebie.

"My concept to this is if you want to live in Brookfield like all of us that do live in Brookfield, you put your nose to the grindstone and live in Wauwatosa or West Allis and save that money until you can afford to live in Brookfield," Seals said.

At a public hearing in October, local business leaders and other area organizations supported the project, saying it was vital to Brookfield's economic future.

"The project would provide a supply of housing that accommodates a variety of income levels, age groups and household sizes, and would help to fulfill life cycle and local workforce housing options," said Nicole Ryt, executive director of the Waukesha County Center for Growth, at the meeting Nov. 15.

Business interest vs. neighbor interest

Most neighbors oppose the project, submitting a petition with over 100 signatures to the council. Dennis Russell spoke at the meeting on behalf of owners of the neighboring Bishops Grove Condominiums.

"Bishops Grove is a beautiful condominium project currently, and we hope we can

keep it that way," he said.

Several aldermen said they support this project because they want to help businesses with staffing problems and want to keep Brookfield a premier business destination. However, others said the concern from neighbors should be considered more.

"I don't represent the Waukesha Business Alliance, the whatever businesses are saying they love this idea," Seals said. "I don't work for them. I work for the citizens of Brookfield and the citizens that I work for don't like this building the way it stands."

Neighbors' primary concern was the height and size of the building. According to city documents, the building is about 50 feet tall, but due to the slope of the land, the building appears taller looking from the east. Other concerns include public safety, noise, traffic and infrastructure being overloaded.

"For many other reasons than just the size and the shape of the building, many of us oppose it for the stress on our community and also for safety reasons," said neighbor Peggy Hamill. "This size of a project and the intent for changing the makeup of our area is totally unacceptable."

City staff said that there will be no issues with the water supply or sewers and they don't anticipate traffic issues either, though a traffic analysis has not been completed.

Future of Brookfield

The council also discussed what type of development the city will see in its future and what type of development it should see.

City staff has maintained that this project is in line with the city's 2050 comprehensive plan, which calls for denser development in some areas.

"I thought that The Reserve (a nearby apartment building) was too big and... really diminished the quality of that portion of Bishops Woods... I thought that every one of these enormous apartment buildings was too big," Blackburn said.

He added that without a gridded street pattern and other changes in infrastructure, Brookfield can't support high density development.

"There's a reality that if you were to build out Brookfield to its capacity as planned now, that it still going to be a primarily single-family residential city, with a ration of 80-20%," Hallquist said. Most officials and residents agreed that they want to see this lot in Bishop's Woods developed, but some were concerned that if the city makes development too hard, developers will look elsewhere.



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