

RANDY BORST/Staff photographer

This view looks northwest at Hillside Elementary.

## On schedule

### Hillside fall opening looks like a go

By Casey Hane  
staff writer

Farmington Public Schools are working hard to complete the new, 77,000-square-foot Hillside Elementary School so classes can begin on time at the westside site. "Each day is, literally, a jewel," said Flanagan, in describing the importance time has in the building project, slated for completion Aug. 17. Flanagan said he is confident in project management reports, which say the building, on 11 Mile just east of Halsted in Farmington Hills, will be done for the opening of school this fall.

Officials have worked on a tight timeline since the January 1989 bond election, in which they were given voter approval to build the school.

"I'm pleased with what's happening so far this year," said trustee James Abernethy, who heads the board's Building and Site Committee and visits the site regularly.

"I see a very good effort being put forth. For another month, we're pretty much at the mercy of the weather." "It's going to be very tight — we're doing what we can."

AS MASONRY and steel form what will be the new Hillside building, officials and parents anxiously await what will be at the school's core.

A curriculum proposal for the new, 650-student capacity elementary school is expected to be presented to Farmington school trustees during a public committee meeting March 6, prior to the regular board meeting. Flanagan said additional time for comment and any formal action would occur at the March 20 board meeting.

Hillside is being built on an 11-acre parcel on the south side of 11 Mile. It will cost \$7.7 million for the

building, furnishings, administrative costs and school playground equipment. The building will include early childhood-level learning and play areas on the east, academic classroom areas in the center and a grouping of cafeteria, gymnasium and school playground to the west.

In a Feb. 20 report to the board, contract managers McCarthy and Smith and E & V Inc. reported that good January weather made up for time problems in December, when a cold snap brought work to a halt. Of 20 available work days, crews worked 15 regular days, plus three Saturdays.

ALTHOUGH STORMS in February also shut down the project for several days, "measures are being taken to resolve this issue," according to a written Feb. 20 construction update.

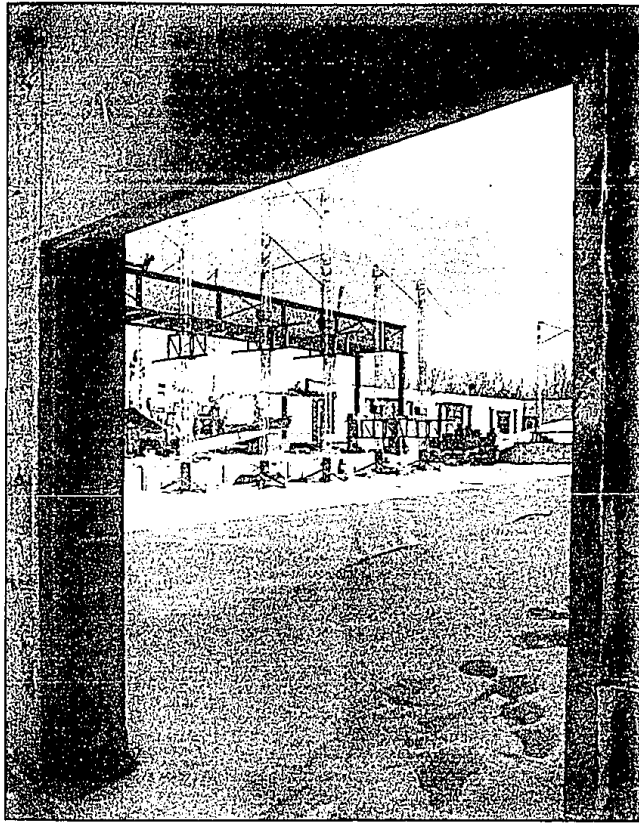
By the end of February, contractors were expected to complete some floor pouring, enclosures and roofing and steel erector of the second floor system.

Flanagan said he has a tentative contingency plan in case the building is not completed, but "we purposely haven't spent a lot of time on it. We should know by the end of the school year if we don't have a chance to make it."

Contingency plans would include adding portables, already on order, to those schools which have students attending Hillside, keeping new classes and teachers together until they could be moved to the new building.

Some 553 students currently attending Flanders, Forest, Beechview and Longacre elementary schools will go to the new school, putting the building at 85 percent of its capacity and allowing for future growth.

Current fourth graders in the Hillside boundary area, of which there are 76, can opt to stay at their current school next fall if they provide their own transportation.



This view looks northeast from the rear of Hillside Elementary.

## police/fire calls

Listed below are some of the Farmington-area police incidents, fire calls and court cases reported during the past week:

### ● stolen car

An 18-year-old Sterling Heights man in a stolen car took Farmington police on a high-speed chase along Grand River last week. The car eventually landed in a ditch and he was arrested.

