Located along the east side of Garden Street, the Paul Wollenberg House sits on a small incline facing west towards the Farmington River. The surrounding residential neighborhood contains a variety of nineteenth- and twentieth-century architecturally significant buildings. Farmington's Historic District lies directly to the east.
Cross-gable in plan, this three-bay transitional Queen Anne/Colonial Revival-style dwelling was erected about 1900. The building's most prominent architectural features are the recessed arches found in the gable ends. A simple Colonial Revival-style porch with classical columns resting on a solid balustrade adorn the facade. Note the roof's wide overhanging eaves. A single-story, bay window is displayed on the south elevation. Modest two-over-two windows are exhibited on the first floor while the one-over-one, second floor windows feature a decorative upper sash. The small gable window displays a pattern pane above a blank lower pane.

Paul F.W. Wollenberg had this house built about 1900 on land purchased from Joseph W. Backus and Henry W. Barbour (FLR 71:428 and 71:470). A local construction firm, the Parsons Brothers, built the house. Mr. Wollenberg's brother, Gustave built a similar dwelling further south on Garden Street at the same time (see 180 Garden Street). Born in Germany, Wollenberg (1861-1903) was the son of Wilhelm and Christine Wollenberg. He and his brother Gustave owned and operated the old grist mill along the Farmington River. In 1897 Wollenberg married Edith Mary Fison (b. 1867), a native of Horton, York County, England, and they had two children: Christopher Herbert (b. 1899) and Ellen Caroline (b. 1902). Active in the Congregational Church, Wollenberg served as a deacon and superintendent of the Sunday School. After her husband's sudden death in 1903, Edith Wollenberg received the house from her husband's estate (FLR 74:187). In 1951, she quit-claimed the property to her son, Colonel Christopher Wollenberg, but remained in the house until her death in 1957. Colonel Wollenberg, a WWI veteran, married in 1920, Ada Fripp of Tarboro, South Carolina and they lived in a house they erected at 12 Maiden Lane. In 1968 the property was sold to Miss Porter's School and it now serves as a faculty residence.

An interesting interpretation of the Queen Anne style with Colonial Revival style embellishments, this house derives historical significance for its association with the Wollenbergs, a prominent family of German descent.

Sources
OWNER'S NAME: WOLLENBERG, EDITH N.F.

WOLLENBERG, CHRISTOPHER

1950-res.

4/16/51 Vol 108 p 34

ADDRESS: Garden Street & Maiden Lane

DATE BUILT: 1900

FOR: Paul Wollenberg

ARCHITECT

Plans from a book

MASTER-BUILDER

Parsons Brothers


REFERENCES:
This house is pictured on page 108 of the Farmington Book as the residence of Mrs. Paul P. Wollenberg.

The house was built in 1900 on land purchased by Paul Wollenberg in 1899 from Backus and Barbour. Paul Wollenberg and his brother Gustave at that time were operating the grist mill at the foot of Mill Road.

Paul Wollenberg had on September 14, 1897, married Edith Mary Fison, daughter of James Reeve Fison and Ellen Sophia Davey, of Peacedale, Rhode Island, formerly of Horton, York County, England. When first married Mr. and Mrs. Wollenberg lived in the mill house, pictured to the north of the mill in the photo on page 53 of the Farmington Book. Their son Christopher Herbert Wollenberg was born in that house.

Paul Wollenberg was a Deacon and an active member of the Congregational Church, and served as superintendent of the church school for several years.

A second child was born to them in this house on December 27, 1902, Ellen Carolyn Wollenberg.

At about the time of Ellen's birth, or a short time prior to it, Paul Wollenberg was seriously injured in an accident at the grist mill. He had to be given much attention and young Christopher, to relieve his mother of part of her burdensome duties, was taken by her brother Herbert William Fison to live in Brooklyn, New York, where he was also providing a home for his mother and for his sister Ellen Fison. Herbert Fison was librarian in Brooklyn, later moved to Malden, Massachusetts.

Paul Wollenberg died in 1903 and young Christopher returned home from Brooklyn not long afterward. He attended Center School here in Farmington and delivered newspapers during his attendance at Farmington High School.

Christopher Wollenberg was one of the first to enter the military service after the Declaration of War in the early spring of 1917. He wished service in the Marines but applied also for the Army, to be doubly sure that he would get into the service. The Army responded first, but was willing to release him when the chance came for officers' training in the Marines, which he took at Quantico, Virginia, after basic training at Parris Island, South Carolina.

It was at the latter base that he met Miss Ada Fripp, the daughter of Arthur Herbert Fripp and Margaret Elizabeth Tison of Tarboro, South Carolina. She was employed by the government in the Army and Navy Department in Washington, D. C. Miss Fripp was a descendant of the early colonists of South Carolina. Her father's family owned and lived on Helena's Island, South Carolina, until the Civil War. Her mother was a direct descendant of Landgrave Smith, first colonial governor of South Carolina.

May 15, 1974
Christopher Wollenberg and Ada Fripp were married on "Neutral Ground" at the Church of Epiphany on January 8, 1920, after Christopher had been released from service at the end of World War I. After their marriage Christopher and his wife lived with his mother at 125 Garden Street. In 1929 they built the house at 12 Maiden Lane on part of the Wollenberg property, and that is the house in which they still reside.

Ellen Carolyn Wollenberg was married in 1928 to Henry Case Rice of Waterville Road, grandson of Henry Rice of 37 Mt. Spring Road. They lived in Bridgeport, where Henry Rice was employed by Otis Elevator. They had no children and Ellen Rice died sometime in the early 1940's.

Mrs. Paul Wollenberg (G. G. to her grandchildren) occupied this house until her death on October 14, 1957, and then the house was inherited by Col. Christopher Wollenberg of 12 Maiden Lane. He rented the house out for some ten years and then sold it to Miss Porter's School, who use it as a residence for members of their faculty.

It is presently the residence of William Schnippert and his wife and family.

May 15, 1974