

Business debates downtown future

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teaching a craft—those are the people who seem to carve out their own little niche," he explained. When Colburn moves out of the building, the structure will be divided into two or three stores in all likelihood, he adds. Currently the landlord put a new Mansard roof on the structure and plans extensive remodeling inside.

The need for more space is why Scott Colburn is moving his business. He's building a new store south of Eight Mile at Farmington Road, doubling the 6,000 square feet he had in downtown Farmington, according to manager Don Roach.

"We looked at several places in Farmington, but we needed parking also," Roach says. Building a store is about the route you have to go short of a mall," he adds.

They liked the downtown location, but don't think moving will be a problem. "Most of our business comes from Detroit and Livonia," he said.

DOWN THE road, business at the Old Winery is good, says owner John White. With about 80 per cent occupancy, most of it in storage or wholesale businesses, he's hoping the restaurant will take care of another 10 per cent.

"The building was empty for seven years, but as fast as we can get it ready, we're filling it up. We've never advertised yet."

With limited parking for 125 cars, White discourages retail business in hopes of providing 60 parking spaces for the restaurant. The restaurant, proposed by Farmington Hills architect Chuck Teichner, however, seems indefinitely stalled. Teichner was unavailable for comment.

The downtown vacancy rate is extremely low, says Gly Mgr. Deadman, comparing it to about five years ago when 16,000 square feet of space was vacant.

"Now, if it's empty, someone's usually holding up the lease," he said. Deadman compares Farmington to a "convenience" center, rather than the highly retail commercial business concept in Birmingham or Plymouth.

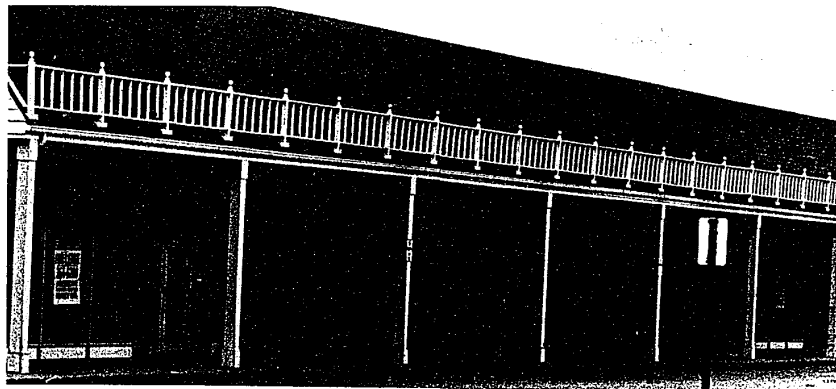
The limited size of downtown, parking, and traffic don't lend themselves to a highly retail concept, he says.

He's convinced that a downtown analysis conducted by Howard L. Green & Associates recommending more medium to high-priced clothing is still valid.

"Finding good tenants for the Federal's store—that's the key to the whole area," he said.

BUT SOME of the Center Company's current tenants aren't too happy.

A "Moonlight Madness" sale recently brought little cooperation from the majority of stores in the center, said two store owners, while the Center Company's leasing policy causes concern.



The old Federal Department Store, vacated earlier this year, waits for a new tenant in the downtown Farmington area while local businessmen debate the future of the main street shopping area.

Farmington schedules leaf pickup

Mark your calendar for leaf pickup in the City of Farmington and hope that this year the city's equipment holds out for the duration of the season.

Last year several disgruntled residents found themselves bagging soggy leaves after leaf pickup was cancelled in their areas because of a machinery breakdown.

Although the schedule is subject to change because of weather conditions or other factors, department of

recently named public service director Earl Billing is hoping to complete all leaf pickup within the city this year.

Burning of leaves is prohibited in both Farmington and Farmington Hills.

Residents are requested to rake leaves to the "right of way" area between the sidewalk and curb. On uncurbed streets, residents are requested to rake leaves to the edge of the street.

THE SCHEDULE is as follows:

- Oct. 9-13 and Nov. 20-22: residential homes east of Orchard Lake Road and north of Grand River;

- Oct. 16-20 and Nov. 24-27: residential homes south of Grand River and north of Freedom Road between Orchard Lake Road and Farmington Road;

- Oct. 23-31 and Nov. 28-30: residential homes west of Farmington Road to Gill Road between Grand River and Freedom Road.

- Nov. 1-Nov. 10: residential homes north of Grand River, west of Orchard Lake Road to Gill Road.

- Nov. 13-14: residential homes south of Freedom Road east of Farmington Road.

- Nov. 15-17: residential homes south of Grand River between Gill Road and Halstead.

For more information, call the Department of Public Services at 474-5500.

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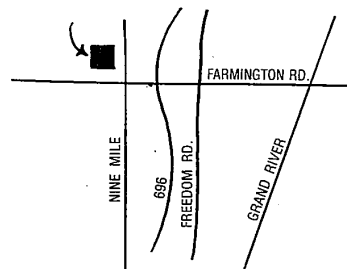
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