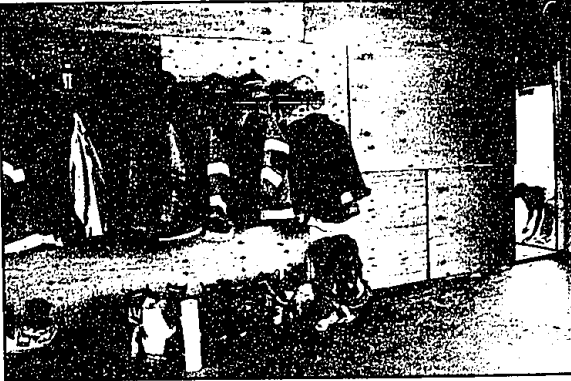


On paper:  
An artist's  
rendering  
shows how  
Farmington  
Hills' Fire Station 2 will  
look from the outside  
after expansion.

Under construction: Firefighter gear hangs from a temporary wall put up during the expansion. Rob Provalenko (right) removes fixtures from the soon-to-be-demolished section.



## Hot project

### Station 2 building expansion fires up

BY BILL COUTANT

**F**armington Hills officials expect the wait for an expanded fire station 2 to be worth it. Mayor Larry Lichtman, City Manager Bill Costick and Fire Chief Richard Marinucci were among several officials who attended a ground-breaking ceremony at the station on Middlebelt north of

12 Mile Road Monday.

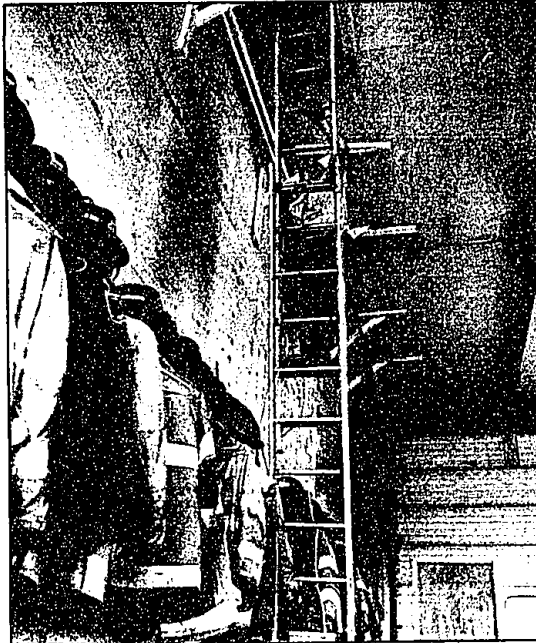
"It's been about three years since we first began on this project," Costick said. "We were able to expand the frontage on this narrow parcel and swap land in back to make it work."

The expansion, for the city's second busiest station, will provide a third bay for fire trucks and equipment while adding space for offices and training facilities. The station will more than double in size, to 7,800

square feet with the 4,300-square-foot addition.

The project should be finished within six months, Marinucci said. The expansion follows improvements to Station 3 in the southeast corner of the city and will help the department, which relies heavily on paid-on-call firefighters, to maintain a high level of service, Lichtman said.

"This will help us remain one of the most cost efficient fire departments in our area," Lichtman said.



STAFF PHOTO BY ANN HEALY

Getting up: Mario Picano of Approved Plumbing works on the pipes above the bays of Station 2 in Farmington Hills.

## Hills looking for ways to see more green, less red at center

BY BILL COUTANT

**T**he euphoria of Farmington Hills' acquisition of the Mercy Center has given way to the less lofty pursuits of its day-to-day operations and how best to budget for it.

City council members crunched the numbers at a study session Monday and discussed future uses, policies and even a new name for the facility.

The council members agreed that if at all possible, any excess revenues from Mercy senior programs or other events should go toward paying back the \$4 million the city borrowed through a bond issue to buy and renovate the 27-acre property.

"We have a projected excess of \$1.2 million over five years," said councilman Terry Sever. "I'm concerned that it does not reduce

the debt."

City finance director Charles Roach said the Mercy bond issue had no call feature, which allows early debt retirement. Any excess could be earmarked toward debt retirement and still be used in case of an emergency, such as major repairs, he said.

Councilman Jon Grant agreed with Sever that paying down the debt and making the facility pay for itself sooner was the best course.

City manager Bill Costick cautioned that because the city was changing from being a renter to the owner of the facility, the numbers would change. While the city will save rent, projected at \$234,333 this fiscal year, it will take over the operation, maintenance and other costs it did not have in previous years.

Mayor Larry Lichtman said narrowing down program costs

will be easier as the city sets policies and procedures during the coming months.

"That's going to have an impact on the budget," he said.

Costick said he doesn't see the budget being far off of projections. Council members also discussed what areas of the building will be used for what purpose. Dan Potter, director of special services, discussed areas where the center will likely continue in the same use, such as the kitchen and Killarney Hall for the senior programs. Several other areas will have multiple uses.

Council members also discussed what policies they should adopt for renting parts of the facility. Grant said he did not want the facility to compete unfairly with private businesses and hotels.

The council also discussed a new name for the center.

## No quorum: DDA's meeting postponed because of absences

BY LARRY O'CONNOR

**T**he Downtown Development Authority postponed Tuesday's meeting because so few members were on hand.

Four board members turned out for the monthly 8 a.m. meeting along with DDA executive director Judy Downey and assistant city manager Robert Schultz.

That's one member short of a quorum for the nine-member board.

The meeting has been rescheduled to 8 a.m. Tuesday, April 12, in Farmington City Council chambers.

"This is the first time this has happened in the seven years of ex-

istence of the DDA," Schultz said.

The number of residents in attendance nearly equaled board members. The Masonic Temple sign was expected to be a topic of discussion during public comment.

Several residents have complained to the Observer about the sign, which was part of the DDA's overall renovation of the northwest corner of Grand River and Farmington road. The Kelly green sign includes a frog, butterfly and grasshopper in a marsh setting to call attention to the historic Masonic Temple.

Other items on the agenda in-

cluded the executive director's report and consideration of convening the DDA board to discuss a real estate purchase.

Board members present included president Robert Fitzpatrick, Craig Grace, Ron Oglesby and Jody Soronen. Absent were Robert Heinrich, Michele Jakacki, Frank Lauboff, Nadine Rafferty and William Ray.

Former DDA member and Civic Theater owner Greg Hohler suggested another constructive way board members present could spend their morning.

"Since you're not doing anything, you can come over and clean the theater," Hohler said.

## "So That The Dove May Soar..."

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Reverend Malcolm Carnov



Rabbi M. Robert Syme

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Hyatt Regency Dearborn  
Cocktails, 6:00 p.m.—Award Ceremony, 7:00 p.m.  
Dinner Following\*



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Alan Ackerman & Frank D. Stella  
Honorary Chairpersons  
Maurice Cohen  
Rev. Dr. Mark P. Jensen  
Most Rev. Adam J. Maida  
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\*We're pleased to announce that the entire dinner will be handled under the supervision of Mrs. Paul Kubes of Quality Kube Catering.  
Five market value is \$15 for each person in attendance. Remaining value amount is tax deductible as allowed by law.