

RESOURCES & GUIDELINES



Historic Preservation in Norwalk

Resources and Guidelines

Historic Preservation

In the City of Norwalk

Submitted to

Norwalk Redevelopment Agency

by

Historic Design Associates

July 1980

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CITY OF NORWALK, CONNECTICUT

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Note: All sketches at beginning of chapters, drawn by Historic Design Associates, are of actual Norwalk historic residences.

I. Introduction



This volume will focus on an identification of the historic and architectural resources and styles that exist in Norwalk in 1980. It is meant to increase public awareness of Norwalk's rich historic and architectural resources and to serve as a starting point to incorporate preservation of these resources as part of the revitalization strategy for Norwalk.

To provide a perspective for the historic and architectural resources that currently exist in Norwalk a brief description of the historical development of the City is provided. The growth of Norwalk has taken place around several activity nodes which developed into neighborhoods. These neighborhoods are identified and several serve as the locations for potential historic districts.

The twelve architectural styles found in Norwalk residential properties that meet historic criteria are illustrated in this volume. Architectural guidelines are presented which describe appropriate and inappropriate renovation treatments for these residential properties, as well as, suggestions for the repair and maintenance of these structures.

Commercial properties are treated in a similar manner. The five most prevalent commercial styles in Norwalk meeting historic resource criteria are illustrated. Commercial renovation guidelines are outlined to aid the continued productive use of these buildings.

II. Historic Development of Norwalk



By Mr. Ralph C. Bloom
Curator, Norwalk Historical Commission

Norwalk is situated on Long Island Sound. The earliest settlement took place in 1651 along the Stamford-Fairfield Path in East Norwalk, now known as the Third District. Gradually, settlement expanded northerly up the Towne Street to the section now known as Norwalk, or the First Taxing District. A separate settlement took place on the west side of the Norwalk River at Old Well, now known as South Norwalk or the Second District. Another village formed on the Five Mile River was Rowayton, also known as the Sixth District.

The district set-up is very important in understanding Norwalk's generally unplanned development. These areas, separated by distance or by water, grew independently of each other; each satisfied the needs of its own inhabitants. The entire Town of Norwalk grew slowly from the beginning of its settlement up to the conclusion of the Revolutionary War. Due to the disastrous burning of Norwalk by the British under the command of General William Tryon in July 1779, many local residents were given tracts of land in Connecticut's Western Reserve. During the early decades of the 19th century, Norwalk's population declined due to western movement. Norwalk was further reduced by the loss of the out-lying parishes: Wilton became a town in 1802 and portions of New Canaan and Westport also separated.

The coming of the railroad in the 1840's brought impressive growth, especially to South Norwalk, and provided the best transportation connections for both people and goods. Near the South Norwalk waterfront one could easily make connections between the steamboat docks and the railroad depot. The greatest concentration of transportation-related industries and businesses — hotels, warehouses and retail establishments, as well as manufacturing plants — were located nearby. All this encouraged immigration to South Norwalk and thus created a mixed racial ethnic flavor that has never been lost. Some of the oldest ethnic neighborhoods in Norwalk are still located in this area. Economically, South Norwalk forged ahead of the other parts of the town and by 1871 had incorporated as the City of South Norwalk.

Norwalk, a borough located at the head of the Norwalk River, was located along a spur line of the Danbury-Norwalk Railroad. Norwalk's major growth area was centered around Main and Wall Streets. Several large manufacturing plants and assorted smaller mills were located further up the river where there was ample water power. The most notable manufacturing firms were the A.E. Smith & Sons Pottery, a complex of twelve buildings on the east side of the river, and the Union Manufacturing Company. The West Indies merchants, E. Lockwood & Sons, had its dock, general store and warehouse at the head of the river on Wall Street. Norwalk was also fortunate to be located along the Post Road. Several large wood frame hotels such as the Norwalk Hotel and the Connecticut Hotel provided accommodations along the route.

