

Orchard Lake Road malls add new tenants

By Judith Doner Berne
staff writer

The success or failure of West Bloomfield's shopping centers may be measured by their distance from 14 Mile and Orchard Lake Road — the new shopping hub of the West Bloomfield-Farmington Hills area.

Established shopping centers south of Maple — Old Orchard and West Bloomfield Plaza — are fully leased, say their spokespeople.

Another south-of-Maple complex, The Boardwalk, which opened late last fall, has only one storefront left.

Its grand opening is slated for Saturday, Sept. 24.

Vacancies continue to plague West Bloomfield's other two major centers — Orchard Mall and Pine Lake Mall — north of Maple Road.

Both malls — which celebrate 10-year birthdays this year — have several available storefronts and count a constant turnover of merchants.

Each mall recently saw a major restaurant fold — although Orchard Mall already has leased Frisco's space to another restaurateur.

"ORIGINALLY, 15 Mile (Maple) and Orchard Lake Road was the hub," said William Lakritz, whose leasing company has just taken over the responsibility

for Pine Lake Mall, Orchard Lake Road at Lone Pine.

He called the failure to widen Orchard Lake Road north of Maple "a mistake." Now, "the real hub is at 14 and Northwestern."

As a result, Pine Lake Mall — conceived as a high-fashion center — has evolved into "more of a service center," Lakritz said. With approximately 8 percent (three storefronts) plus the restaurant of its space up for lease, Lakritz said the attempt is "to merchandise" and bring in some high traffic generators. But he has none currently in mind.

Orchard Mall recently lost two

tenants whose 10-year leases had expired and saw the township's only full-fledged video arcade fold in early summer after one year's operation.

However, one men's store replaced another (John Kent in for Bloch's), and co-owner Arthur Sills says the longtime tenants were paying 1973-style rents.

Sills heads a coalition of owners who rescued the mall from near-bankruptcy four years ago.

GIVE ME one more year, Sills said, to fill the mall. "One has to cure the errors of its predecessors."

"The successor tenant to Frisco's can only improve that situation," he said. A computer software store and a comput-

er school are two separate tenants moving in to space vacated by a woman's dress store (Lorette Mammoth) and Wells Fargo, the discount kitchenware store which moved to Orchard Place, in the "hub" area.

"Orchard Lake Road is still the only game in town," Sills said.

"Everything is okay," said Jack Liwaser, leasing agent and manager of Old Orchard — the township's oldest shopping center, just south of Maple.

Olga's restaurant will open next month. In the prominent corner location vacated by Taggs (which also moved to Orchard Place). A closing (a children's store) and tenant shift will allow Farmer Jack to expand into two vacant adjacent storefronts, Liwaser said.

Liwaser attributed location to the shopping center's success. "I have no vacancies and so many inquiries," he said.

MOVING SOUTH on Orchard Lake, owners of West Bloomfield Plaza also report a full house. The center, which expanded from a smaller strip center, opened five years ago next month.

"The traffic light — that's the secret," says Charles Peruski. "We have easy access compared to the rest." The traffic signal was paid for by the owners.

"The center, which also includes an office building, has 'no vacancies right at the moment,'" Peruski said. A gift store (Rikki's) was quickly replaced by a cleaners, and a Korean restaurant

has taken over another restaurant's (The Woden Nickel) space. "It seems to be holding its own," Peruski said.

The Boardwalk, catty-corner from West Bloomfield Plaza, is the township's newest shopping center, boasting 25 stores. The most recent opening is devoted to computers. Chocolatissimo and an art gallery will open soon, said Bluma Siegel, marketing director.

"WE'RE VERY pleased. We opened at a very hard (economic) time. And they (the stores) have got followings. The location is wonderful, and West Bloomfield is more developed than before."

Apparently satisfied with the Boardwalk's potential and success, its developers are moving on to another Orchard Lake Road strip center — this time north of Maple.

