

Recovery from page 1F

Increases have been reported in Tower 14, the Advance Building, Pinewood Plaza and Honeywell buildings.

However, many large buildings in the area remain vacant.

The middle tier, bounded by Nine Mile, I-696, Lodge and Greenfield is in transition and flux.

The massive Prudential Town Center continues to draw tenants. However, once prominent offices like the former Empire of America complex and the former Donor Building are vacant, "partially plagued by asbestos and insufficient market demand."

Southfield's northern tier also may begin to experience deterioration, as space remains available in top-notch buildings like First Center and Travelers Tower.

All isn't bleak, however.

"The slow drain and exodus of tenants from Southfield to other adjoining office communities has slowed down . . . and to-

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*Joel Feldman
Noble/Advantage Group*

day is nowhere near as pronounced as it was even a year or two ago," Feldman reported.

Renovation of troubled buildings like Onyx Plaza and Comerica Southfield Tower will enable them to once again be competitive.

CANTON'S BEST KEPT SECRET Stewart's Woods



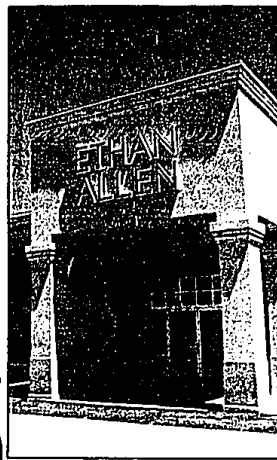
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A FEW SITES LEFT



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ART EMANUELE/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Refurbished: Ethan Allen store in Livonia saved itself a pile of money and kept its strong local client base by getting a facelift instead of moving to a new site.

Exteriors from page 1F

"This stuff is becoming a common building material," he said. "Five years ago, I had difficulty explaining to people in the business what I did."

CEMS coveted a former auto dealership for its headquarters primarily for the service area to maintain the ambulance fleet, said Donna Lawrence, marketing and community relations manager.

"As far as the exterior, we wanted to design a state-of-the-art look, something not of the typical office building look, something unique," she said.

The architect recommended Mantua's firm.

It bends relocating

Ethan Allen, with a store in Livonia for 27 years, didn't want to move from a highly visible location when contemplating an image change, said Peggy Pobuda, regional manager.

"We enjoyed good success there," she said. "Ethan Allen had been looking a couple of years to change its image to bring our look into the 90s and give people an idea of the breadth of the line we carry."

"Remodeling of the facade was a much less expensive option

■ 'Ethan Allen had been looking a couple of years to change its image to bring our look into the 90s.'

*Peggy Pobuda
regional manager*

than relocating," Pobuda said.

Mantua does some design work, but most of the time he plays a subcontractor role to jobs already specified. Seventy percent of his commercial work is renovations, 30 percent new. He's even starting to get requests for residential renovations.

"As new work picks up, this material finds itself into every new building," Mantua said. "It may just be an entryway, but it's in some way. We do jobs 10-by-10 and we do jobs that are 40,000 square feet."

Do-it-yourselfers should take care in jumping into smaller projects alone because there is a skill involved, Mantua cautioned.

"Workmanship has to be very precise, as the manufacture recommends, or there will be failure," he said.

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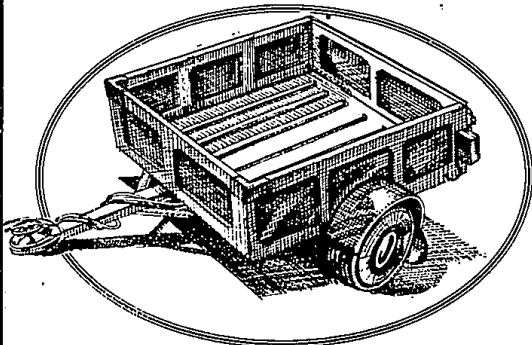
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