East Norwalk, excluding a shipyard at Dorlon's Point, does not appear to have been affected by the industrial revolution. This area was primarily agricultural. The Hat Corporation of America did not move from its original plant in South Norwalk to its present location in East Norwalk until 1925.

Rowayton had its village center on the Five Mile River and oystering was its main industry. In the early 18th century, one of the first shipyards to operate in this region was built there.

The connecting links that helped tie these areas together were the early horse railroads, and later, the trolleys. By the late 19th century, transportation was available and mobility increased by the presence of several horsecar lines. Along the major lines on East and West Avenues, elegant residences were built during the mid to late 19th century and several estates were formed. The most notable, the sixty-room granite chateau built by LeGrand Lockwood, surpassed all else within the town.

Norwalk was divided politically along much the same district lines. Although Norwalk consolidated in 1913, each district became a taxing district within the new City of Norwalk. District-owned properties such as utilities and libraries were retained for, and supported by, the residents of each district. This inequity of public services continues to the present day. Many residents in the city's outlying areas still provide for themselves such a basic service as garbage collection. There was a strong feeling about living "uptown" or "downtown."

Some of this feeling continues, but has been mitigated by the large influx of residents. The feeling of living within a certain district created either status or stigma. The outer sections such as Silvermine, Rowayton, or West Norwalk continue to be typical of suburban living while the inner-city areas of Norwalk and South Norwalk continue to suffer from blight, new immigration, and a need for revitalization.

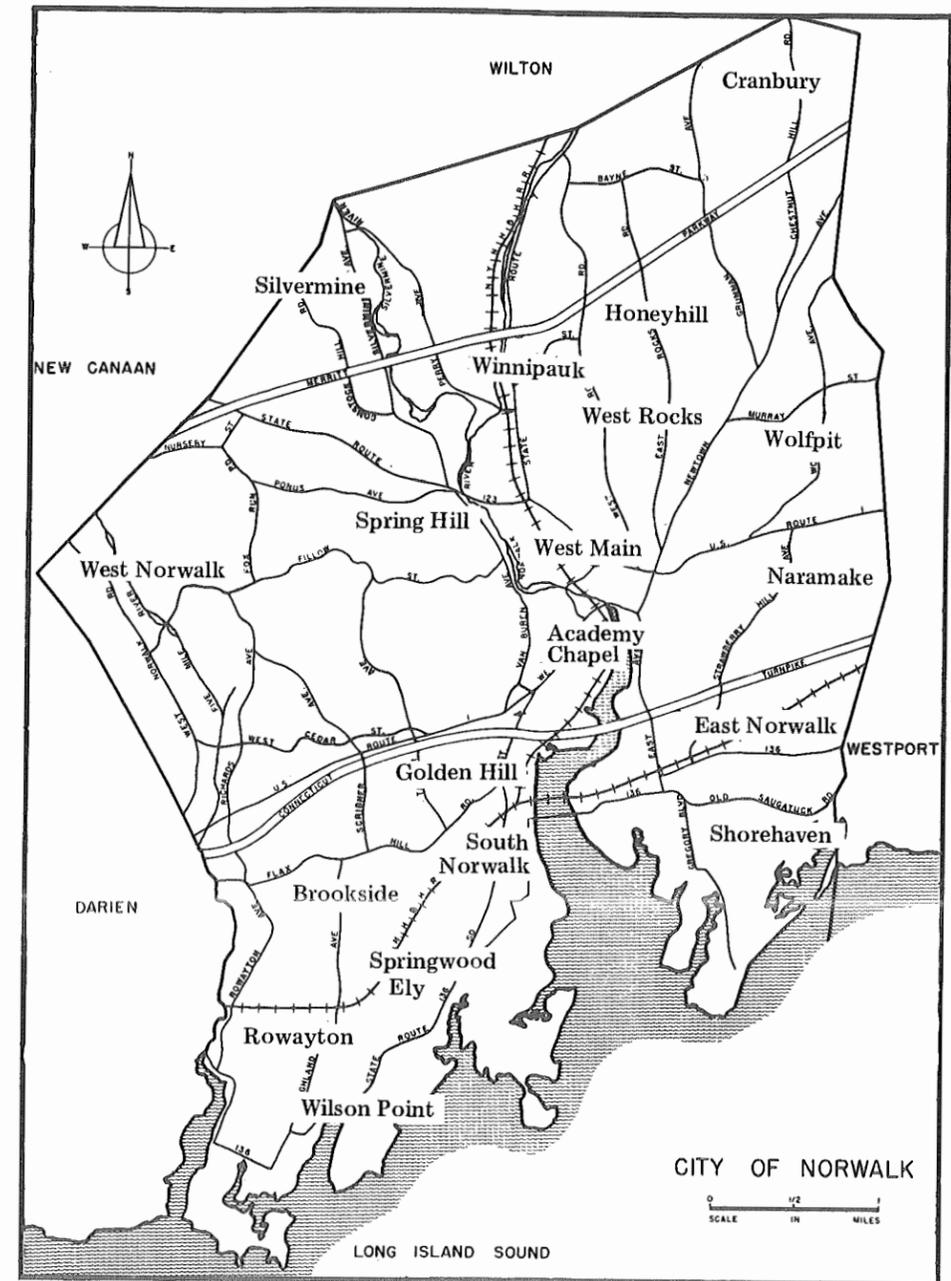
Norwalk grew steadily from the beginning of the 20th century. Increased manufacturing, mainly in the hat industry where thousands of local residents were employed continued through World War I and World War II. The greatest change that took place in Norwalk was the disastrous 1955 flood.

