

5 contractors indicted
Charged with consumer-fraud
violations by prosecutor. See B3

County & Region

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W'boro welcomes construction of Ruby Tuesday to Town Center

By Melissa Hayes
BCT staff writer

mhayes@phillyburbs.com

WILLINGBORO — Local officials broke ground Friday on what is being called the "cornerstone" of the township's renaissance.

The Township Committee welcomed Ruby Tuesday as the newest addition to the Town Center development on Route 130.

The groundbreaking was ceremonial in more ways than one.

It marked the first restaurant of this type in the township. Ruby Tuesday Inc. also owns the township's first liquor license, which it purchased for \$2,500. The sale came more than 3½ years after voters approved a referendum that created six licenses in the formerly dry town.

"The committee is very, very happy that we're at this site today breaking ground for Ruby Tuesday," Mayor Jeff Ramsey said Friday. "We believe it's going to be a tremendous asset to the Route 130 corridor and the township of Willingboro."

Committeewoman Jacqueline Jennings called the restaurant the latest addition to "Willingboro's renaissance."

John Hurley Jr., regional construction director for Ruby Tuesday, said the restaurant would open in February.

He said there are 21 Ruby Tuesdays in the state, the closest ones to Willingboro being the Hamilton Marketplace location and the soon-to-open Toms River location.

The Willingboro Ruby Tuesday will be 4,900 square feet and have 188 seats.

Hurley said every location is hand-picked by Sandy Beall, the founder and chief executive officer.

"That's a big deal," he said.

Committeeman Paul Stephenson said the Town Center has come a long way over the past few years.

The Town Center, formerly known as Willingboro Plaza, was the highlight of the county's stretch of Route 130 in the 1960s and 1970s until stores began to close. The space remained vacant for 20 years, Stephenson said.

"From what this used to be

to what it is now, is really something," he said.

Ramsey called the restaurant the cornerstone of the development, which is fitting since the project architect is Cornerstone of Bethlehem, Pa.

The committee said the restaurant is only the beginning of what's to come.

"We're just getting started with redevelopment," Committeeman Jim Ayer said.