

Give him a pencil and he'll plan total projects

By JACKIE KLEIN

You name it, we do it.
That could be the motto of Robert B. Al-

per Associates. Architects and Planners of Birmingham. The firm was formed in November 1975 with the basic concept of establishing a group of professionals in diversified, yet related, fields, said Alper.

"We're interested in all aspects of architecture, design and planning and in creating creditable structures in close harmony with the natural environment," Alper said.

The firm succeeded the former 13-year-old Levine-Alper and Associates in Detroit. Nathan Levine and Associates Inc. are now based in Southfield.

"DEVELOPMENT OF our Birmingham group has been a steadily upward movement toward specializing in services of programming, research, design, planning, project management, supervision, interior design, merchandising, store planning and design and graphics," Alper explained.

"Our firm offers total services by consulting with specialists and individuals who afford structural, mechanical and other engineering expertise."

Among commissions of varying size and scope in which Alper and Associates have been involved are land planning for commercial and office complexes, high and low rise apartment building developments, recreational and theater structures and the planning and design of office and retail interiors.

THE FIRM has been retained by Highland Construction Co.-an architect and land planner for a proposed 12-story senior citizen apartment building on Greenfield near Ten Mile in Southfield.

Alper and Associates designed the proposed shopping center on Greenfield and Nine Mile and will do interiors of boutiques planned for the 70,000 square foot structure.

"The facade will be earth-toned masonry units with horizontal terracotta metal in large," he said. "We're doing a series of buildings for a total concept, from space planning to lighting fixtures down to the most minute details."

Alper prefers contemporary design, which he interprets as "of the times but ever-changing." The goal of his firm, he said, is to find solutions for problems of form and space and consider clients' needs.

"I PERSONALLY don't like antiquated solutions or copying what has been done," Alper said. "You can learn from the past, but you can be innovative and diversified so you don't turn out carbon copies."

Alper has eight architects and planners in his firm and they work as a team, he said. They use consultants in areas such as landscaping but enjoy getting involved in the design, he said. In 90 per cent of the



ROBERT ALPER

firm's projects, Alper and Associates participate in land planning and attend local rezoning and site plan hearings for clients.

"We've done remodeling and interior design for Hudson's stores downtown and in shopping centers," he said. "It's an exciting challenge when you're faced with a concrete floor, cinder block walls and a skeleton structure and you're assigned to transform the project into something realistic and functional. That's where creativity in space planning comes in."

THIS ALSO involves merchandising interior store planning and design. We've also designed fringe real estate properties for Hudson-Weber. Many of these projects were accomplished by Levine-Alper Associates. We also designed the North Park Towers and other apartment projects in Southfield totaling 1,500 units.

OTHER ALPER and Levine projects are Somerset Plaza in Troy and Bloomfield Commons Shopping Center. The Birmingham firm has been retained to plan and design a multi-story hotel, auto mall, medical office and bank in Novi, a skating arena in Farmington Hills, Marvin Danto furniture mart in Troy, Steak and Ale in Farmington, theater in Northville and a 300-acre project in Toledo. Alper and Associates have designed 60 Great Scott Supermarkets and the list goes on and on.

Alper, who was president of the Detroit Chapter of the American Institute of Architects and has been active in the professional organization since 1964, said "We're looking forward to large scale planning and full development as the economy swings."

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