



PHOTOS BY MICHAEL MCARDLE/POST-TRIBUNE

John Nelson of Lowell helps construct the dining room Wednesday at Pines Village in Valparaiso.

## Meetings ease construction

■ Pines Village residents grateful for chance to discuss expansion.

By AMY LAVALLEY  
Post-Tribune correspondent

VALPARAISO — The sounds of hammers, jackhammers and other tools nearly drowned out a weekly meeting with Pines Village Retirement Communities residents Wednesday morning.

But they're used to it. Construction on a \$10.5 million renovation and expansion of the independent living facility, as well as renovation of an assisted living facility, started a year ago and will be complete in October. The Pines is located at 3303 Pines Circle, off Calumet Avenue on the city's north side.

The 25,000-square-foot addition will provide more program and community space, including an expanded dining area and updated kitchen, and spaces for fitness, massage and physical therapy, and even an art gallery, with new

exhibits each month.

"It's really exciting for us to be doing this at a time when the community is renovating," said Cherylene Frankenberg, construction liaison for the Pines, referring to the new Valparaiso Family YMCA and shops at nearby Cumberland Crossing. "We felt it was a good time to be a part of this." The weekly construction updates started five months ahead of the actual work, to inform residents of the coming changes and get their input as the plans moved forward.

Several of the residents at Wednesday's meeting had a copy of the plans with them, including Louis Foster, who moved into the independent living facility with his wife in December.

"I like to look at the plans," he said, adding a question he had that was asked by one of the other residents — about whether the boards on the new balconies would be stained — was answered.

Trudy Schaefer, who's lived at the Pines for 2 1/2 years, said residents are looking forward to the finished project, which, in addition to more space, will give the interior and exterior of the facility a more residential feel.

She also appreciates the weekly meetings.

"I think it's so important

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For more on Pines Village Retirement Communities, check out [www.pinesvillage.org](http://www.pinesvillage.org) or call 465-1591.

because I like to include the residents in what's going on," she said. "We're a curious bunch."

Almost 30 of the facility's 160 residents attended the most recent meeting, where Frankenberg included updates on the renovation and brought answers to questions residents had last week, like whether they could have bird feeders on their balconies or patios.

The meetings have been key in easing the usual dust and noise that comes with such a project.

"When you're building a building around 160 residents whose average age is 87, they've done really well," Frankenberg said.



Frankenberg