

# Farmington Observer

Volume 94 Number 83

Thursday, July 28, 1983

Farmington, Michigan

68 Pages

Twenty-Five Cents

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## Druggists riled over plans for new store

By Tom Beer  
staff writer

"A lot of good things, but always a drug store." That's the advertising slogan of the giant Perry Drug Store chain.

But local businessmen fear that Perry, which will be occupying 15,200 square feet in the proposed shopping center at Nine Mile and Farmington roads, could bring about a few bad things, too.

The center's site plan, originally showing a Farmer Jack super market and 10 smaller stores, has been amended by Farmington's Planning Commission to include a large Perry Drug

Store — and several south Farmington druggists don't like it one bit.

"If Perry goes in, my business will go down," said Harry Watson, owner of Godmar Rexall Drugs in downtown Farmington.

Watson and his fellow Farmington druggists say they'll be hard pressed to compete with a large chain like Perry, which often can offer lower prices.

The competition is not enough already, they say, with six drug stores in the south Farmington area. In addition to Godmar, there are two Maple Village stores, Meadow's Drugs, Efros Drugs and Base Line Drugs on the Livonia side of Eight Mile Road.

The city has commissioned several

studies on the effect of the new shopping center on existing businesses, Watson said, and all indicate that there were already too many drug and hardware stores in the area.

"That study showed that only so many drug stores were needed in an area," Watson said. "We have a number of population. Farmington isn't growing anymore."

"And they're going to put in another drug store just three-quarters of a mile away from me! Why, something's got to give. You're going to end up with a lot of vacant buildings. Downtown's going to be hurt."

ANOTHER DRUGGIST, Basim Ab-

delnour, owner of Meadow's on Farmington Road just north of Eight Mile, echoes Watson's sentiments.

"It's been a tough three years in this business for us," he said. "We've been paying our profits as our expenses go up. Our utilities, our taxes, our labor and insurance all keep going up."

"We've been absorbing price increases and limiting our profits to keep the customers walking in the door. With a big chain like Perry, things are going to get even tougher."

Perry's bigness gives it a huge advantage over its smaller competitors, according to Abdelnour.

"It's not that they're unscrupulous," he said. "It's just that big chains like

that have a pricing structure that's based on the competitiveness of the area."

"If they wanted to sell their beer at cost, they could do it and continue to do it and keep it up for a long time. They could force us to do the same or watch our business go away. Foot traffic is the name of the game in this business. You get the customers in your store, and they'll buy the products."

ABDELNOUR SAID he thought the center would be anchored by the Farmer Jack store, which is relocating from its smaller downtown Farmington.

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Harry Watson

## Group seeking job changes for lawmakers

By Diane Gale  
staff writer

State legislators may have their work year slashed and save the state millions of dollars, if the Part-Time Legislature Committee's proposal is supported by Michigan voters.

"I think we engage in a lot of activities that are not necessary and are wasteful," said Rep. Sandy Brotherton, R-Farmington. "I think we could be more efficient if we worked part time than we are now."

Brotherton said the legislature has grown beyond its means and that the body could accomplish as much working part-time as it does full-time. He notes that legislators enjoy a three-month summer break, anyway.

"The lobbying organization in Lansing has become so overwhelmingly large that some organizations have 15 to 20 full-time people carrying out their legislative oversight activities," Brotherton said.

"There's more and more of that, and it's becoming a bigger business than the legislature itself," he said.

THE COMMITTEE is working to garner at least 304,000 signatures supporting a constitutional amendment that would reduce the legislative session from 13 months to four months annually.

If it reaches its goal, the proposal would be placed on the November, 1984 general election ballot. The deadline is July 1984.

"What inspired me to get involved in this is the view that people who are in this type of elective office should be working for the purpose of serving the public," said Rep. Tom Power, R-Travelers City, who helped author the proposal.

Most of the legislators would be opposed to the changes proposed by the committee, which is chaired by Bruce

York, who is president of an advertising firm in Lansing.

Sen. Jack Paxon, D-Southfield, represents the opposing view.

"The demand placed on the state has been growing in the past years," he said.

"Going back to a means of government that was used when there were a couple of thousand of people is like going back to a horse and buggy means of transportation," said Paxon, referring to approximately 20 years ago when Michigan legislators worked on a part-time basis.

MICHIGAN IS one of six states that employ a full-time legislature. The other 44 states have part-time legislatures that meet anywhere from one to nine months a year.

"Some legislators are perhaps motivated to satisfy interest groups to keep voters and keep their jobs," Power said. "By making it an attractive job, it has made legislators closer to being a part of the bureaucracy, instead of part of the public."

Next year legislators' salaries are to increase from \$31,000 to \$33,200 annually, and under the proposal they would be reduced to \$15,000.

Expense accounts would be reduced from \$4,700 to \$50 per session on the days actually attended by the legislator.

"This way you can't get expense money unless you're actually there," Power said.

Including cuts in expense accounts and salaries the proposal would save the state approximately \$3,235,000.

"I believe the big saving will be in attracting better people to the legislature who want to work because they want to serve the legislature, rather

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RANDY BORST/staff photographer

## Lisa Varty is Miss Farmington

Farmington Founders' celebrants launched this year's festivities with the traditional crowning of the 1983 Miss Farmington, Lisa Varty, who was crowned last night after the competition in Vladimir's restaurant in Farmington Hills. Later the blond and blue-eyed jazz dancer, who also won

the talent competition in the 10th annual Miss Farmington Scholarship Pageant, was introduced in Downtown Farmington Center in her first official public appearance, with a musical welcome coming from Franklin Village Band.

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## Expansion sought for 12 Mile strip

By Diane Gale  
staff writer

Farmington Hills City Council flashed the green light Monday for City Manager Lawrence Savage to ask the Economic Development Corporation to pay for a master plan study to expand 12 Mile and an additional interchange at I-495.

"Everyone who wants to come to the city exits at 12 Mile and Orchard Lake Road," said Assistant City Manager Bill Costick.

"As the city grows the traffic will become worse and this plan will spread the traffic out," he said.

The master plan, which is to identify the problems and advise the city on what action should be taken on road changes, is expected to cost approximately \$35,000.

The study will set the groundwork for a multimillion dollar project, which isn't expected to be completed for at least a couple of years, even if everyone involved approves, Costick said.

A COMMITTEE formed by local businesspeople met in March to promote and support the road changes. They

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## Should voters cut legislators' time?

Today's Oral Question is:

WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OR DISADVANTAGES OF LEGISLATORS WORKING PART TIME?

To call Oral Quarrel, dial 477-5450. You have until 1 p.m. Friday. To see how your neighbors feel about this issue, look in Monday's Farmington Observer.

A group of legislators and business leaders have organized the Part Time Legislature Committee in an effort to promote shorter state legislative sessions. The group is trying to collect at least 304,000 signatures by next July so the issue can be placed on the ballot in the November general election. If the proposal passes, the sessions would be reduced from 13 months to four months. Backers claim this would save the state approximately \$3.3 million in cut salaries.