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with full payment by the city.

The following stipulations would also apply:

■ That the current sign be replaced with a sign of about the same size and at a location acceptable to the Masons. The name at the top of the sign will say "Farmington Masonic Temple."

■ In the planter area northwest of the Grand River-Farmington Road corner and adjacent to the southwest area, a 9-foot-deep by 12-foot-wide area will be provided for the placement of the Masons' vendor booth which is operated during the Founders Festival.

■ An electrical outlet will be located in the vendor area for the Masons' use.

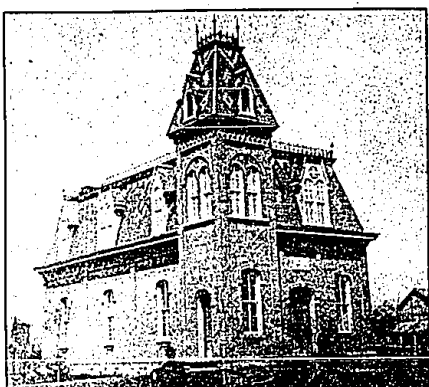
■ The improvements made in the area will not be used to increase the state equalized valuation of the Masonic property.

■ Final drawings of the proposed improvements will be provided to the Masonic Lodge for review prior to construction.

■ The city will be responsible for all maintenance in the land lease area and will maintain the right to make improvements and modifications to structures in the land lease area as considered appropriate and will advise the Masonic Lodge of any such plans prior to implementation.

Past seat of government

The Masonic Temple originally housed both the offices for the city and township of Farmington, served as the monthly meeting place for the Masons on the second floor, and was used as a community hall in which dances and



In days of old: The Masonic Temple, completed in 1876 at a cost of \$4,300, once served as the Farmington Township Hall.

basketball games were held.

Masonic Lodge No. 161 was established Oct. 15, 1863, when the Grand Lodge of Michigan granted a dispensation for one to be started in Farmington. Oliver B. Smith served as the first worshipful master for the Farmington Lodge, which had 123 charter members.

Meetings were held in a room above a dry-goods store on the north side of Grand River, about a block east of Farmington Road.

The Masons met there for nine years until the Farmington fire of 1872 destroyed much of the city north of Grand River.

In 1885, the Farmington Masonic Temple Association listed 410 members — part of the nearly 5 million men, 3.5 million in the United States, who are members of the Free and Accepted Masons.

Howard Legg, secretary of the Farmington Association, said the local group now has 330 member.

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"I remember one time when we (husband Charlie and three children at home) had a power outage," she said. "We had no TV, no distractions. We had to talk. It was great. We made popcorn, played games, slept in sleeping bags and really spent time with each other."

Bates said she doesn't want government necessarily to have a larger role, but rather to become a clearinghouse so that people needing parenting help, family counseling, or assistance can find the right agency.

One expert said Farmington Hills could follow a plan being adopted in Pontiac and Waterford that focuses on children from

birth to age 5. And other than administrative start-up costs, the "healthy start" program, first developed in Hawaii, uses resources and agencies already up and running.

"We need to focus on early childhood needs," said Christina DeLange, executive director of the Child Abuse Council of Oakland County.

"Sometimes parents are involved in desperate decisions where you get a 'home alone' situation or something like it." The program coordinates organizations that deal with family issues, including abuse, public health, and education, DeLange said.

But Bates said she has no specific agenda, just a desire to match agencies and services with families who can use them.

"It could be as simple as providing one night a month where families could join together in some activities," she said. "I'd like to get families out from behind the TV and out doing something together."

Bates said she sees meeting family needs as a way to prevent drug abuse, crime, and other destructive behavior.

The committee will have its first meeting at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, April 15, at city hall.

Party

from page 1A

the refreshments. Among other actions, the committee:

■ Agreed to make invitations formal and in the name of the Farmington Hills City Council.

■ Decided to use the city logo on a sheet cake and napkins for the event and come up with a slogan to mark the date.

■ Discussed events for the Family Day in the Park, set for July 11 at Heritage Park.

■ Agreed to rent a calliope for the event.

■ Decided to put on an early morning walk and pancake breakfast to benefit Team Farmington, a local Special Olympics group. The committee plans to meet again on Wednesday, May 5.

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