The sale of six acres of land by Mike and Signe Fredrick to the Town of Milton for its potential new municipal building is in keeping with a family tradition of offering a vision for friends and neighbors in the rural township to secure and maintain a quality way of life.

When the Town of Milton sought alternatives for fire and safety protection moving forward, Fredrick said building a new facility on land tilled by his father, Jerry, is in keeping with the community awareness and vision handed down through three generations of farming.

The recent decision by the Town of Milton Board of Supervisors to potentially split from its long-standing fire department partnership with the City of Milton left the township in need of land for its own municipal building to house its municipal offices, police and fire departments. The town’s municipal and police offices are currently housed in a small building on Second Street in the City of Milton and the town jointly owns the fire department located along Madison Avenue.

“This is something dad would have been very proud of being a part of,” Fredrick said of the township taking full control of its own fire protection needs. “He always wanted to do what’s best for the community in the long run – not just the short answer.”

Mike Fredrick is a third- generation farmer and now a restauranteur. A supper club along Merchant’s Row bears the Fredrick name and is operated by Mike and Signe and Lori and Mike Jacobson. But Fredrick still plants many of the acres of the farm just east of Milton his father nourished a grew for decades.

Jerry Fredrick grew up on a farm along Pine Road west of Milton and then leased land along Highway 59 east of town owned by Leo Frank. In 1972, Jerry bought the farm and grew it into a 300-acre crop and dairy farm.

The long hours farming each day did not preclude Jerry Fredrick from becoming one of Milton’s best-known citizens through his tireless community service. The elder Fredrick was a charter member of the Milton Jaycees and later became one of the driving forces of Milton’s FFA Alumni, perhaps Milton’s most productive and accomplished service organizations. He also helped to build the new Hope Luthern Church.

Jerry Fredrick’s community service also extended to Milton Township when he was elected to the town board and served three terms beginning in the mid-1990s. During those years, he represented the township on the Joint Fire Commission.

“He always had a way of playing devil’s advocate,” Mike said of his father. “He had a knack for asking the tough question or the question others did want to ask.

“He never wanted to go with a short-term or easy fix,” Mike added. “I think he would have viewed the merger with Janesville as an easy fix. He always wanted to do what’s best for the long-term good of the township.”

Mike Fredrick views the potential decision by the township to end its relationship with the City of Milton and its impending fire department merger with Janesville, as a positive path for the township to move forward with an agreement with the Edgerton fire department.

“This came out of a discussion between multiple elected people from various municipalities,” Fredrick said. “All were in need of clarity on fire and safety services. They are all seeking a say in it. I think we are a big enough community to provide our own fire service and help out townships around us.”

Despite that growth, Fredrick insisted on reverting to some of the traditions handed down by his father when it came time to cement an agreement between parties. The sales agreement between Fredrick and the township was signed on the hood of a pickup truck and Fredrick and town chair Bryan Meyer forged the decision with “dollar shake” a traditional exchange of a handshake and one dollar to finalize the deal.