

Profile
Wenonah

Wenonah conceived as serenity by creek

The minutes of the Mantua Land & Improvement Co. of April 3, 1871, recorded the founding of the town and lake known as Wenonah. The name Wenonah, or Winona, was derived from the Santee Indian dialect and means "first-born daughter." Wenonah was the mother of Hiawatha, according to the famous poem by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

The town was incorporated in 1873 by a group of wealthy Philadelphia businessmen whose vision was to create a small town along the Great Mantua Creek that offered serene living in stately homes with tree-lined streets and easy access to the city. The location also was chosen for the pure artesian water and the soil, which afforded excellent drainage, thereby eliminating the risk of malaria and other such diseases, the early inhabitants reasoned.

A Profile of Wenonah by Jane Ramsay

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