

# Housing coming to Seco, UZ, Neon and elsewhere

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bile homes placed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. HOMES Inc. has since placed permanent block foundations, built steps up the porches, changed some of the siding and placed solar panels. Eight “stick-built” homes are also being built, and all are either complete or nearing completion.

All the houses at Thompson Branch are using rooftop solar panels to achieve “net zero,” meaning they are capable to producing as much

energy as they use.

The complete plan calls for townhouses, single-family homes, duplexes and apartments in locations around Letcher County. In addition to the ten houses at Marlowe, HOMES intends to build 19 apartments inside the old Fleming-Neon High School, 12 single-family houses at Thornton, 12 single family home at UZ, 26 townhouses at Seco, 48 two-story townhouses and eight single story apartments on Town Hill in Whitesburg. The Town Hill

site will likely be the farthest in the future because of the need for water, sewer, a road, and other infrastructure to the mountaintop site. The work does not include houses HOMES will help build in surrounding counties, or the houses it could build on the Grand View subdivision in Jenkins, where another 350 homes are planned on an old strip mine off US 23.

More than 60 of the new homes will be multi-family rental units, something Long called “a heavy lift.”

# Parents: Keep our school

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grade, 23 in second, 25 in third, 23 in fourth, 33 in fifth, 24 in sixth, 37 in seventh, and 38 in eighth. District 2 Magistrate Kenny Anderson, whose son attended Arlie Boggs and whose granddaughter will likely attend it if it is still open, questioned whether all the people employed at the school would be “out of a job” if the school closes.

Yonts said they would not. The teachers would transfer to Cowan Elementary with the students, and there are enough openings for the classified employees as well.

“There’s all kinds of things we need to look at before you do these things. These little community schools actually (teach) these kids,” he said. “I know firsthand. I had two that went to Whitesburg that couldn’t write their name, and I think that’s bad.”

Mendy Boggs, who served on the Board of Education for

12 years, apologized to parents, saying she felt like she didn’t fight hard enough as a board member. Enrollment is down from around 3,600 to 2,300 now. It is a financial stretch, but she said, “We have money to keep the old vocational school going for years for three sports teams to practice.

“Our kids have been through, for lack of a better word, hell for the last few years,” she said, citing COVID-19 in 2020, and the flood of 2022 less than a year after school went back in session.

When they returned to school again, a bus with more than 20 students onboard was hit by a tractor trailer on KY 932 and rolled over the hill. There was one serious injury, and a few weeks later a bus carrying the same students tilted on to its side in a ditch when the driver dodged another tractor trailer on US 119.

Over the course of the two-

hour meeting, parents, teachers, and current and former county officials came to the podium to speak out against closing the school.

Only two current school board members could attend because of a state law that says anytime a majority of members meet together, a special meeting must be called and public notice given at least 24 hours in advance.

Board Chairman Robert Kiser attended the meeting, along with Angie Miranda Holbrook, who took office as a school board member in January and represents the Cumberland River area.

Holbrook taught at Arlie Boggs, and at 60 years old, she said she spent 28 years there. She assured those present that no matter what the rest of the board does, she has made up her mind.

“I am not going to vote to shut my school down,” she said.

# If you meet these rules, you can drive your ATV on roads

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allowing that on Monday.

The new law would allow people over the age of 16 to drive the vehicles on two-lane highways, as long as they are street legal, registered, insured, and do not travel more than 20 miles on a road with a center line. The law takes effect June 27.

Special purpose vehicles include ATVs, UTVs, mini-trucks, pneumatic-tired military vehicles and full-size special purpose-built vehicles. Low-speed vehicles as defined by state law are not included.

In order to ride the vehicle on the highway, they must have the following equipment:

- One or more headlamps
- One or more tail lamps
- One or more brake lamps
- A tail lamp or other lamp constructed and placed to illuminate the registration plate with a white light
- One or more red reflectors on the rear of the vehicle
- An amber electric turn system, one on each side of the front of the vehicle
- Amber or red electric turn signals on the rear of the vehicle
- A braking system, other than a parking brake
- A horn or other warning device
- A working muffler
- Rearview mirrors on the right and left side of the driver
- A windshield, unless the operator of the vehicle wears eye protection while operating the vehicle
- A speedometer, illuminated for nighttime operation
- A roll bar or roll cage

- For multi-passenger vehicles a seatbelt assembly that conforms to the federal motor vehicle safety standard for each designated seating position
- Tires that have at least 2/32<sup>nd</sup> of an inch or greater tire tread

The county ordinance is aimed at making the county friendly to tourists who travel hundreds of miles to ride ATVs and UTVs in the mountains.

In the same meeting, the court approved an interlocal agreement with First Frontier Appalachian Trails part of the Kentucky Mountain Regional Recreation Authority. There are currently trails in 18 counties in Kentucky, and the agreement allows the county partner with First Frontiers to connect trails within the state and to other states. First Frontiers also has liability insurance for the trails.

