

A Historic Renovation at 340 Main Street

Transformation of the Timothy Wadsworth House a labor of love

By Ron Janeczko & Chris G. Nelson

THE HISTORY of 340 Main Street in Farmington is deep and rich. The home was originally built by Timothy Wadsworth in 1795 with a main “body” and an “ell”. 340 Main was one of the stops on the Underground Railroad, with hiding places in the attic and basement. Years ago the town erected a granite post with plaque on the front lawn commemorating the homes’ status as a stop on the “Freedom Trail” and so we utilized similar granite posts for our main and entry signs.

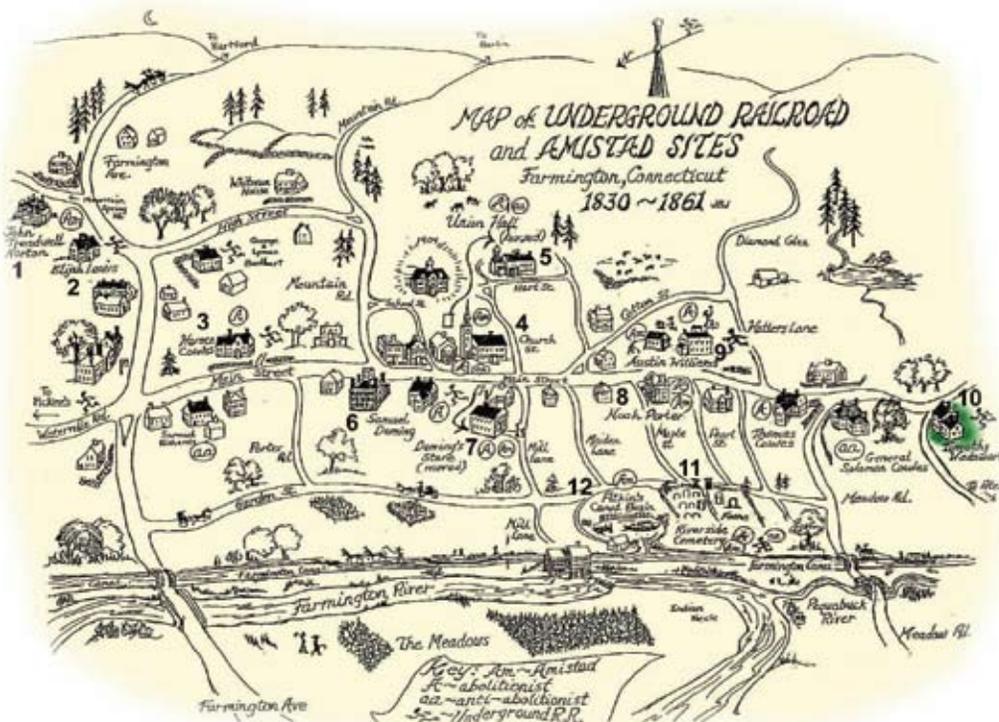
The previous owner secured variances to allow for an office use of the home. A simple parking system was installed, but the property was never utilized commercially. Upon our purchase we worked with Architect Jack Kemper (Kemper Associates) and Landscape Architect Chris Ferrero (Ferrero / Hixon Associates) to create an updated



site plan and building expansion plan to meet modern-day office use and ADA requirements. Both the size of the structure and the parking lot was expanded. Our primary goal, as craftsmen, local business owners, and residents, was to honor the historic structure while creating an integrated finished product where it would be hard to tell the

new from the old. We feel we have accomplished this and more. The property was honored by the Farmington Garden Club and Chamber of Commerce by being presented with their 2008 Beautification Award.

The construction process was a labor of love. As we started by ex-



At left, The Timothy Wadsworth house is highlighted in green on this modern interpretation of a primitive map of Farmington Village. The house has a place in history as it was a stop along the Underground Railroad’s “Freedom Trail.”

Map was adapted from “Speaking for Ourselves, African American Life in Farmington, Connecticut” by Barbara Donahue and the Farmington Historical Society Research Team. Copyright © 1998 by Farmington Historical Society. Original map by Jean Johnson, Copyright © 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009. For more information go to www.farmingtonhistoricalsociety-ct.org



ploring what was behind the walls and discovered a previous renovation had dramatically changed and updated both structure and mechanical systems. The exterior walls, for example, were a blend of original framing and newer plywood sheathing. The electrical and mechanical systems had been updated, but were not adequate for modern office needs.

We utilized the “Flash & Batt” insulating system, which uses a thin layer of expanding foam for critical air seal and then ran all new wiring and Cat 6 network cables. Then we used high-R batt insulation in the walls and topped off with blown-in cellulose in the attic. Pella Architectural Series windows and Len-

nox HVAC systems were selected for their high energy efficiency. The end result is a very tight, comfortable, and efficient building with all of the modern conveniences and systems expected in a new office.

Where we could, we retained the original flooring, otherwise we specified random wide-plank oak. All interior trim was consistent with what originally existed in the home: Flat stock window, door, and base trim and simple cove at the ceiling. Some built-up trim was used at key locations, such as the main reception desk in the lobby. One of our design desires was to have clients enter the space and feel immediately comfortable and “at home”. We again worked with

interior designer Kirsten Floyd, who also helped us decorate previous HOBI winners Hamilton Way, Bradford Walk, and Somersby.

Construction was completed in late September 2008 and today, three companies enjoy this beautiful space. Landworks Realty, a growing full-service real estate services company, occupies most of the first floor. Nelson Construction and Landworks Development occupy the second floor and one office on the first.

Editors Note:

More history was made when Landworks won the Best Commercial Rehab / Adaptive Reuse HOBI Award for 2009.