

## **Town House at Mill Hill Historic Park Part II-Timeline 1659-1848**

### **1659**

The first Meeting House was built at the corner of East Ave. and Fort Point St. This building was the place where the people of Norwalk worshiped on Sundays and where the men of the town gathered to discuss the business of the town. The building was probably made of logs and the dimensions were 30 feet long and 18 feet wide. This building did not have a bell. The men were called to meetings by beating the drum. Inside the building were bare benches with no backs. The building had no heat. On Sundays when the building was used for religious purposes, the men sat on one side of the room and the women sat on the other. The religious service lasted for several hours in the morning, took a break for lunch, then continued through the afternoon. Children attended these meetings and were expected to be quiet and still for the whole time.

### **c1680**

The second Meeting House was built. The children of the original settlers had grown, married and had children of their own. New people came to settle in Norwalk – the town was growing. In 1678 the people of the town began planning for a new and larger Meeting House. The plans described a square building, with a roof like the one on the Fairfield Meeting House. It was to be erected about one block North of the first Meeting House. The old Meeting House was sold in 1683. The new building continued to serve as the place where the town held religious meeting as well as town government meetings.

### **1720**

A new building which was called “The Meeting House” was built, but this building was not to be used for any meetings other than religious meetings. This could be called the first “Congregational Church Building”. Samuel Grumman of Fairfield was the builder of this meeting house. The Town business meetings were held in the already existing “North” or “Upper” school house.

### **1726**

After some discussion, the town decided not to build a new building for the purpose of Town business meetings. Instead, they added an addition to the school house.

### **1746**

A Town House was erected for the sole purpose of conducting town business. This building was built on the site of the 1835 Town House.

### **1794**

The Town House was erected. People began slowly re-building Norwalk after the Burning of Norwalk during the Revolutionary War.

**1835**

A Town House, the present day Town House, was built to replace the 1794 building which had become so dilapidated that it was torn down. The 1835 building was built by Lewis Raymond Jr. who had built the first brick house in Norwalk as his own residence. The 1835 building was the seat of Norwalk Government until June 30, 1913 when the Borough of Norwalk and the City of South Norwalk were consolidated and the government moved to South Norwalk's City Hall.

**1837-40**

The Town House was used by the Baptist Church for Church Services.

**c1848**

Catholic Bishop Tyler came to Norwalk and said Mass in the Town House.