

Neighborhoods

EDITOR: JEAN PORTER
PHONE: 582-4244 / FAX: 582-7080

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News and
features at
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Jefferson Co.

Renovations lift Bardstown stretch

Apartments, store among Triangle work

By MARTHA ELSON
The Courier-Journal

A \$700,000 building planned on Bardstown Road in the Cherokee Triangle is one of three projects by one developer that are helping upgrade a busy stretch between Highland Avenue and Grinstead Drive.

The new building at 1037-41 Bardstown, where a dilapidated building was demolished, is being developed by Apex International to house the Complete

Mac computer store on the first floor.

The new building also will have three apartments and an outdoor patio on the second floor — an unusual feature that harks back to a time when people commonly lived above stores.

The apartments "are one way to keep the cash flow going," and "when the business closes, still you know there is a light on," said Karim Momeni, a partner with Farid Razavi in Apex, which also owns Highland Station Antique Galleries, 1055 Bardstown.

The computer store will move from its current site across the street at 1042 Bardstown, a multi-story former residential building owned and rehabilitated by

Apex.

With 11 employees, the store needs more space and wants to stay on Bardstown Road, president Robert Coffman said last week. Construction is set to begin soon on the new building and should be finished in November.

Highland Station Antique Galleries is in a former theater and furnace company building that Momeni and Razavi bought about four years ago. They spent about \$200,000 renovating it, Momeni said.

While some recent plans for construction along Bardstown have provoked objections, the new building Apex plans "is exactly the kind of 'in-fill' development we ought to be supporting," Commissioner Charles

Cash of the Louisville-Jefferson County Planning Commission said at a meeting last month.

Such development fills in existing empty retail spaces and buildings, rather than spreading to the suburbs.

The commission approved a waiver reducing the number of required parking spaces from 24 to 16 and a variance allowing the building to encroach into front and side yards.

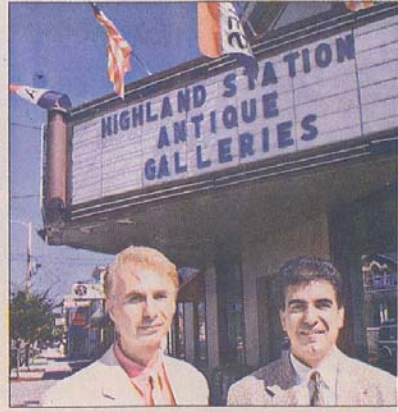
The plans also were approved by the city's Bardstown Road Overlay District Review Committee, which was "very, very receptive, very pleased," said Charles Raith, urban design administrator with the Louisville Development Authority. "They had nothing but good comments."

Momeni and Razavi also have renovated some residences in the Highlands area and are looking for more property to rehabilitate.

They first tried an Oriental rug store in the theater building, but the space was too large, Momeni said.

Then they discussed a restaurant about a year ago, but the restaurateur who was interested wanted them to help operate the restaurant — which they didn't want to do, Momeni said.

At that time, they planned a parking lot for the restaurant with an elaborate facade at the site where they now plan the new building.



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Developers Farid Razavi, left, and Karim Momeni are looking for more property to rehabilitate.

Renovations give Bardstown stretch a lift

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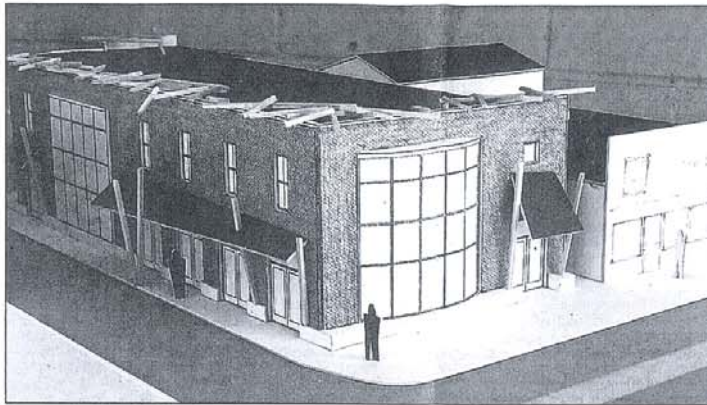
They opened the antique gallery about nine months ago in the theater building. It's filled with furniture, rugs and other items and also has a cafe. A framed photo at the entrance shows the old Airway Theatre in the 1940s, when the marquee advertised "Crosby and Astaire in Holiday Inn."

