

## Downstate developer breathes new life into Ishpeming school



A former Ishpeming school is getting a new lease on life. G.A. Haan Development of Harbor Springs recently finalized their purchase of the C.L. Phelps Middle School, which has been closed since the winter of 2010.

Some of the work required to convert the building into the combination of housing and commercial space known as Phelps Square is already underway. Ben Ide, Director of Development at G.A. Haan, says the project will include 24 low to moderate income housing units ranging from 750 to 1600 square feet. Ide says the modern and efficient units are required to meet stringent standards of the Michigan State Housing Development Authority, who provided funds toward the project.

The developers are hopeful that the \$7.1 million undertaking will have a positive effect on the community similar to that of a previous effort in which they renovated and converted a former bank and Masonic building in Sault Ste Marie.

Crews are currently working on demolition and environmental remediation at the site, taking the first

steps in a 12 to 14 month construction schedule. Both the commercial and residential components are expected to be made available by next summer or early fall. Pre-leasing of residential units will likely begin in the spring, and Ide says some local residents have already expressed interest in the units.