Tim Whitehead, a community trail development coordinator for First Frontier, said West Virginia’s Hatfield and McCoy trail brought in \$42 million, and Kentucky wants to create something similar. The Spearhead Trail in Coeburn, Virginia, is a standalone trail, but the Hatfield and McCoy trail is a system of trails.

“Hatfield and McCoy is different – it’s all tied together,” he said.

Offroad vehicles might need to get on public highways to move from one trail to the next, and that’s. why Whitehead said it is important for Letcher County to pass ordinance allowing them to be made street legal. He said

if the drivers obey the new law, they’re welcome. He said drivers will also have to obey traffic laws, noting that some people like to “pop a can” of beer when they ride.

“If they do that on the highway, they need to make an example of them,” Whitehead said.

Judge/Executive Terry Adams said ATVs can’t run forever through the woods, and allowing the vehicles on the highway will make it easier for them to spend money in the community.

“Those people buy gas and groceries,” he said.

# Hotel plan boosted

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60 by 160 feet with four floors, including the full basement. When it was opened the weekend of July 4, 1920, the Daniel Boone Hotel had cost about \$100,000 to build and furnish — about \$1.2 million in today’s dollars, a bargain-basement cost by modern standards. Stabilization of the building alone, begun in August 2019 and completed in early 2020, cost more than \$1 million.

At the time the Daniel Boone was built, it was a first-class hotel in a town that still had dirt streets and farm animals in downtown. In addition to rooms to rent, it featured a banquet room where many weddings and meetings were held, a café, a barbershop and several offices. An open atrium allowed sunlight from a skylight to reach to the bottom floor. That skylight was eventu-

ally the literal downfall of the building. Part of the glass in the skylight was broken and allowed water into the building, damaging three wooden floors below it. The roof and all three floors eventually collapsed into the basement.

The hotel operations ceased in the 1970s. Mountain Comprehensive Health Corporation used it for its first clinic beginning in 1976, and the county rented it as a temporary courthouse from 1997 through 1998 while the 1964 courthouse just down the street was being renovated.

The building at empty for a number of years until the Dawahare family gave it to the city in 2009, and it has been unoccupied ever since.

The city awarded bids for that first project to SSRG of Cincinnati. That company removed the debris and the damaged parts of the building and built a new structure

inside the century-old brick walls, including structural members, three new floors, a new roof, and an elevator shaft.

SSRG has been involved in many of the historic renovations in the Over-The-Rhine District in Cincinnati, one of the largest historic districts in the country with 1,200 buildings built mostly between 1865 and the 1880s.

The Daniel Boone Hotel is in the heart of the Downtown Whitesburg Historic District, where there are about 83 historic buildings built between 1896 and 1964.

The existing plans, laid out by now retired architect Bill Richardson, called for 42 rooms and a rooftop penthouse, complete with outdoor patio, and a first-floor retail space. Those plans were preliminary. A new architect or engineer will need to be hired to do the final design.

## Letcher County Democratic Party

### SATURDAY, MAY 3 10:00 A.M.

#### LETCHER COUNTY COURTHOUSE CIRCUIT COURT ROOM (2<sup>ND</sup> FLOOR)

- Party Meeting
- Precinct Elections
- County Convention

#### ALL REGISTERED DEMOCRATS ARE STRONGLY ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND

KENTUCKY DEMOCRATS



## Step Back in Time



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## PRESCHOOL, HEAD START, KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION 2025/2026

### Registration Schedule:

8:00am-4:30pm

- April 22 & 23, 2025- Jeremiah Missionary Baptist Church
- April 24 & 25, 2025- Neon Church of God
- April 29 & 30, 2025, May 1 & 2, 2025-Whitesburg First Baptist Church

**Parents/Guardians: Our Kindergarten, Preschool, & Headstart Screening**  
Registration is open for any child that will be 3, 4, or 5 by August 1.

**Important things to know:**

- You must visit the Letcher County Public Schools website; @ www.letcher.kyschools.us and complete the online pre-registration form.
- Once pre-registered, someone from Central Office will call you and set-up the appointment date/time.
- Appointments will be set 30 minutes apart, please be on time for your appointment.
- We will be conducting Hearing, Vision, Speech, and Developmental screenings, so please bring your child.

**INTERESTED IN EARLY KINDERGARTEN ADMITTANCE?**  
If your child does not turn 5 by August 1, 2025 and you would like them to enter Kindergarten early, they will be required to take assessments, and must pass all assessment areas. You will need to notify the school principal by April 15, 2025 in order to apply for early admittance.

For more information contact:  
Regina Brown  
Director of Special Ed and Preschool  
606-633-4455

### Letcher County Public Schools



Parents please bring the following documents for your appointment:

- Your child’s certified birth certificate
- Custody Papers if applicable
- Social security card—Kindergarten Students Only
- Immunization certificate (Must be Current)
- Two proofs of residency (acceptable forms of residency; utility bill, insurance statement, cable, etc. within the last 3 months)
- Proof of Income (acceptable forms of income; Check Stub, Front page of an Income tax return, Benefit Award letter, etc.)
- KY Eye exam
- KY Physical exam
- Dental Exam—Kindergarten Students Only

Dental Screenings will be available at registration