Merchants: downtown will survive tough times

Despite tough economic times and competition from places such as Livonia's Laurel Park, small down towns can survive. Not as we've they will, local business people say. Fred Hill, who closed his Plymouth haberdashery after 25 years due to sagging sales, looks to the past to understand the present. "Plymouth is in a transitional phase," he said. "Customers' shoping habits may have changed, and those habits dictate a mall. But look how different Plymouth is today from when I opened."

HILL SEES PLYMOUTH thriving as a commercial district catering to "narrow specialty shops and home accessory shops ... what I would call office, retail interior decorator types. They're all good uses, just dif-ferent uses." Hill said.

types. They're all good uses, just dif-ferent uses." Filli said. Wendy Strip-Sittsamer is sex-tive director of the Farmington Downtown Development Authority. "One of the things we know from research we've conducted is that while people shop while in downtown Farmington," often their primary

purpose for being downtown is to conduct business other than retail business, "she said.
"In other words, they're coming to the post office, the library or to see their doctor, lawyer or banker. That's one of the things downtowns, especially older downtowns, offer especially older downtowns, offer that the Laurel Park Places of the world do not."

"I SEE A DIFFICULT future, I'm

"I SEE A DIFFICULT future, I'm not sure downtowns can continue to survive in the ways they have traditionally. I'm not sure they can continue to be the sole center of commerce as they once were.

"And there's no such thing as a universal answer. What may work, for downtown Farmington may not, work for downtown Pirmouth, Birmingham, Rochester or Detroit, for that matter, We have to keep the local character of our downtowns in mind.

cal character of our downtowns in mind.

"I think in Plymouth, as in other communities, we're seeing some of that disappear. The question is, how do we redevelop the downtown so that it is in keeping with that character in recognition of the changing marketplace and the changes in people's tilving patterns?"

GREG GOODMAN, owner of

'The question is, how do we redevelop the downtown so that it is in keeping with that (local) character in recognition of the changing marketplace and the changes in people's living patterns?'

- Wendy Strip-Sittsamer DDA chief

owned and operate materials.

Here are some tactics Goodman says can help bolster business:

• Greater cooperation among merchants 'so that they can compete on a more effective basis with the mails. When I say coordination,

Plymouth's Cafe Bon Homme and former chairman of the city's Downtown Development Authority, offers some solutions, but says business people need to be aggressive to make them word of the ideas meet with success in Northville during the recession in the early 180s, when he word and operated MacKinnor's Restaurant.

Here are some tactles Goodman

Park."

Stick-to-it-iveness. "When it opened, Laurel Park was pretty vacani and it looked rather bleak for several months," said Goodman. "But they apparently knew what

they were after and they went about their business in a very deliberate fashion to anchor their stores and to bring in the theaters, restaurants and health spas as complements to the retail sector."

the retail sector."

Accepting the advantages malls offer and fighting back. Malls can dictate who their tenants are and what their can do, he said.

In downtowns, landfords are concerned "first and foremost with a

In downtowns, landbords are concerned "first and foremost with a
positive cash flow. A secondary concern is how well the business mixcomplements the retail downtown."

• Coing, ahead with the Downtown. Development Authority

• Coing, ahead with the Downtown. Development Authority

• Coing all downtown.

• Coing the diserables that during a
recession so that when it's over,

relymouth can hit the ground running?"

The streetscape plan would make
shopping "far more pedestrian'
friendly. You can really lay out,
through different paving, mechaisms, whether they be cobblestonesor bricks, paths for pedestrians. You

can also segregate them from motorized traffic with plantings, treesiand that sort of thing. That's better
for motorized traffic, and infinitely

better for pedestrian traffic.

The streetscape plan also calls for

uniform, aesthetically pleasing signs.
"You have to be completely aware of the importance of convenience to the shopper. That's how you compete. You make it as easy as possible for people to do business with you. Don't make it difficult — that's insane."
Goodman's not ready to accept totally that Plymouth is in direstraits. Granted it needs help, and it needs some coordinated effort that will help it compete, but it is in the threes of transition, and it hisk the marketplace has an uncanny way of telting people know when and where noney can be made and when, and where it can't, stayed with their apian, and ultimately things came around. The same thing has to happen here. We have to lock into a game plan and stick with it until it bears fruit. Ultimately, we will win to lose based on our ability to come together and dismiss all the petty pickering and get to the greater good." he said.
Plymouth has pluses going for it that Laurel Park never will, he add-No maiter what they do, Laurel-Park will never have a downtown park or tree-lined streets.

inkwell

Inkwell provides information about primary and secondary to the primary and primary

ART DISPLAY

A special display of artwork by
Linda Weh's third graders fromilliside Elementary School is
being shown this month at Alexander Hamilton Life Insurance Co. in
Farmington Hills, at the Invitation
of chief executive Richard
Headte.

of chief executive iterates.

The artwork, entitled "Farming-ton — Past and Future" was scheduled for display from Jan. 20-31 around the building. Other student works were also displayed. Each young artist is pictured with their written goals for the future.

Headlee asked for the student art exhibit after visiting Web's classroom as part of a community reading project in the fall. Then, he read "The Giving Tree" and shared some original poetry with students.