Momeni, the spokesman for the partnership, moved to the United States from Iran in 1976. He has a master's degree in engineering from the University of Louisville.

Before going into the development business, he was head of support services for U of L libraries, handling equipment purchases, construction, rehabilitation, computer systems and other matters.

Coming from a city of 3 million people in Iran, Momeni said he's attracted to Bardstown Road because of its activity and vitality. It reminds him of the Georgetown area of Washington, D.C. "I like to see the crowd," he said.

As he looks for more property to rehabilitate, he said his specialty is to take a building that's in "really bad condition and make it into a really nice place."



The new building is being developed by Apex International to house the Complete Mac computer store on the first floor and three apartments and an outdoor patio on the second.

Group's convention in Louisville

By MISSY BAXTER
Special to The Courier-Journal

Take Off Pounds Sensibly, a non-profit weight-loss organization with more than 275,000 members worldwide, will hold its 1999 international conference in Louisville, starting tomorrow.

The conference, which runs through Saturday at the Galt House East, is expected to draw more than 3,500 people from the United States, Canada and other countries.

Known as TOPS International Recognition Day, the conference will include a special ceremony to recognize people who have achieved their weight-loss goals.

This is the first time the international conference has been held in Kentucky, and many Louisville-area members helped organize the event.

Last year's gathering was in Milwaukee, and it celebrated the organization's 50th anniversary.

The non-profit organization was founded in 1948 in Milwaukee by Esther Mazz, a homemaker.

It is the world's oldest weight-loss organization and has more than 11,000 chapters worldwide.

The chapters, which meet weekly, provide members with information, motivation and fellowship in attaining and maintaining their physician-prescribed weight goals.

The chapters welcome women, men and children.

There are 64 TOPS chapters in the Louisville metropolitan area, 40 of them in Jefferson County.

For information about chapters in your area, call (800) 832-8677, or visit the group's Web site at www.tops.org.

TOPS leader helps others shed those extra pounds

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honored to be hosting it."

Keown and other organizers had to find a suitable location, make sure hotel accommodations were available for the 3,500 members expected to attend, plan daily activities, arrange guest speakers and help decorate.

"A lady from my TOPS chapter named Marcella Wilson, who passed away last year, made all the flags that will be presented to people during the recognition ceremony," Keown said. "A lot of people put a lot of time into getting ready for this. We hope it's the best conference ever."

Keown said TOPS works because it's based on camaraderie.

"The support you get from the members is great," she said. "If you're having a hard time losing, people there can sympathize. People who have never had a weight problem don't usually understand how hard it is to lose weight."

Keown said she's learned vital things about healthy eating as a TOPS member, like eating breakfast each day to jumpstart your metabolism.

She also recommends eating three small meals a day with healthy snacks in

between. And exercising.

"Exercising can help you lose weight, and it reduces stress," she added.

The main difference between TOPS and other weight-loss organizations is the cost, Keown said.

"Our members only pay \$20 a year, and that includes a monthly magazine that has success stories, medical advice and recipes," she said. Some weight-loss groups charge weekly and want participants to buy their packaged food, she added. "We teach you how to cook healthier meals."

Keown, who makes weekly visits to TOPS chapter 33, which meets at SS. Simon & Jude Catholic School in southern Louisville, said she'll be a lifelong member.

"Facing the scales every week is a good incentive because it motivates you. . . . It keeps me in line," she said. "Losing weight and keeping it off is an ongoing battle we have to fight."

Other members credit Keown with contributing to their success at losing weight.

"She really is an inspiration to everyone," said Malvia Szczapinski, a member of Chapter 536 in Pleasure Ridge Park. "Patsy has the sweetest personality, and she's always willing to help others. That makes her a good leader."

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