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SPORTS, 8A

SWING AWAY

PREP GIRLS GOLF AND
BOYS TENNIS SQUADS
BATTLE FOR STATE TITLES

Shelby Township police station construction nearing final leg

BY BRAD D. BATES
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SHELBY TOWNSHIP — A project nearly five years in the making is set to come to fruition in February 2012.

The new Shelby Township police station, which will be located on the township's municipal grounds, is nearing the end of its

exterior construction and is slated to be ready for the department to move into early next year.

"It is slightly behind schedule, but it's looking like February at this point," Shelby Township Building Director Tim Wood said of the building's completion. "It was a rainy spring, and the masonry took longer than expected."

The \$4 million project was

funded entirely from the department's general fund but has undergone numerous changes since the Board of Trustees OK'd its earliest incarnation Jan. 2, 2007.

The board originally approved plans for a \$20 million "justice center" that would have housed the Police Department and a new facility for the 41-A District Court.

The entire plan was placed on

hold June 17, 2008, with concerns regarding the township's general fund and forecasts that the costs of construction and maintenance would be too much of a burden.

The plan was placed back on the table without the court, and the official groundbreaking on the \$4 million station occurred March 2, 2011.

See STATION on page 12A



Apple fever

Celebrate Michigan's largest fruit crop during a han-

Station

from page 1A

But its roots date as far back as 2001, when then-new and now-former Police Chief Robert Leman made moving the department from the basement of the township building to its own facility a top priority.

“It’s something that they’ve been looking forward to for several years,” Shelby Township Police Lt. Stan Muszynski said of the department’s anticipation level. “So it’s exciting to see it come together.”

Exterior construction is slated to finish up by the end of November and work will move inside.

“Over the next month they will put in asphalt parking and curbing, and close in on the exterior,” Wood said.

“Those exterior shell items should be complete in four to six weeks. Once you do that, the weather, which has been a big factor, becomes less of a factor.”

Interior work should take a little longer than what is usual for most projects given the complex systems used by the Police Department, but Wood feels the construction can adhere to a timely schedule all the same.

“The Police Department has quite a few sophisticated systems with 911 and radio controls and

security cameras,” Wood said. “Those are all on the interior. To coordinate all those is quite challenging.”

To overcome some of the inevitable challenges posed by switching from one hub for dispatch and offices to another, the Shelby Township Police Department will work with some of its neighboring law enforcement agencies.

And while not as bad as weather, that type of interdepartmental work can slow progress.

“We’re going to end up using Sterling Heights dispatch for a short time,” Wood said. “And scheduling those things and coordinating them can some times cause delays.”

Those delays, though, will allow the Shelby Township police to move into their new facility and immediately work at full capacity.

“When they turn the building over to us, it will be a complete building with phones and dispatch ready for us, so it won’t be a problem moving in,” Muszynski said.

Once the police move into their new facility, their old offices will undergo a facelift and help the other space-hungry township departments.

“The Police Department occupies a significant portion of our lower level,” Wood said of the space that will be opened up beneath the current township offices.

“It will be renovated into fitness and tactical training, meeting rooms and storage for the Police Department that will also be available to other departments.”

And that will be yet another benefit of more than five years of planning and work.

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