The central business section of the city, the manufacturing plants along the river, and the residential neighborhoods along the shore were either severely damaged or completely demolished by the rampaging waters. Much of the affected area was placed under urban renewal programs. The second most noticeable change was that caused by the construction of the Connecticut Turnpike, which cuts through the city from east to west, and the new Route 7, which runs on a northerly route from its intersection with the Turnpike in the center of Norwalk towards the Merritt Parkway and the Wilton town line. Highway construction changed the character of East and West Avenues from residential with limited commercial use to heavy commercial use. Several inner city parks were also lost or greatly altered by the highways.

Today, the city is a community of about eighty thousand people and a great deal of local industry. Although it is a commuting town, there are more than 200 manufacturers employing over 15,000 people. Industries include a variety of electronic research and manufacturing companies.

III. Norwalk Neighborhoods

Norwalk is a City of neighborhoods each contributing to the historical context of the City. The 19 identified neighborhoods in Norwalk are illustrated on the accompanying map.



Norwalk Neighborhoods

CLUSTERS OF ARCHITECTURAL STYLES*

1. Colonial

Because of the 1777 burning of Norwalk by General Tryon, the remaining Colonial houses are mostly in the outskirts — i.e., the areas adjacent to Darien and New Canaan, including Silvermine and West Norwalk, and a few along old roads leading to the east, such as Strawberry Hill Avenue.

2. Federal

No real concentrations. Out of 44 listed examples, there are six on West Norwalk Road, three on Fox Run Road, two on Newtown Avenue, three on Flax Hill Road (widely separated), several in Norwalk Center, including two on East Avenue, East Wall Street, Smith Street and Park Street.

3. Greek Revival

A concentration of 14 or more around "the Green." (nine on East Avenue, three on Park Street, one on East Wall Street, one on Chapel Street, etc.). Of 34 others listed, five are on West Norwalk Road and seven on Main Street. The balance of 22 are found all over Norwalk, but not in groups.

4. Gothic Revival

Generally distributed throughout Norwalk, with a concentration on Golden Hill (seven on Bayview Avenue). Other groups are on Camp Street (three and four along Chestnut Hill Road. The balance of 34 listed houses are widely distributed throughout the city.

