

BUILDING SCENE

F

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 22, 1992

BUILDING SCENE'S NAMES & PLACES

Excellence in building

Two area buildings were among the three selected as regional winners in the Pursuit of Excellence Office Building of the Year competition sponsored by the Building Owners & Managers Association of Metropolitan Detroit.

They are Brookfield Office Park in Farmington Hills, winner in the suburban office park category; and City Center in Southfield, winner in the 100,000- to 500,000-square-foot category.

Etkin Equities is the general partner and Equities Management the managing company for both properties.

The Fisher Building in Detroit was named best historical building.

The winners are eligible for honors in international competition to be held in Baltimore in June.

BOMA is associated with the Greater Detroit Chamber of Commerce.

State award winner

Joseph Benyai, an associate-broker with Signature Associates, Southfield, has been named the Commercial Realtor of the Year by the Michigan Association of Realtors.

Benyai also was named Realtor of the Year for the South Oakland County Board of Realtors. He is a founding member and current chairman of MAR's commercial industrial group and a member of the Detroit Metro Commercial Investment Division.

He also is a member of the Commercial Investment Real Estate Institute, the National Marketing Institute and the Michigan Association of Real Estate Exchanges.

Morris & Berke VP

A. Lyle Beckwith has been promoted to vice president of property management at Morris & Berke, Birmingham Farms.

He is responsible for management of day-to-day operations, including maintenance, marketing, tenant relations and hiring and training of building staff.



Benyai



Beckwith

Homebodies

Builders loath to cross county lines

Convenience and comfort are a couple of reasons you won't often see builders venturing outside of a base community to build new subdivisions. Here are a few exceptions.

By GERALD FRAWLEY
STAFF WRITER

Builder/developer Lawrence Cohen, president of Cohen Associates in West Bloomfield, is entering a new world called Western Wayne County. Sure, for those of you who have lived there, this hardly equates with Columbus's discovery of the new world, but for a builder/developer who has made his name in the heart of Oakland County, it's a big step.

Building is a parochial avocation. Of the literally hundreds of builders that work in southeastern Michigan, most work almost exclusively in one or two — generally nearby — communities.

Only a small handful build across county lines. With the grand opening of Meadowbrook — which he is both developing and building — in Canton Township this week, Cohen joins that number.

Cohen has built in West Bloomfield almost exclusively, but several years ago branched out to Novi with Woods of Novi development.

Building in Canton

Cohen broke ground on the 33-acre, 77-home site project south of Ford Road on Canton Center last February, he said, but planning began many years ago.

Cohen said he doesn't think builders are territorial by nature; it's more a question of convenience and comfort levels.

"There are so many ways (to build

a home) wrong and just a few ways to do it right," he said. "When you build in only one area, you learn what will fly and what won't."

Nor does he find builders are more competitive than normal when another enters his "territory."

"I've always found builders to be friendly competitors," he said.

When he began looking in other areas, he said he discovered most builders were more than willing to help him determine what would be appropriate for that area and what wouldn't.

Some were more helpful than others, but he said he came away with the general feeling that builders realize that the more diversity available in a marketplace, the better it is for all builders.

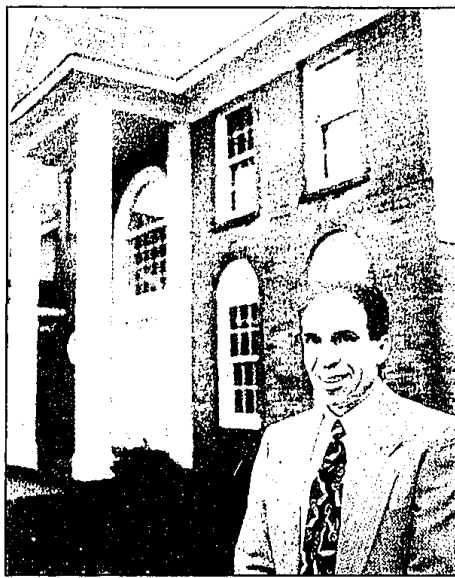
Added diversity

It's only natural that builders stick to areas where they've had success, Cohen said, because every time a builder enters a new community he has to start over again.

"For our company — we don't desire to be a huge company — but we need to maintain at least three subdivisions," Cohen said. That number keeps all of his employees busy and helps him to provide diversified products.

"I didn't feel comfortable doing it all in one community," he said. "If my homes agent's selling in West Bloomfield, they may be selling in Canton — it broadens my market."

"We spent nearly two years going



BILL BRONKHORST/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Transplanted: After many years in the business, builder/developer Lawrence Cohen, president of Cohen Associates in West Bloomfield, is starting all over again. Well known in Oakland County, Cohen is trying his hand in Western Wayne County with the grand opening of Meadowbrook, his first project in Wayne County, joining a small handful of builders working in more than one county.

through models (of other builders in Western Wayne) in preparation for this," he said. Cohen said he also made a special effort to solicit information from Wayne County residents who toured the model he built for last year's Homearama in Novi.

Cohen said one of the toughest parts of building in a different community is establishing oneself all over again. "We're the new kids on the block and we're not automatically

See BUILDERS, 4F

ONE OF THE
GREATEST
TOOLS FOR
SAVING THE
ENVIRONMENT

Take a long piece of string. Wrap it around a small stack of newspapers. Then take it to a recycling center or leave it out for collection on recycling day.

You'll be helping U.S. newspapers in their drive to encourage recycling. More than a third of our country's newsprint was recycled last year. But without your help, we won't have the material to make recycling work.

So tie a string around your finger. It'll help you remember to recycle.

GRAND OPENING

At HIDDEN CREEK

Hidden Creek
Open Daily 8am-7pm
Call Paul Sanderson...
429-3003

NEW HOMES
From... **\$129,900**

GOOD NEWS
TOWNSHIP TAXES
ANN ARBOR SCHOOL

Hidden Creek South

30+ Lots

| | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brick 4-sides | <input type="checkbox"/> Studio & Cathedral Ceilings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1327 to 2200 sq ft | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Car Garages |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3 & 4 Bedrooms | <input type="checkbox"/> Open Park Area |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ranch, Colonial & Cape Cods | <input type="checkbox"/> Many Park Lots & Pond Lots |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Full Basements | <input type="checkbox"/> City Water & Sewer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1st Floor Laundry | |

Located on... Platt Rd., Just South of Michigan Ave. (off US-23)

PDM/J Group Bldg. Co.