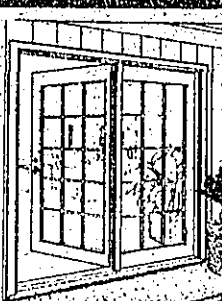


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Hills historical stops marked way to cityhood

For many years before cityhood, the Farmington Hills region was ripe with history. Following is a description of some of the more familiar landmarks.

WHERE FARMINGTON began. The corner of 11 Mile and Power. On March 8, 1824, five men, led by Arthur Power, a Quaker from Farmington, N.Y., came into this area. They built a log house about one-half mile to the southeast of this point, "on the bank of a small run" which can still be seen. The permanent village, now the 2 1/2 square miles of the city of Farmington, was established within six months, about one-half mile south of here along the Shawasssee Trail. In 1972 the remaining 33 1/2 square miles of the original township area was incorporated into the City of Farmington Hills.

THE BOTSFORD INN. On Grand River West of Eight Mile. This historic inn, the oldest in Michigan still providing food and lodging, was built as a home in 1836 by Orrin Weston. In 1841 it was converted into a tavern by Stephen Jennings. Known as the Sixteen Mile House, it was the stage-coach stop here in Clarenceville on the Grand River Plank Road, which followed an Indian trail that went on to Lake Michigan. Milton C. Botsford in 1880 acquired the inn. It became a popular meeting place for drovers, farmers, and travelers to and from Detroit. Henry Ford, who had first seen the inn while courting his future wife, Clara, in a horse and buggy, purchased the Inn from the Botsfords in 1924 and restored it. The Fords operated it until 1951.

THE PHILBRICK TAVERN. The corner of 11 Mile and Power. The attractive home on the northwest corner dates from 1827. In the 1830s and '40s it was a tavern operated by Nathan Philbrick and was one of the finer hotels in southern Oakland County, widely known for the high quality of its entertainment for weary travelers. It also served as a meeting place for the early township government. In the 1850s, according to a strong and persistent local legend, the place possibly served as a station on the Underground Railroad, helping escaped slaves into Canada. It is now a private, well-kept home.

UNIVERSALIST CHURCH. Halsted. The Farmington Union Society began the planning of this New England-style

Meeting House in 1849. Universalist services were held here prior to its dedication on Aug. 28, 1853. Pledged to a free religion, its pulpit has been shared not only by other denominations but by politicians and poets. Known now as the Universalist-Unitarian Church, it was moved in 1987 from Warner near Thomas to the Gibson Centennial Farm. It is the oldest church building in the Farmington area, and the oldest Universalist Church in Michigan.

NORTH FARMINGTON. Corner of 14 Mile and Farmington Road. Established here around 1850, this was a small village, containing a post office, a blacksmith shop, a cheese factory, general stores and about 10 homes. It was a collecting point for milk from the surrounding farms. A cemetery, south of here, still owned and controlled by an association, was incorporated in March 1837. With the coming of Rural Free Delivery, the post office was closed. With better transportation available, the businesses and stores were closed, and North Farmington was a ghost town by 1930.

FRACTIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 1. On Middlebelt near Northwestern Highway. This is the only existing one-room schoolhouse in the area used continuously for educational purposes. It was built on land donated for a public school and later named after George German, one of an English group who settled here in 1835. It provided education for grades one through eight for many years. After all of the school districts in Farmington were consolidated in 1944, the building was used for kindergarten classes. This site, and one-room schoolhouse, is now owned by the Hilled Day School.

THE UTLEY CEMETERY. Entrance of the East Farmington Cemetery on 12 Mile. This cemetery, now known as the East Farmington Cemetery, is the oldest in Farmington. Mrs. Sanford M. Utley, who died as a result of a fall as she alighted from a wagon upon completion of her long trip from New York, was the first settler to be buried here. She was laid to rest on Sept. 26, 1824, which also, coincidentally, was the birthdate of John Collins, the first white child to be born in the community. This land was donated by Mrs. Utley's son, Peleg S. Utley. Many of Farmington's earliest settlers are interred here.

First council meeting

Following is an article that appeared in the Farmington Observer after the new city's first city council session.

Robert McConnell was elected the first mayor of the city of Farmington Hills at the historic first council session Monday.

Frederick Lichtman was named mayor pro-tem, and the council rapidly set a date of July 23 for a hearing on the first city budget, incorporating a tentative increase of 0.8 mills.

City Clerk Floyd Cairns was named acting city manager, and the council accepted the offer of Edward Miller Associates to conduct a search for the new city manager for \$1 plus expenses. McConnell's appointment as mayor

culminated years of work toward incorporation of the new city.

PRESIDENT OF THE Future Farmington Association, he was drafted to run as township supervisor on a pro-incorporation platform.

Chairman of the charter commission, he spearheaded the most recent, successful drive to cityhood.

Earl Oppenheimer, who made the nomination, praised McConnell in a lengthy speech saying, "You would have to look a long time to find someone who has worked as hard for cityhood."

Lichtman, who has made support of cityhood a constant theme in his local political career, ran closely behind McConnell in the election for council on the same slate.