

# The METROWEST DAILY NEWS

## New police substation a boost for downtown Framingham

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*Framingham Chief of Police Kenneth Ferguson talks with SMOC Executive Director Jim Cuddy as Framingham holds grand opening at downtown's new Burkis Square Community Police Substation. The substation will share office space at 75 Hollis St. with Framingham Downtown Renaissance. The space was donated by the South Middlesex Opportunity Council. Daily News Staff Photo / Allan Jung*

FRAMINGHAM - Community leaders celebrated the grand opening of the Burkis Square police substation on Hollis Street Wednesday, hailing it as another step toward downtown's revitalization.

"As you can see, the implementation of a police substation is much more than a police initiative: It's a community initiative," Police Chief Ken Ferguson told a crowd of officers, Town Meeting members, downtown business owners and other community partners who gathered outside 75 Hollis St.

The substation, just south of the railroad tracks, allows the department to step up its community policing and strengthen its relationships within the town, Ferguson said.

Police are sharing the cozy storefront office space with Framingham Downtown Renaissance, whose executive director Holli Andrews is thrilled with the chance to work more closely with officers on the downtown beat.

"We're going places," Andrews told the crowd, which filled up the sidewalk and spilled onto the street. "This is the comeback of downtown Framingham and we are all a part of it."

The South Middlesex Opportunity Council donated the space, which is across from Tesoro Supermarket. SMOC will continue to use the upstairs stories to house single adults in its recovery programs, Planning Director Jerry Desilets said.

With the Burkis Square substation, less than a half-mile from headquarters, Framingham Police now have three branch posts, with the others at the Pelham Apartments and in the Tripoli neighborhood on Waverly Street.

Ferguson said he hopes to open a fourth substation on the Rte. 9 corridor.

Before cutting a red ribbon out front, Selectman Cheryl Tully Stoll told the crowd the new substation really helps support downtown's resurgence. She said she sees the revitalization efforts really taking off.

"I've been eating, dining and coming here for several years to shop and recreate and I come down here for selectman business," Tully Stoll said. "Every time I come down I discover something new and I encourage everybody else in Framingham to come down here and discover what we have in the gem that is downtown Framingham."

Mirna Polanco, owner of Pupusas y Tacos Dona Sofia at 40 Concord St., attended Wednesday's ceremony, is glad about a greater police presence.

"You feel more secure," she said. Polanco said police "keep everything in control" and the sense of security should help bring more people downtown.

"That's what we're hoping for, that it's going to be more fun to be around Framingham downtown," she said.

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