



300 block of West Main Street, 1963.

A slow but sure storefront conversion

(Cont'd from P. 4)

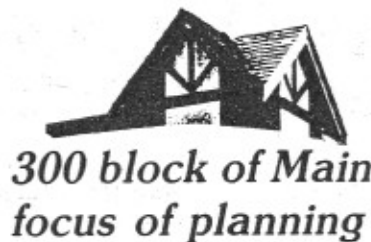
ed a complex of buildings — all in Swiss Chalet architecture.

McLouth tried then to encourage the community to adopt to this same kind of style, but the time was not right — not until 1963 when the idea was resurrected by a chamber of commerce committee.

In the 300 block Gordon Everett, who owned the Northern Star shopper's guide located in the middle of the block, was the first person to bring an architectural rendition of Alpine storefronts to the community.

Today, the main lodge at Hidden Valley Resort / Otsego Ski Club features an A-Frame with exposed beams, cut fieldstone and blue colors. It overlooks the Sturgeon River Valley, neighboring watersheds for the Pigeon and Black rivers.

Indeed, Gaylord is the high water mark for northern Michigan, the divide of watersheds going in all directions. The AuSable and Manistee rivers also have beginnings in Otsego County and head off to Lakes Huron and Michigan,



300 block of Main focus of planning

respectively.

Adopting the Alpine idea, the chamber of commerce developed a plan to convert the central business district slowly but surely to a consistent motif in the style of a Swiss Village.

One complex of downtown buildings on the south side of the 100 block of West Main Street provided the start. There were eight store buildings, five of which were vacant.

They were purchased by the old Gaylord State Bank, all of them razed and in their place the present banking structure for Old Kent Bank of Gaylord was built.

The first building is of cut fieldstone, in the gentle slope of an A-frame. The second is a three-story office building with a clock tower, featuring flower boxes,

balconies and stucco finish.

In the same block, the former Hogan's Jewelers and Mooney's Sporting Goods Shop buildings were purchased by new owners and in their place today, stand the Pendleton Shop and the Alphorn Shop.

The Alphorn Shop features a flower box balcony and the alphorns mounted on the front of the building.

Over the next several years, downtown underwent a tremendous transformation from old to new. The Swiss style caught on throughout the central business district. One by one the storefronts were united by the theme.

The Glasser Building at Main and Court streets has dominated the central square for around 50 years. Beth Zorn, an architect from Birmingham, fashioned the current Alpine adaptation with shutters and Edelweiss flowers. Built on the front of the building, a balcony, shake-shingle awning, new flower boxes, new windows and bright colors became bright examples of Alpine touches in the

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How downtown Gaylord gradually changed appearance

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First National Bank of Gaylord

501 West Main Gaylord 732-3502

Arby's Roast Beef

609 W. Main Gaylord 732-4943