

Companies decide to go west . . . Metro West

By Gary M. Cates
staff writer

Business is booming at the Metro West Industrial Park in Plymouth Township, and that makes Robert DeMatia very happy.

DeMatia, a Farmington Hills-based developer, owns the park and has been working frantically of late to meet the demand for light industrial land.

'Miles for Mercy' race is planned

Ironman Charlie Blanchard invites area runners and walkers to participate in "Miles for Mercy," a 10K road race and a one-mile walk/run for fun for Mercy College of Detroit on April 20.

Awards will be given to first-place winners in various categories and T-shirts will be given to all contestants.

The entry fee is \$8 (\$10 after April 15).

On the day of the race, registration will be 7:30-8:30 a.m. in the Mercy College Conference Center. The fun run will start at 8:30 a.m., followed by the 10K road race at 9:15 a.m. Advance registration is encouraged.

Blanchard, owner of the Total Runner specialty stores, will direct the events.

Blanchard was launched into national attention in 1982 and again in 1983 when he won the masters division (age 40 and over) of the Ironman World Triathlon Championship in Hawaii. The Ironman is a daylong ultra-endurance race that combines a 2.4-mile ocean swim, a 112-mile bicycle race and a full 26.2-mile marathon run in continuous, non-stop competition.

The "Miles for Mercy" race course

roads. Plat approval is a routine request unless, as in DeMatia's case, the roads and utilities aren't in.

DeMatia was faced with a May 1 deadline for selling property to an overseas firm. It required putting up large amounts of bonds to insure the road and utility work is completed.

"If we didn't put them here, then we would go to another state. We had to move fast," he said. "It was here or Chicago."

"We approached the different authorities and they all bent over backwards to help us. We were able to accomplish in two or three months what usually takes a year or more."

So, without roads or utilities even started, DeMatia received his plat approval. Township Clerk Esther Hulsing even stopped in the middle of the meet-

ing to sign the document. "It was teamwork," DeMatia said. "You talk about the Bay View to Michigan campaign . . . this is what can make Michigan great."

With the fast plat approval, the developer successfully landed the overseas firm. He wouldn't release the name or details, saying only it's a major firm which deals in high-tech prototypes and will hire enough people to get into the hundreds.

TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR Maurice Breen, who monitored the progress of the plat project via long-distance phone while on vacation, lauds the accomplishment as an example of what is needed to develop.

"You can't create development, but you can create an environment for development," Breen said.

"As a government, we have to present an attitude that says 'we want your business.' We grease the skids for development, rather than throwing up roadblocks," he said.

But this venture is only one example. DeMatia says he doesn't have enough land at Metro West to meet all the demands. Using an expandable pointer, he points to a color-coded map of the park marking the sites where business will start building this spring.

"I only have one lot left in Phase I of the park, and we're already selling Phase II," he said.

During the race, split times will be called at three points on the course and two water stations will be available for runners. Following the race, free refreshments will be served including Pepsi, fresh fruits, fruit juices, doughnuts and cheeses.

Awards will be presented following the 10K race. In the 10K road race, awards will be given for the first male and female finishers, first Mercy alumna finisher, first wheelchair finisher and first place in each of seven age categories. In the one-mile walk/run for fun, a trophy will be given to the first-place male and female finishers and certificates to all participants.

For more information or to register for "Miles for Mercy," call the Alumni Office at Mercy College at 592-6114. Proceeds from the event will benefit Mercy College.

p.m. Thursday, March 14 in the architecture auditorium on LIT's campus, 21000 W. 10 Mile, Southfield.

The free presentation is open to the public.

The firm is known for its many concert halls, theaters and residences along with the American Film Institute and Best Product Corp. headquarters.

Hardy, a partner in the New York firm of Hardy, Holzman, Pfeiffer, will present Resolution of Opposites at 7:30

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Monday, March 11, 1985 O&E

THIS LAND is close to the automotive centers in Detroit and close to research facilities in Ann Arbor — it really is prime land, it's at a perfect crossroads," he said.

"We have easy access to the expressways, and this is one of the few parts that has full utilities on it. And, besides that, the community also is a super place to live."

Within five years, DeMatia hopes to have the park completely built. His said marketing efforts are underway throughout the United States, as well as around the world.

"It's a tremendous effort. We're bringing jobs to the area without giving away the whole farm either," he said.

Breen shares the enthusiasm for the booming industrial park.

"This contributes to the economic longevity of the area. It also reduces

the tax load on residents, without putting an increased load on services," he said.

Besides the increased revenues from property taxes, Breen said there is a tremendous spinoff from the development. He points to the increased revenues from payroll taxes and sales taxes as a result of the increased money pumped into surrounding commercial and retail shops.

"An increase in manufacturing jobs, opposed to retail, have a tremendous impact on the local economy," he said.

Both men said the industrial park is a spiral, both for development and economic impact. And once that spiral starts, as it appears to be doing at Metro West, it just keeps going.

"People want to go with the winners," DeMatia said.

Follow marine rules of road

The greatest single cause of collisions afloat is not following the rules. There is no excuse for ignorance. Copies of these rules are available free of

charge. Write or call your nearest U.S. Coast Guard unit or Coast Guard Auxiliary flotilla.

Architect to speak

Hugh Harey, an architect who "can do architecture with anything" without having to conform to one particular style or a limited selection of materials, is the next guest speaker in the Lawrence Institute of Technology School of Architecture's ARCHILECTURE series.

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