

Hills economic committee oversees commercial boom

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• Eisner & McClain for \$684,936. A restaurant chain called Sixpence Steak and Brew moving into a building (of a restaurant that went under) on Grand River.

• White Motor Corp. for \$222,000. Expanding its world headquarters on Grand River. The EDC adjourned the project plan last month until reorganization under Chapter 11 of the Federal Bankruptcy Code becomes clearer.

• K-F Land Co. for \$9.7 million. A 30-acre industrial park.

• Franklin Knolls for \$1.6 million. Two office buildings to be constructed on an ecological preservation concept near Shrewsbury on the north side of Northwestern Highway.

• Warwick North & South for \$4 million. Two office buildings on Haggerty Road.

Four new applications await EDC action. They are:

• Fern Leasholds for \$1 million. A piping company that wants to

erect its headquarters in the industrial park near 10 Mile and Grand River. The company is located in Ferndale but needs to expand its base of operation.

• Stuart Frankel for \$7,570,000. A shopping center and office complex on the northwest corner of 12 Mile and Halsted.

• Jacobson Slovin for \$7,476,984. Redevelopment of the Drive-In Grand River into a quad-theatre complex, shopping center and offices.

• The Ross Co. for \$10 million. A 30-acre office complex on Northwestern Highway to include walkways, trees and ponds.

two-year future forecast are picked over with a fine tooth comb by the EDC board.

"We make sure the interest of the city is served," McConnell said. McConnell was formerly chairman of the city's Industrial and Economic Development Corporation (IEDC), which can also float municipal bonds with a \$10 million ceiling. The IEDC is limited to industrial projects while the EDC can offer loans to a broader base of businesses, like commercial and office developments.

The IEDC still operates today but activity is slow — reflecting the auto industry, according to Robert Clarke, chairman.

"Most of our industry applicants are satellite businesses for the auto companies. Right now, no one is thinking of expanding, just of staying alive," Clarke said.

Small business bucks all trends

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The Orchard Lake Road widening project, which is increasing that major north-south thoroughfare from two to four lanes between 12 Mile and Maple, will provide new incentive to business growth along the Orchard Lake corridor, Leeds said.

"WE'RE SEEING more small businesses take an interest where they see a profit," he said.

City Manager Lawrence Savage is pleasantly surprised by the continuing commercial development. Yet he realizes many of the developments are on-going projects which predated the present high cost of borrowing money.

"There may have been financing commitments made prior to now and those projects will continue," he said.

"But some of the spots out here are prime and persons are willing to go ahead [with development] in the face of adversity."

If present economic conditions persist, Savage expects a slowdown in new construction. If commercial growth

surpasses residential, the tax base could favor homeowners.

"More commercial growth lowers the amount of providing city services to all taxpayers, since residential property requires more service than commercial," Savage said.

Success belies gloomy economy

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"Builders are saying 'let's back off and get some affordable housing. Let's get rid of the brick and replace it with aluminum siding, shorten the drive ways and get rid of the mandatory two-car garages,'" he said.

He's brimming with ideas for future developments and is a big advocate of senior citizen housing.

Rosenbush, who lives in Huntington Woods, is in business with his son, Rex. His other son, Rick, is a builder who restores historic homes in Maine.

"I think the market will always continue to be good in Farmington Hills simply because a major part of our growth is right here in southern Oakland County."

"It will continue to grow more steadily."

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The North Oakland African Violet Society will conduct a show and sale of ever-popular African Violets.
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October 24-26
Winning student exhibits from the 1980 Metropolitan Detroit Science & Engineering. Members of the Engineering Society of Detroit will be available to answer questions. Students of Lawrence Institute of Technology will provide career information. They also will demonstrate some scientific principles at the opening ceremony, 7:30 p.m. Friday.
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