5. Stick Style

Houses of the stick style are not numerous in Norwalk. However, out of a total of eight listed, there are three closely bunched on Seaside Place and Cove Avenue.

6. Italianate

Fifty-three buildings are listed including at least seven commercial buildings. Concentrations occur along South Main Street (eight), Flax Hill Road (four), East Avenue (four), West Main Street (four), Elmwood Avenue (four), Camp Street (three). The remaining 26 examples are scattered throughout the city.

7. 2nd Empire

Thirty-one houses are listed. Concentrations are found in South Norwalk; "Golden Hill," with at least eight houses: four on Fairfield Avenue, two more on Flax Hill Road, one on Couch Street, one on Lowe Street. In Norwalk Center there are two on East Avenue and three on West Main Street.

8. Queen Anne

Of 20 houses listed, over half are in South Norwalk (Golden Hill). Four are in Norwalk Center, but not clustered, and the other five are in various single locations.

9. Shingle Style

Nine houses are listed as shingle style, of which one has been recently demolished. Of the other eight, six are in Norwalk Center, clustered on the south side of Morgan Avenue and adjacent East Avenue, and one on Main Street.

10. Classic Revival

The 1912 City Hall clearly belongs in this category. Of ten houses listed, six are in Norwalk Center (three on East Avenue, others nearby on Park Street, North Avenue and Wall Street. Two are widely separated along West Norwalk Road, near the New Canaan line.

*References are to the Norwalk Historic Resources Inventory.

Potential Historic Districts

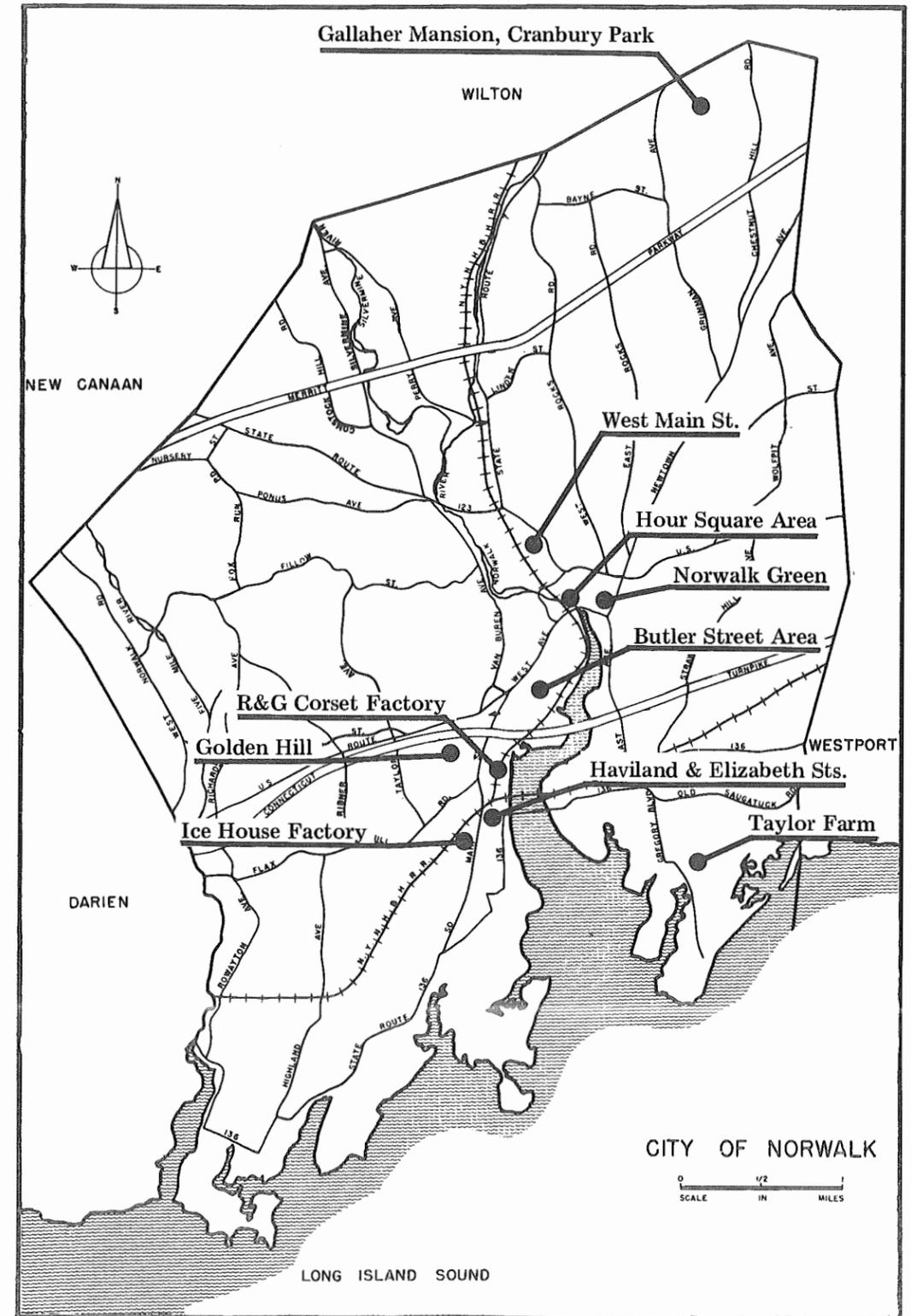
Some of the potential districts in Norwalk that have been proposed for Register listing in the past include:

