

The 'King' has arrived

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Business and political leaders along with volunteer firemen gathered at one of the busiest places in Dunkirk Tuesday afternoon, Aug. 27 to hail the "King." Southern Maryland's newest Burger King opened last week in the north Calvert town. The Calvert County Commissioners presided over a ribbon-cutting ceremony and offered their wishes for success. Commissioner Evan K. Slaughenhaupt Jr. [R], a Dunkirk resident, congratulated the duo who own and operate seven other Burger King restaurants in Southern Maryland. Slaughenhaupt noted Tom Saia Jr. and Bill Neblett are hoping to identify another Burger King location in Calvert.

"You give me the zoning and I'll open it," Neblett shouted.

"It only took us 34 years to get here," Saia joked.

Later, Saia explained that the partners would like to find a location in Prince Frederick for another Burger King. One issue that has dogged their efforts has been Calvert's regulations on drive-up windows.

The Dunkirk Burger King is located in a building on a pad site previously occupied by Arby's. When that store closed, the property owners, Marrick Properties, sought a name-brand chain to take over occupancy.

"We looked for someone with real credibility," said Rick Bailey of Marrick.

"We did the demographics, we believe there's a need here," said Saia.

As for converting the Arby's into a Burger King, Saia remarked, "We certainly had to work within the constraints."

Sporting a shirt that read "The King has Arrived," Saia, with large scissors in hand, cut the ceremonial ribbon.

Whether it was by coincidence or design, when the ribbon was finally chopped in half, the sirens on the trucks from the Dunkirk Volunteer Fire Department sounded, signaling in a new era of quick service food for Calvert's northern area.

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