Site plans for the development of a center between Orchard Mall and the Sign of the Beefcarver restaurant were approved by the West Bloomfield Planning Commission Tuesday night. Tentative name for the new mall is Sugar Tree Square.

"It may not have the same flavor (as the Boardwalk)," Siegel said. "We have to wait to see how it goes."

Orchard Mall's Sills hopes the planned shopping center will generate traffic for both centers, perhaps moving the shopping "hub" north again. "The spillover is actually much better than trying to market alone," he said. "We'll share parking and it creates continuity. It has to be a plus."

Judge's son to stand trial for murder

By Jackie Klein
staff writer

Randy Gardner, the son of the late Detroit Recorder's Court Judge, will stand trial in Oakland County Circuit Court for allegedly killing a Detroit man Sept. 6 outside a Southfield bar.

Gardner, 31, of Detroit was bound over for trial Thursday by 46th District Court Judge Norman Feder on an open murder charge and a charge of possessing a firearm in commission of a felony. He is out on \$20,000 bond.

Gardner, the son of Judge Samuel Gardner, is

accused of the shooting death of Kevin Fields, 21, during a brawl which started in the bar of the Perfect Blend on Northwestern, Highway near 10 Mile and spilled out into the parking lot. The fight started when a companion of Gardner's grabbed Pauline Davis, Fields' fiancée, by the buttocks while she was dancing with Fields in the bar, according to witnesses.

Feder rejected an argument by defense attorney Elbert Hatchett that Gardner not be tried on a charge greater than second-degree murder.

"There has been no

proof of first-degree murder, no premeditation has been shown," Hatchett maintained. "Temper flared, and my client acted in self-defense."

PROSECUTOR EDWARD Sosnick requested the open murder charge, maintaining it's up to the jury to determine the degree of murder after hearing elements of the case.

Michigan law, according to Feder, clearly states that the question of degree is left to the ultimate trier of fact. Feder said he is sitting as a magistrate in this case.

Hatchett attempted to prove his argument that Gardner shot in self-defense by calling two witnesses Thursday who said they saw Fields attack Gardner's companion inside the bar.

One witness said she saw Fields run into the bar with a crowbar. The 21-inch-long crowbar and a knife with a 5-inch blade were produced in evidence Thursday.

Southfield Police Detective Michael Walsh testified Thursday that

Gardner suffered an injury to his head and was treated at Providence Hospital, Southfield, shortly after his arrest.

In the first day of testimony last Tuesday, Davis said Gardner came into the Perfect Blend lounge with two friends, Clarence Craig and Samuel Fields. While she was dancing with Fields, Craig "grabbed my be-

hind," Davis testified. Fields struck Craig, and when they were

wrestling on the floor, Gardner got involved, Davis said. The altercation moved to the parking lot, where, Davis testified, Craig said to Gardner, "Shoot him, shoot him or give me the gun."

Fields was knocked bleeding to the ground, Davis said, and she saw Gardner pull a handgun from his pocket and fire it once into her fiancée's chest.

Hills 'addresses' problem

Continued from Page 1

must be at least six inches high. Putting your house number on a mailbox is allowable as long as it is directly in front of your house and is not grouped with other boxes, said City Manager Lawrence Savage.

Businesses must place the business name and street number at the back door so it is visible from the alley, service drive or parking lot. The numbers must be three-six inches high.

The owners of apartments, condominiums and industrial complexes must have street numbers at the entrance of the road that leads to each separate address.

Mobile homes would have to display the address on the side facing the road.

IF ADOPTED, THE ordinance will take effect Oct. 10. If, however, it is not adopted, it will take effect Jan. 1, 1984. If, however, it is not adopted, it will take effect Jan. 1, 1984. If, however, it is not adopted, it will take effect Jan. 1, 1984.

"There's been a lack of uniformity," Karon said. "We're trying to strive for improved standardization of address-

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