

Finl in Farmington

Women's boutique expects to fit in downtown

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

Finl of Farmington is just getting started as a women's boutique, but manager Nadia Hosking sees the store as a beginning of something on a grander scale.

"It (downtown Farmington) is just a nice area. Why not be another Royal Oak?," said Hosking, who lives in Farmington Hills and shops downtown. "It's a charming little town, and I think it should be made use of."

Finl of Farmington opened for business in the Cook Building, 33318 Grand River. The specialty

store sells women's clothing along with hard-to-find home accessories such as antiques, lamps, picture frames, pillows, clocks and even hat boxes.

Hosking, who was involved with the recently-closed Finl store in Twelve Oaks Mall, sees the boutique as fitting in with a downtown that is just realizing its quaint strength. She cites the coffeehouse, tea room and other specialty stores that have emerged in the past year.

The exterior of the Cook Building reminds her of something one sees in Soho or Paris. Inside, ceiling fans and a sofa accentuate the

boutique atmosphere, she said, providing a place where a husband can sit and drink coffee while his wife shops.

The building where Fred Cook and P.D. Warner once operated a store, gave Hosking the idea to start a boutique. She read there was space available and contacted the Sakutas, who own the building.

"It was one of those crazy things," said Hosking, who has previously worked in retail sales. "I saw there was space available. All the bells started ringing."

Hosking, with a group of

friends, followed through. She won't reveal who or how many people are in her corporation.

"It's not like we're going to make a fortune," Hosking said.

"It's something fun to do."

Dennis Sakuta said Finl will be a welcome addition to the Cook Building. The building already houses Gold Spot, Kitchen Master and the Grand Cafe.

Finl of Farmington rents 1,500-squads feet of space formerly occupied by Michele Marc's Flowers and Co.

"We've been holding out for an uplifting tenant to add something to the city," Sakuta said.

Downtown Development Authority director Judy Downey thinks the boutique will add something.

"It's going to improve the quality of choices downtown because this is an upscale ladies apparel outlet," Downey said. "This is the kind of shop that would increase our selection of choices of where to shop."

Gina Smith, a buyer for Finl, said women's clothing is only one aspect of the boutique. She goes to New York, Paris and Asia looking for items people would have a hard time finding elsewhere.

"It's like going to New York but

staying at home," Smith said. "I do all the leg work."

Smith's also a buyer for the Finl store that operates in Grand Blanc. Another Finl outlet in Twelve Oaks in Novi closed recently.

Finl stores are individually owned but have the same designer. Hosking said there are advantages to opening a shop in a downtown.

"I think probably you have a more personable relationship with the customers," she said, "and it's a more positive shopping experience."

Calls from page 8A

An attempted break-in of the Salvation Army food pantry on Shiloh in Farmington Hills Jan. 25-31 caused \$200 in damage to the rear door and gates.

■ EMBEZZLEMENT

A cashier didn't ring up video and computer equipment worth \$574.96 for a customer at the Target store on Grand River in Farmington Hills Jan. 30. The merchandise was recovered.

■ THEFT

A woman's diamond engagement ring worth \$1,500 was stolen from an office building on 12 Mile in

Farmington Hills Jan. 24.

A \$370 Sony Watchman TV was stolen from a residence on Lancaster in Farmington Hills Dec. 17-31.

A \$1,500 black mink jacket was stolen from the Clarion Inn on 12 Mile in Farmington Hills Jan. 25-28.

Hubcaps (\$400) from a blue 1992 Chevy Lumina at the Green Hill Apartments on Green Hill in Farmington Hills were stolen Jan. 26-27.

An NEC portable phone (\$1,800) was stolen from Harrison High on 12 Mile in Farmington Hills Jan. 16.

A \$300 AM/FM car stereo was stolen from a green 1993 Chrysler Concord parked on Echo Valley in Farmington Hills Jan. 29.

Farmington Hills undercover officers followed a yellow 1979 Mercury to the YMCA on Farmington in Farmington Hills and then arrested a 35-year-old Detroit man after he came out of the Y with \$400 worth of items including calculators, a radio, a telephone and cleaning supplies in a black plastic garbage bag Feb. 1.

A purse containing \$15 in cash and various credit cards was stolen from a bench in the Village

Shoe Inn in Farmington Jan. 29.

■ INDECENT EXPOSURE

A maintenance worker told police that a male tenant, 48, at the Independence Green Apartments on Madison Court in Farmington Hills, opened his apartment door and stood in front of her while naked Jan. 29.

■ AUTO THEFT

A white 1990 Geo Tracker worth \$12,000 was stolen from the rear lot of the Paine Webber office building on Northwestern Highway in Farmington Hills Jan. 28.

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