

# How Forest Park Became A City

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# 1954

- Warner-Kanter (W-K) buys undeveloped land in North Greenhills from Cincinnati Community Development Company(CCD-CO) and renames it Forest Park.
- Commits to build 1,000 units the first year and four more increments of 1,000 units until 5,000 have been built.

# 1956

- First house is sold and occupied at 861 Cascade Road in March. Owners are Robert and Helen Carroll.
- Forest Park is dedicated on Sept. 28 in a ceremony at Founders Park at Sharon and Waycross.

# 1957

- On April 2, Warner-Kanter Vice President L. Charles Underwood meets with five middle-management Forest Park residents employed by GE, GM, and Avco Corporation to discuss organizing a civic association.
- On April 29, approximately 100 residents come to a meeting called by Bill Kernodle to take steps to form a civic association.
- They draw up a constitution and by-laws in subsequent meetings and in December inaugurate the *Forest Park Newsletter*, an 8 ½ x 11 publication for all members.

# 1958 & 1959

- On May 15, 1958 the Civic Association reports sufficient membership to form 11 standing committees, one of which is the Development Committee working closely with Warner-Kanter, Inc.
- The Warner-Kanter partnership is dissolved and Forest Park development is taken over by a new corporation, Joseph H. Kanter Corporation.
- In 1959 Union Central Life Insurance buys land in the western part of Springfield Township, intending to move from 4<sup>th</sup> and Vine (now PNC Tower).

# 1960

- By the end of the year the *Forest Park Newsletter* notes that 1,200 families are living in Forest Park and 475 (40%) of them are members of the Civic Association.
- The population is estimated to be 4,800, based on Springfield Township census tracts.
- The Association's largest standing committee, Development, has 20 members.

# January, 1961

- The 20 members of the Development Committee, with the approval of the 9-member Executive Committee, commission “A Study of the Proposed Village of Forest Park” to be done by the Bureau of Governmental Research, Inc.
- The Kanter Corporation agrees to pay for the study.

# Early March, 1961

- Word at GE is that people in Greenhills want to gerrymander and annex the Union Central property.
- It is learned that a handful of Forest Parkers had asked to be annexed to Greenhills.
- A plan to consider incorporation later in the year is immediately scrapped and replaced by a plan to block the attempt at annexation.



# Mid-March, 1961

- On March 19, the 9 Directors and 11 Development Committee members of the Civic Association recommend incorporation ASAP and that same day collect sufficient valid signatures for a petition to be submitted to the Springfield Township trustees asking for permission to hold an incorporation election.
- On March 20, Forest Park's lawyer hand-delivers its request to the Springfield Township Trustees. This had to be completed before the Greenhills Village Council could approve an annexation request. By law, Greenhills could not act while a valid incorporation request was pending.

# April and May, 1961

- On April 5, the Township trustees approve the request and authorize an election. Near that same time, the report of the Bureau of Governmental Research, Inc. is released.
- On May 5, the election is held and incorporation is approved by voters 924-258 (78%-22%).

# July, 1961

- On July 5, Forest Park's incorporation as a village is ratified by the State of Ohio.
- On July 8, an election is held to select six village council members, for which there are 27 candidates, and a mayor, for which there are 3 candidates.
- Also running for election at that time are 3 candidates for Clerk and 2 for Treasurer.
- The first meeting of the Forest Park Village Council is held July 22 at Kemper Heights Elementary School with all elected officials in attendance for swearing in and voting on ordinances and resolutions.

# January, 1962 and November, 1963

- New terms begin for all officials elected in November, 1961: 4 years for the four largest vote-getters and 2 years for the others.
- Members of the Civic Association vote in November, 1963 to disband on the basis that their purpose for existence, the incorporation decision had been met.

# 1967, 1968, 1969

- A Charter Commission is elected in November, 1967 consisting of 15 volunteers (all men).
- Residents adopt a charter in 1968 specifying a Council-Manager form of government.
- Forest Park is declared a city by Ohio Secretary of State based, not on census data, but because Forest Park had over 5,000 registered voters.

# Sources

- Private conversations with Frank VonHagen.
- Forest Park Historical Society clipping files,
- ***Forest Park Newsletter***---December 10, 1957-December, 1964.  
Published by the FP Civic Association through June, 1963, Forest Park Historical Society Archives.
- Minutes of Forest Park Civic Association General meetings and Board of Directors meetings---April 29, 1957 to May 6, 1963, Forest Park Historical Society Archives.
- ***Greenhills Journal***, April 12, 1957, Greenhills Library Archives.