According to a Farmington Department of Public Safety report:

On Feb. 28 at 9:10 p.m., officer Vincent Ziegler noticed a man in a 1990 Dodge Daytona accelerating abruptly. Ziegler pursued the car near the Prospect/Shiawassee area.

When Ziegler tried to pull over the driver, he accelerated onto east-bound Grand River. The pursuit continued past Orchard Lake Road, then Nine Mile.

As the driver approached the curve at Haynes, his car struck the curb and he lost control. The car wound up in a ditch.

The car is owned by Sterling Heights Dodge, where the arrested man was employed until about one week ago. He told police he had stolen it from the lot three weeks ago and had "treated it as if it were my own."

The man and his passenger told police they had just left a religious youth bible meeting in Farmington Hills.

Police are seeking warrants charging the man with fleeing and eluding and possessing stolen property over \$100.

### ● concealed weapon

A 23-year-old Farmington Hills man was arrested Feb. 28 after a traffic stop in Farmington, during which a double-edged knife was found in his car visor.

According to a Farmington Department of Public Safety report, officer Tony Gubacz stopped a man after he turned right on red at a prohibited intersection. Gubacz spotted the seven-inch knife clipped to the driver's sun visor.

Officers will seek a warrant charging the man with carrying a concealed weapon.

### ● internal probe

A 42-year-old employee of Arbor Drugs in downtown Farmington was arrested last week after a surveillance regarding cash and merchandise imbalances in store records.

The employee is a resident of Farmington.

Farmington public safety officers were contacted by internal store security after an internal investigation in which \$800 to \$1,000 was missing and stock and cash intakes for February were not balancing.

According to the public safety report, it was discovered that a certain employee had made "no sale" entries into the register, at times making up to 35 in one day.

### ● cars attacked

A 26-year-old Taylor man south-bound on Orchard Lake Road told Farmington Hills police a potato thrown from the woods near Oak-

land Drive shattered the windshield of his van at 2:15 p.m. Wednesday. He was not hurt.

BBs or pellets were fired into windows of 15 vehicles parked on Ashley, Doreen, Tredwell, Ontaga, Tuck and Stockton in Farmington Hills late Wednesday. Total damage topped \$2,000.

### ● man flees

A man who Farmington Hills police believe was intoxicated eluded arrest early Friday.

According to the police report:

At 2:25 a.m., officers came upon a parked but running car at Independence and Jefferson. When they pulled alongside to check on the driver's welfare, he got out.

Noticing he appeared intoxicated, officers asked him where he lived and he pointed to a nearby house. The man then walked toward the house.

The officers left but returned within a minute to make sure he hadn't gotten back into the car. As they arrived, they saw the car leaving, then accelerating on Jefferson.

The man pulled into a driveway on the 21400 block of Jefferson, bailed out, ran into a back yard and hopped two fences.

Officers lost his trail but impounded his car. They will seek a warrant charging a 38-year-old Southfield man with fleeing and eluding.

### ● thefts reported

Jewelry valued at \$2,275 was reported stolen from a house on Erie, Farmington Hills, Feb. 12-26.

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## Dwyer is Detroit grand jury witness

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"I don't feel it's appropriate to comment on the content of my testimony," Dwyer said. "I'm cooperating with the grand jury. I've answered them truthfully."

The grand jury is investigating the Detroit Police Department and its secret service fund, which is used for undercover drug operations, including paying informants and making drug buys. The jury will determine whether there is reasonable cause to believe that money was illegally diverted from the fund.

The probe centers around former civilian Deputy Police Chief Kenneth Welner. It is expected to go back 10 or more years into activities in the Detroit Police Department, according to news reports. In court testimony, FBI agents have said they believe \$1.2 million was diverted from the secret service fund to dummy corporations controlled by Welner.

OTHER KEY people, both past and current employees of the Detroit Police Department, have been called to testify as witnesses. FBI sources would not say how many had been called or give any information about the probe.

"We can't give that kind of information out," said spokesman Hank Glaspele of the FBI in Detroit. "The law enforcement agency cannot make public any information. We can't release it."

A grand jury is convened at the request of prosecutors to evaluate evidence and to determine whether a bill of indictment, or a formal charge, is warranted.

In related actions, the Detroit City Council voted Wednesday to subpoena police records of the secret service fund, and a separate drug forfeiture fund. Wayne County Prosecutor John O'Hair also asked to see records for both funds, citing Freedom of Information regulations.

"I want to know what every dime was spent for," O'Hair said.

Detroit Mayor Coleman Young said the controversy raised by the federal investigations is crippling the city government. "It certainly doesn't help the city," he said. "I think it's being carried to an excess now."

The Associated Press contributed to this story.