



A little history...

Special Hillandale moments

1716-- Alexander Beall is deeded a 920-acre tract between Northwest and Paint Branches. Upon his death, the estate is parceled among heirs. One parcel, in what is now East Silver Spring, is called "Hills and Dales."

Turn of the 20th Century-- The local area contains small farms, two country churches and three large country estate-farms owned by wealthy Washingtonians. Horse breeding and racing is popular for the estate owners. A large part of Hillandale is known as Sitka Farm owned by a Civil War entrepreneur who made a vast fortune in the seal fur trade of early Alaska. From 1916 through the 1920s, Sitka Farm becomes Carmandale, a commercial racehorse breeding operation, featuring Meridian, the 1911 Kentucky Derby winner. Another estate, in what is now Oakview, is named Avenel, the country home of the owner of the National Theater and sees frequent visits by performers and artists. A third estate boasts an early golf course and a dam on the Northwest Branch that provides both boating and terrapins.

1930s -- The large country homes are giving way to other uses, with the Xaverian Brothers establishing a seminary and college, and a developer, Merritt Lockwood, planning residential development. Lockwood reaches back to use the forgotten name of the Beall tract for his new subdivision, Hillandale. The main thoroughfare, such as it was, is called Bladensburg-Colesville Road by old timers, Avenel Road by some maps and eventually renamed "Piney Branch Road--Extended." Just off Cresthaven Drive goats graze in the fields. On both sides of the main road, houses are being built. Residents form the Hillandale Citizens Association (HCA) in 1937.

1940s -- The volunteer fire department is incorporated, with its firehouse in the old Sitka Farm barn. The Golden Rule Dairy (later bisected by the Capital Beltway) supplies milk to local residents. But the big news is the construction of the Naval Ordnance Laboratory (NOL) and the arrival of scientists and workers to the area.

1950s -- Hillandale gets its first elementary school (now CHI Centers). The Hillandale Swim and Tennis Club opens in 1957. New houses (advertised for \$8,450, all brick) touted as "beautiful country life in beautiful Hillandale." And that main road is renamed New Hampshire Ave.

1960s -- The Hillandale Shopping Center develops, with a big Tower Department Store and a drug store with a lunch counter. More homes are constructed, some in Crest Park known for "mid-century" architecture. A second pool, West Hillandale Swim Club, opens in 1962 and a second elementary school, Cresthaven, opens. The Hillandale Recreation Center hosts square dancing cotillions. Construction of the Capital Beltway is completed with opening ceremonies in Hillandale. The Golden Rule Dairy succumbs to development pressure, closes and the land becomes a mix of uses, including the Coca-Cola bottling plant. The community builds the Hillandale welcome wall.

1970s, 80s, 90s -- The Xaverian College, facing financial challenges, sells the property to the AFL-CIO for the George Meany Center for Labor Studies which later becomes the National Labor College. The West Hillandale Citizens Association merges with HCA to unite area homeowners. The Naval Surface Warfare Center (a.k.a. Naval Ordnance Laboratory, NOL) grows and then closes with the federal government holding on to the property for future use.

Turn of the 21st Century -- Much of the community remains the same---houses, pools, shopping--but investments are made in two new elementary schools and a new middle school. Our biggest new neighbor is the Food and Drug Administration, which by 2015 will consolidate on a 130-acre tract of the 660-acre White Oak Federal Research Center (the new name for the old Navy property). Nine thousand, or more, FDA employees will work at the agency's New Hampshire Avenue campus when completed. For the latest FDA development plans see:

<http://www.fda.gov/AboutFDA/WorkingatFDA/BuildingsandFacilities/WhiteOakCampusInformation/default.htm>