

Major investment in Temperance to bring long-awaited facelift

By Melissa Burden
Staff Writer

For years, the former Mobil Gas Station, located at 8903 Lewis Ave., in Temperance, has been an eyesore in the downtown area.

Now, a major investment by a Bedford businessman may bring new life and a much needed face lift to the downtown Temperance area.

Dale Hinkelman, of Edward Jones Investments, in Lambertville, has purchased the property from Cora Loga, who inherited the property from her late husband Robert Loga. According to Hinkelman, he and his son Jay, are well on their

way to restoring the building and opening a used car dealership, specializing in classic, muscle and late model cars. The building is the former site of Bob's Mobil Service Station.

"We have run Bedford Auto Source since 1998, which was a sideline business of ours," said Hinkelman. "This location has been 'sold' many times but there has always been a lack of financing. When the last sale fell through, Jay and I decided to just go for it."

The purchase by Hinkelman could not have come at a more opportune time.

Earlier this month, the Bedford Township Economic De-

velopment Corporation (EDC) hired ENP & Associates, of Ann Arbor, to help develop a viable economic plan for downtown Temperance.

ENP is expected to help the committee develop an economic plan, by gathering background data including demographic information, land use, housing data and vacancy rates, as well as completing a survey of the current business owners needs and wants as well as a community "visionary" session which will seek input from residents as to what they would like to see in downtown Temperance.

As a member of the EDC,

(Continued on page 9)



Out with the old ... in with the new! Dale Hinkelman, of Edward Jones Investments, and his son Jay, have purchased the former Mobil Gas Station, located at 8903 Lewis Ave., in Temperance. The two plan on restoring the building and opening a used car dealership, specializing in classic, muscle and late model cars.

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(Continued from page 1)

Hinkelman decided to be the first to begin the revitalization process.

"The EDC's focus is to revitalize downtown Temperance and this property was the most blighted property there," said Hinkelman. "My thought is that this is a start. Once I start revamping the building, other businesses may also upgrade their businesses as well. This is just my thought but I would love to see Temperance become 'Old Town Temperance' with sidewalks, street lights and curbs, but those are my visions. I just hope this begins the revitalization of the area."

According to Hinkelman, he and son Jay will restore the building to its original appearance in 1953, sans Mobil logos. Hinkelman has been helped with the restoration by finding the original building plans, tucked into a corner of the station.

The building's nostalgic appearance will include the use of the original color scheme of red and white trim on the outside, and red and gray trim on the inside, said Hinkelman.

"We will have nostalgic signage and memorabilia, and possibly an old Mobil pump as well," he said. "The two bays inside will become a showroom and we will be able to do some small repair work as well. This is the perfect location for us. It will allow us to restore cars, offer a full service detailing service, and to sell used cars."

Hinkelman and his son have already replaced the glass on the building as well as ordering the heating system from Walt Wilburn, owner of Walt's Heating and Air Conditioning, Inc., of Temperance.

"A lot of people may not realize that Bob Loga, who was also the president of ARCA (Auto Racing Club of America), wanted to turn the station into an ARCA museum before he was killed in 1996," said Hinkelman. "It is fitting that we are going to bring the nostalgia back."

Before opening in May, Hinkelman will appear before the Bedford Board of Zoning

Appeals to ask for a variance on the property. Currently, the station is zoned C-1. Hinkelman will be requesting a legal non-conforming C-3 usage.

"The variance we are requesting is not unusual," said Hinkelman. "We have received overwhelming support from the neighbors around the building, the EDC and from township officials. I am not expecting a lot of problems with the request."

Bedford Township Supervisor LaMar Frederick, said he was pleased that the old building will be on the tax rolls again.

"He (Hinkelman) has some issues with the BZA but generally, we are pleased that the building will be a productive facility which will improve the area," said Frederick. "We are generally pleased with the plans and we wish him well in his endeavor."

As for bringing another car dealership to the Lewis Avenue area, Hinkelman said that his business will complement the current businesses already there and they, in turn, will complement his.

"I already have an excellent working relationship with Northtowne Chevrolet and Whitman Ford," said Hinkelman. "We have different styles of business so we will complement each other."

Hinkelman may be best

known outside of investment circles as the creator and founder of the Bedford Summer Charity Cruises, which were held last summer at the Kroger Plaza, located at the corner of Stems and Secor, in Lambertville.

The popular auto shows raised thousands of dollars for local charities including "Take a Test Save a Life," Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), the Carr Park Equipment Challenge, the Bedford Community Foundation and the Bedford Heart of Hope.

"The Cruises will begin again in May and will be held on the fourth Thursday of every month through September," said Hinkelman adding, "The shows were very popular last year. We had 117 cars in the first show and over 260 in the last show."

An organizational meeting for the cruises will be held at the end of March or beginning of April, said Hinkelman, adding that charities for the benefit car shows will be chosen at that time.

For those interested in helping with the cruises or attending the meeting, call Hinkelman at (734) 854-5623.

Greed is a bottomless pit which exhausts the person in an endless effort to satisfy the need without ever reaching satisfaction.

- Erich Fromm