

Study finds N'land shoppers fearful

By CARL STODDARD

Nearly half the shoppers at Northland Shopping Center don't feel safe while at the giant mall, say a group of Southfield High School students. Students at the school, as part of a two-year market research project, interviewed 400 people at the shopping center and conducted another 400 telephone interviews with people living in the metropolitan area.

A complete tabulation of the results won't be known for another month, but some preliminary findings have been developed. According to Daniel Smith, 18, a senior at the school, about 46 per cent of

the shoppers interviewed at Northland admitted they don't feel safe while at the Southfield center. A third of those questioned said they didn't think Northland had a pleasant atmosphere. Of those shopping at the mall during the day, 40 per cent said they did so for safety reasons. Only 15 per cent of the 400 people interviewed by telephone said they shopped during the day at other malls for safety's sake.

THE STUDY IS being conducted by students in distributive education classes at the school. The classes are primarily designed to teach co-op students about the workings of business and related fields. Most members of the two distributive education classes at the school are also members of the Distributive Education Clubs of America (DECA). When completed, the Northland study will be entered in state DECA competition. If the study is among the winners, students will take it to the national competition later this year in California. To raise money for the club's activities, its 60 members naturally enough

rely on the free enterprise system. They sell popcorn in the school and operate a soft drink machine that dispenses "free enterprise Pepsi," Smith said. Part of the profits also go to support the club's research into shopper's opinions about Northland. Smith said his group found that many people still go to Northland because of the variety of stores available at the mall. The average shopper, however, only drives one to five miles to Northland. The new Fairlane Town Center, on the other hand, draws shoppers from an average of 10-15 miles away, he said.



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Residents may control fate of vacant school

Residents interested in suggesting possible uses for Valley Woods Elementary School can do so at a public hearing at 9 p.m. Jan. 25. It will be held at Berkshire Junior High School, 21707 W. Fourteen Mile Road.

The opportunity has been a long time coming, according to some.

The Birmingham Board of Education scheduled the hearing following a unanimous decision by the Beverly Hills Zoning Board of Appeals Monday to deny a zoning change that would have allowed conversion of the

school to a senior citizen housing facility.

The school was closed by the board of education in June 1975 because of declining enrollment. Efforts to sell or lease the facility were unsuccessful until an offer to buy was made in August 1976 by Valley Woods Retirement Apartments Associates.

The offer was accepted by the board of education, contingent upon approval of the zoning change.

The offer was one of three received by the board in August, all for \$550,000 cash. The other two offers

were from St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church, for use as a senior citizen residence, and the Yeshiva Beth Yehuda Corp., for use as a religious school.

HOWEVER, THE latter offer was received after the published deadline and was not considered by the board.

Rabbi Norman Kahn of the Beth Yehuda School, when asked Friday if there was still interest in the property, said, "Yes, there is."

"We're interested, there's no question about it. I have not had a chance

to meet with our board. The main people who could make that decision are out of town."

He said he had been contacted by a representative of Proctor Homer Warren Inc., realtors, soon after last week's decision by the zoning board of appeals. The firm has been retained by the board of education to attempt to sell or lease the school.

Rabbi Kahn said he could not say whether the original offer for the school would hold and said maintenance and other costs would have to be looked at again.

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Council again delays senior housing decision

A decision on proposed revisions to Southfield's senior citizen code was postponed for the third time by city council members at their Monday night meeting.

The controversial matter was delayed until Feb. 7 at the request of officials who want more time to review suggested amendments.

Changes in the elderly housing ordinance, recommended by Southfield Planning Commission, have been sharply criticized by a number of apartment builders and developers in the city. They maintain proposed measures fail to insure that senior citizen projects would be used for that purpose.

Owners of conventional apartment buildings claim the new ordinance would be unenforceable and projects could be developed with higher density and smaller units under the guise of providing elderly housing.

Southfield's Senior Citizen Housing Commission recommends the proposed ordinance should require that each unit have at least one occupant

62 or older. That's the minimum age requirement for federal projects, commission members said.

The commission also maintained an exception should be allowed for physically handicapped persons. A minimum number of units for the handicapped is another federal requirement.

HOUSING COMMISSIONERS agreed with planners' recommendations that one-bedroom unit sizes in senior citizen apartments be a minimum of 525 square feet. Two-bedroom units, according to commission members, should be at least 550 square feet in size.

Current requirements that developers of elderly housing sign a pact to insure the use are as far as the city should go to regulate tenant occupancy, commission members contended.

The title company involved should be made aware of the agreement, according to commission members. Added protections are in a number of inspections required every two years by the state, commissioners said.

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Skiers take honors

Two Farmington skiers, Jill Robins and Lisa Williams, divided top honors in the Alpine events held recently at Boyne Mountain.

Jill, 13, took a first place in the morning slalom event with a time of 84.75 seconds. Lisa, 14, came in second in 85.71. In the afternoon giant slalom, Lisa won a second-place silver medal with a combined time of 72.97 seconds, while Jill took the bronze with a 73.43 clocking. The races are sponsored by the United States Ski Association.

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