

# Work set to begin on community center

By **CRISTINA D. JOHNSON**  
Press staff

**MIDDLEFIELD** — After months of comparing estimates and proposals, the town of Middlefield has chosen a masonry restoration contractor and work is scheduled to begin next week on the community center.

GL Capasso Restoration Inc. won the bid for the restoration job, with a low bid of \$128,000. First Selectman Jon Brayshaw spent last week checking references and this week — Friday — led to the signing of the contract.

"This is a job that's long overdue," Brayshaw said.

After a walkthrough of the building and a brief inspection of the interior and exterior conditions, Carmine Capasso,

Capasso said through the process of the restoration, different sections will be treated at a time and the comings and goings at the community center should not be disrupted too much, although there will probably be times when different entrances will have to be used.

Capasso said he is glad his company won the job and, based on his evaluation of what needs to be done, it will be just as expected when his proposal was entered.

"I look forward to working with [Brayshaw]. ... It's nice to work with someone who knows what he's talking about."

project manager for GL Capasso Restoration, said the job is fairly normal in terms of extent.

"This is just normal wear-and-tear," Capasso said, indicating various cracks and breaks in the exterior.

Capasso said he plans to have a four-man crew working on the building as soon as next week.

"It should take anywhere from 45 to 60 working days," Capasso said, as long as weather permits.

Brayshaw explained the project involves the tradesmen using their professional judgment to discover areas of weakness in the mortar of the bricks.

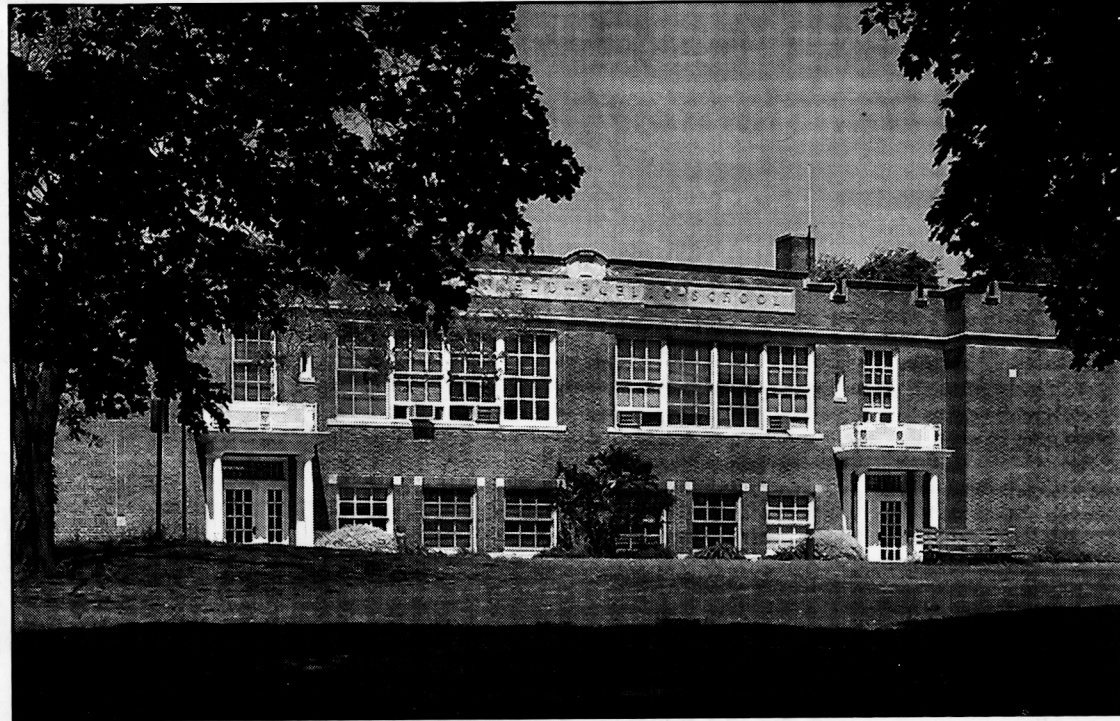
"It's not a science so much as it is an art," Brayshaw said.

The job will include removing worn mortar between the bricks and replacing it with new mortar. Additionally, Capasso said, the old sign — which reads "Middlefield School" — will be restored.

"We'll have it looking like it originally looked," he said.

GL Capasso Restoration is based in New Haven and specializes in structural restoration. The firm has done work at Yale and Wesleyan universities.

Capasso said the work his company will be performing will last for another 15 to 20 years.



GL Capasso Restoration Inc., which won the bid for restoration of the Middlefield Community Center, will begin working on the building as soon as next week, according to project manager Carmine Capasso.

File photo

"If, every couple of years there is an inspection done and the building is maintained, it should last [15 to 20] years."

Capasso also said there is not much beyond maintenance that would have avoided the community center being in its current condition, and indicated the moist weather of New

England tends to contribute to deterioration of the mortar.

"But restoring it is much cheaper than it would cost if (the town of Middlefield) had not done anything. Five years from now, you'd have to rebuild large parts of the building instead of just repairing," Capasso said.

Brayshaw — who has an extensive background in archi-

tecture — said the process is essentially making the building waterproof and protected.

"When moisture — such as in a driving rainstorm — is blown in by the wind, it drives the water in behind the mortar ... causing the joints to fail. This causes the bricks to loosen up."

