

Lot

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After some debate, the planning commission ultimately approved a downsized version of the special exception use permit request, formally made by Jack Demmer Lincoln-Mercury.

The temporary, five-month trial basis permit will provide them with enough time to find a permanent solution for their current storage problem," said Mardy Stirling-Hamilton, planning commission chair, after the meeting.

After deciding against a six-month permit, the commission voted 8-1 to allow Demmer stock a total of 100 cars across the street from the dealership, a number reduced from the 120 spaces originally requested. The "temporary trial basis" permit ends in mid-May.

All but Commissioner David Gronbach voted for the request.

Also approved was a request enabling the cars to have price stickers affixed to them, as long as they do not encroach the dealership's stamp.

The majority of those cars - including 30 previously approved by the city for Dusseau - will be parked in front of the former Cattleman's, as well as along Mooney Street, as far away from Uptown Farmington Plaza businesses as possible.

Farmington city building inspector John Konecal will work with the Demmers to map out the specific areas where cars can be parked. About 60 of the vehicles were parked in the lot, mostly near the corner of Grand River-Mooney (one block west of Orchard Lake Road), as of Tuesday morning.

Commissioners Terri Morency and JoAnne McShane both expressed concern about Uptown Farmington Plaza businesses losing valuable parking space in the spring but approved the request nonetheless.

The need to park cars along Grand River was viewed by commissioner Alton Bennett as somewhat of a down side to the plan.

"The 20 places along Grand River, that bothers me; they are a higher profile," Bennett said. "Our discussion before was they'd be out of the way, so it doesn't look like a car storage lot, that it looks more like (customers') cars parked in a parking lot."

Accompanying William Demmer at city hall were his father, Jack, and brother, James. All are owners of the dealership, the family's second, to go along with Jack Demmer Ford in Wayne.

The dealership's vice president, James Demmer,

later explained what prompted the need for extra space so soon after the Demmers moved in.

"When we took over the franchise (Dec. 1), we had to make Ford Motor Co. certain promises" as far as increasing business, he said. "One way to do that is to have enough inventory to support the extra sales."

For the most part, the commission was supportive, largely because they see a successful car business triggering spin-off benefits for the east end of the city.

"If you intend to keep the dealership in town," said commissioner William Burke to the Demmers, "that would increase my empathy, or sympathy" about the space dilemma.

William Demmer said he is "hoping to secure an area within the city of Farmington or Farmington Hills to support the storage of automobiles within one or two miles of the store."



Bought: William Demmer with his father and brother (at left) took over the franchise from Bob Dusseau Lincoln-Mercury. They are seeking a permanent lot for overflow new car inventory.

STAFF PHOTO BY BILL THORNTON

Tips

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spray of cinnamon sticks, pine cones and walnuts. Or center a white, paper doll on top and wrap with lots of white organdy ribbon.

Wrap travel-theme gifts in maps from your Atlas or globe compartment. Wrap a special gift in sheet music and tie with red and green velvet ribbon. Save the comics for your children's gifts and the crossword paper for a puzzle buff.

Wrap wine bottles in aluminum foil. Put confetti inside the bottle and tie with paper streamers. Or wrap the bottle in a big, colorful napkin.

■ Wrap over-sized gifts in large, inexpensive plastic-coated holiday tablecloths.

■ For a romantic gift, cover a box in gold foil paper and glue five silver paper doilies on the sides. Make a bouquet bow from dried flowers, wrap it in cellophane and tie it with lace.

■ Wrap a box of jewelry or perfume in a fancy lace hanky.

■ Save those cardboard toilet paper and paper towel tubes and stuff them with small items like socks. Wrap them in tissue paper, tie both ends with ribbon and fan out the ends.

■ A box wrapped in a swath of flowery chintz drapery gathered in a

topknot and entwined with a silk rose is gorgeous. So is a gift wrapped in moiré wallpaper adorned with a cutout of cascading chintz roses. Stiffen roses with spray starch before cutting them out.

■ Use wallpaper borders on presents wrapped in solid colors.

■ Glue brightly colored buttons or peppermints on gifts wrapped in white paper. Varnish peppermints to keep color from transferring.

■ Wrap just about any unusually shaped gift in tulle or netting.

■ Instead of a bow, decorate gifts with feathers, seashells, cookie cutters, tiny Christmas tree balls bunched with wire, or strands of fake pearls.

■ For a unique gift wrap, photocopy your favorite pictures. Color pictures can be done on 11-by-17-inch sheets and black and white on 18-by-24-inch sheets.

■ Have a teenage girl? Fill a pair of tights with hair spray, shampoo and other grooming gifts. Tie legs in several places with elastic hair "scrunchies" to keep items from shifting.

■ Have two teenage girls? Stuff the fingers of gloves with lip gloss, nail polish, eyeliner, barrettes, etc.

Ready to wrap? Great, but before you begin, remember it's what's under the wrapping that's most important. One Christmas, my cash-strapped, then-16-year-old son taped two Dixie cups rim-to-rim with duct tape and tossed the gift under the tree. The present was for his brother and contained about \$5 in loose change.

We still laugh about that gift ... every Christmas.

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