Ileadiee enjoyed the student art-work on historical Farmington, which combined social studies and art lessons, and "though it would be a good idea to share this work with everyone here," said an Alex-ander Hamilton memo.

Web's students were also sched-uled to visit the Hills company on Jan. 30 for a tour and tunch with Headiee. The visit will give the stu-dents a chance to see their work on display and learn about art collec-tions housed at Alexander Hamil-ton.

WOMEN'S SYMPOSIUM

• WOMEN'S SYMPOSIUM
Some 200 students from Farmington Hills Mercy High School and other Michigan high schools will be part of a day-long symposium entitled "Young Women for the Ninettee" on Jan. 31.
Hosted by the Academy of the Sacred Heart Catholic School in Bloomfield Hills, the third annual event is designed to give young women in grades 9-12 the opportunity to share ideas. The keymote speaker will be State Rep. Lyn Bankes.

Workshops will include student chosen themes such as: college en-

trance and success, discriminiation against women, dating, women in the workplace, teen pregoatory, date rape and dysfunctional families. Each topic will be the subject of a 45-minute open-ended discussion facilitated by an adult. For more information call the school at 846-8900.

school at \$46-8909.

• ART GIFT

A \$50 grant from the Farmington Area Arts Commission allowed
Eagle Elementary school in West,
Bloomfield to bring artist Linda
Snaveley to the school Jan. 24 to do
assemblies on theme illustrating.
Each classroom selected a
theme which was put on paper, and
a variety of characters were woven
around the word to create a classroom drawing.

"This assembly will nicely compliment our enrichment programs
and reinforce our contlusting theme
of the litelong joy that comes from
reading and learning." said principal Sue Johnson.
The arts commission provides
\$50 grants to area school to pro-

pai Sue Johnson.

The arts commission provides \$50 grants to area school to promote cultural and arts education.

Since January is School Board Member Recognition Month across the state, Longacre Elementary School had a little fun with it re-

the state, Longarce Elementary
School had a little fun with it recently.

The school board met on Jan. 14,
the night after the area's large
snowfall, and members of the Longacre staff and PTA decided an
other law staff and PTA decided an
other law staff some staff and PTA decided
of the staff some staff and pta staff and other law staff to the staff and of the staff and the

bility for approving the an budget and maintaining a balar budget through the school year.

on the agenda

Below are highlights from the agendas of povernment meetings this week. All meetings are open to the public.

Farmington Hills City Council Council Chambers 31555 11 Mile 7:30 p.m. Monday, Dec. 27

Under onlinshed business, the council will: consider enacting an ordinance arreadment regulating the large of the council will consider enacting an ordinance arreadment regulating the large of the council c

Winds and the control of the control also consider a resolution to amend the sewer system debt service rates and charges.

Consider a request from Wing Hong, Inc. for a new entertalnment permit without dressing rooms to be

held in conjunction with a 1991 Class
C liquor license at 31455 14 Mile.
Consider approval of a sile plan
north of 12 Mile between Halsted

and Haggerty roads for detached cluster housing in RP-1, planned res-idential housing district. The propo-nent is Leon Zolkower and the owner is Copperwood Creek Ltd. Partner-sto.

ls Copperwood ship.

The city manager will offer a report from the city assessor regarding the 1992 property assessment freeze and board of review procedures.

Farmington Board of Education
Lewis Schulman Center
32500 Shiawassee
Toesday, Jan. 27
6:30 p.m. — special meeting
7:30 p.m. — policy committee
8 p.m. — regular meeting

The board is expected to vote to go into closed session at the 6:30 p.m. meeting to discuss contract negotiations. The policy committee will meet to discuss proposed changes in the number of school voting pre-

During the regular meeting, the board will have a presentation from students at Flanders Elementary, conduct routine business and hear a progress report on the study of year-round education for the district.

LOSE WEIGHT WITH ACUPUNCTURE

You've probably filed to lose weight with all the usual ways Acquirent tree is an ancient Oriental way of therapy. It has proven very helpful treating many of modern day problems and otherases. Losing weight one of them. NDW is the time to make a change and tose weight with acquirection of the time to make a change and tose weight with acquirection.

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CTTY OF FARMINGTON ORDINANCE NO. C-194-92

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ection 5. Emergency Ordinance
This Ordinance in declarace in the an emergency Ordinance which is increary-stion of the public proce, health and safety.

WILLIAM & HARTSOCK, Mayor JOSEPHINE M. BUSHEY, City Clerk

Meeting adjourned at \$ 15 p m.

WILLIAM & HARTROCK, Mayor JOSEPHINE M. BUSHEY, OU Cork

Arthritis Today
Joseph J. Welss, M.D. Rheumatology
18829 Farmington Road
Livenia, Michigan 48152
Phone: 478-7850

ARTHRITIS MEDICATION &

"BLOOD THINNERS"

Many people had that saking anthies medication is dianger.

The basis for this feeling likely comes from the fast that aspirin stops blood plateless from dumping and this action in turn keeps blood from cloning.

The basis for this feeling likely comes from the fast that aspirin stops blood plateless from dumping and this action in turn keeps blood from cloning.

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