- (a) Butler Street area;
- (b) Hour Square area (Landmark Square Building — former Norwalk Hour, Trolley Barn, Stock Exchange Restaurant, Twin Cities Building);
- (c) Norwalk Green.

As an example of City progress to date, several hearings have been held on the establishment of the Norwalk Green as an historic district (see map, page 12, entitled "Proposed Historic District," courtesy of the Norwalk Planning and Zoning Commission).

Potential additional National Register Districts and Buildings which might be considered for nomination include:

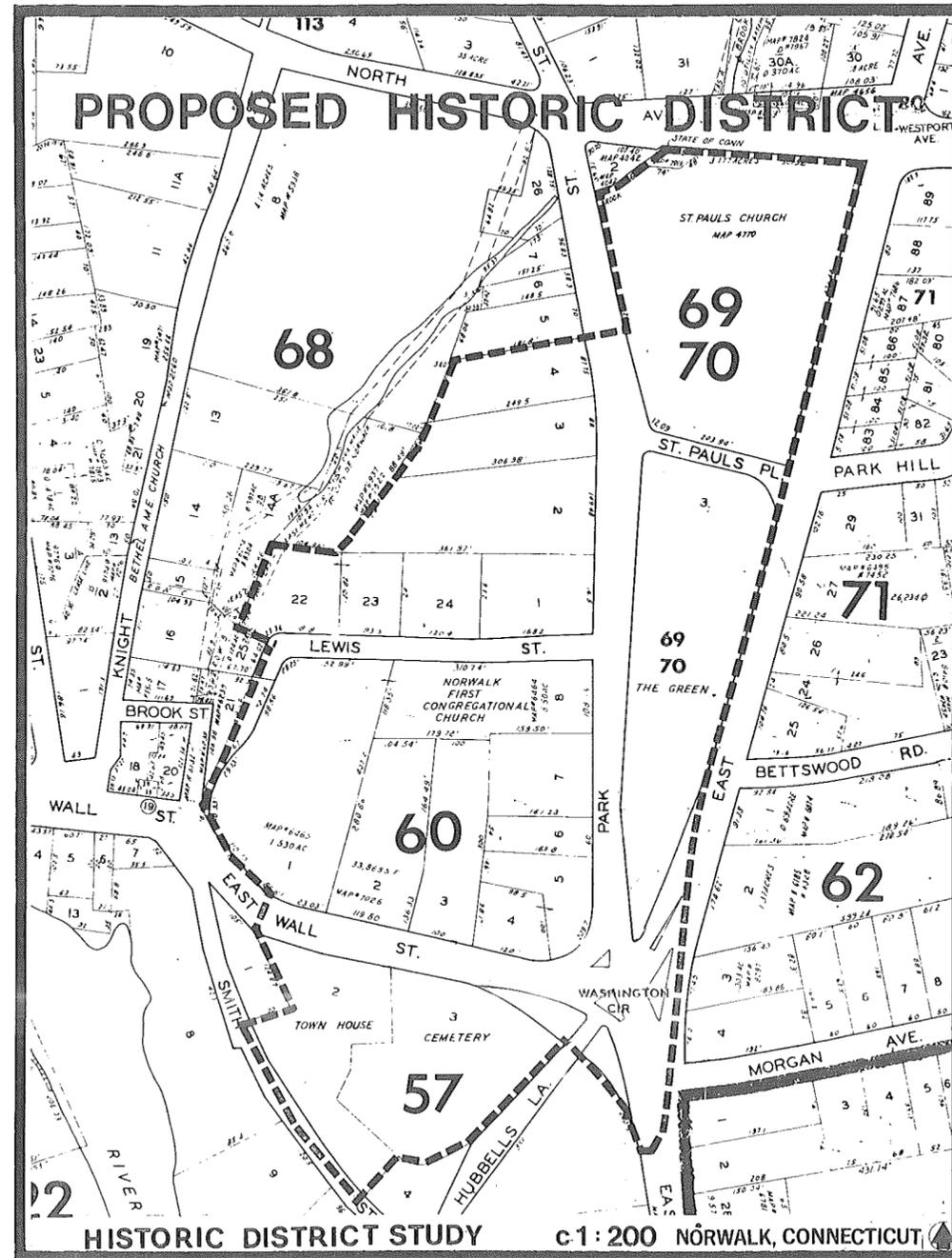
- (a) Haviland and Elizabeth Streets;
- (b) R & G Corset Factory;
- (c) Ice House Factory;
- (d) West Main Street Neighborhood;
- (e) Golden Hill Neighborhood;
- (f) Gallaher Mansion, Cranbury park;
- (g) Taylor Farm.



Potential Historic Districts

IV. Residential Styles in Norwalk

Norwalk Green



Map: Courtesy of Norwalk Planning & Zoning Commission



Colonial (to 1785)

The term “Colonial” has been applied and misapplied more than any other style designation. Properly, it should only refer to a building built before 1783 — after which there were no more “Colonies,” and hence no truly “Colonial” architecture. The style continued for another 40 years, but was then called “Federal.” After 1820 it was almost completely superseded by the Greek Revival.

Norwalk’s true Colonial buildings were almost all burned to the ground by British General Tryon’s infamous raid in July 1779. The house shown, one of the very few that escaped, is typical of the period, 1750-1785, with long side facing the road and large central chimney. This chimney accommodated several fireplaces — usually one in each room flanking the entrance hall, and a larger one in the rear kitchen equipped for cooking and baking. In winter this large central mass of masonry, with fires constantly going, warmed the center of the house quite effectively.

House frames were of hewn timbers, pegged. Exterior walls were covered with narrow clapboards or “weather boards,” terminating against thicker vertical boards at the corners.

Cornices were extremely simple, often only one or two boards.

After 1750, windows were always of two sashes and were narrow because they were set between two wall studs. Only the lower sash could be opened. Glass panes were most often 7” x 9”, sometimes 8” x 10” in later examples. The same size of glass would usually be used throughout a house, and variations of window height were achieved by varying the arrangement of panes.

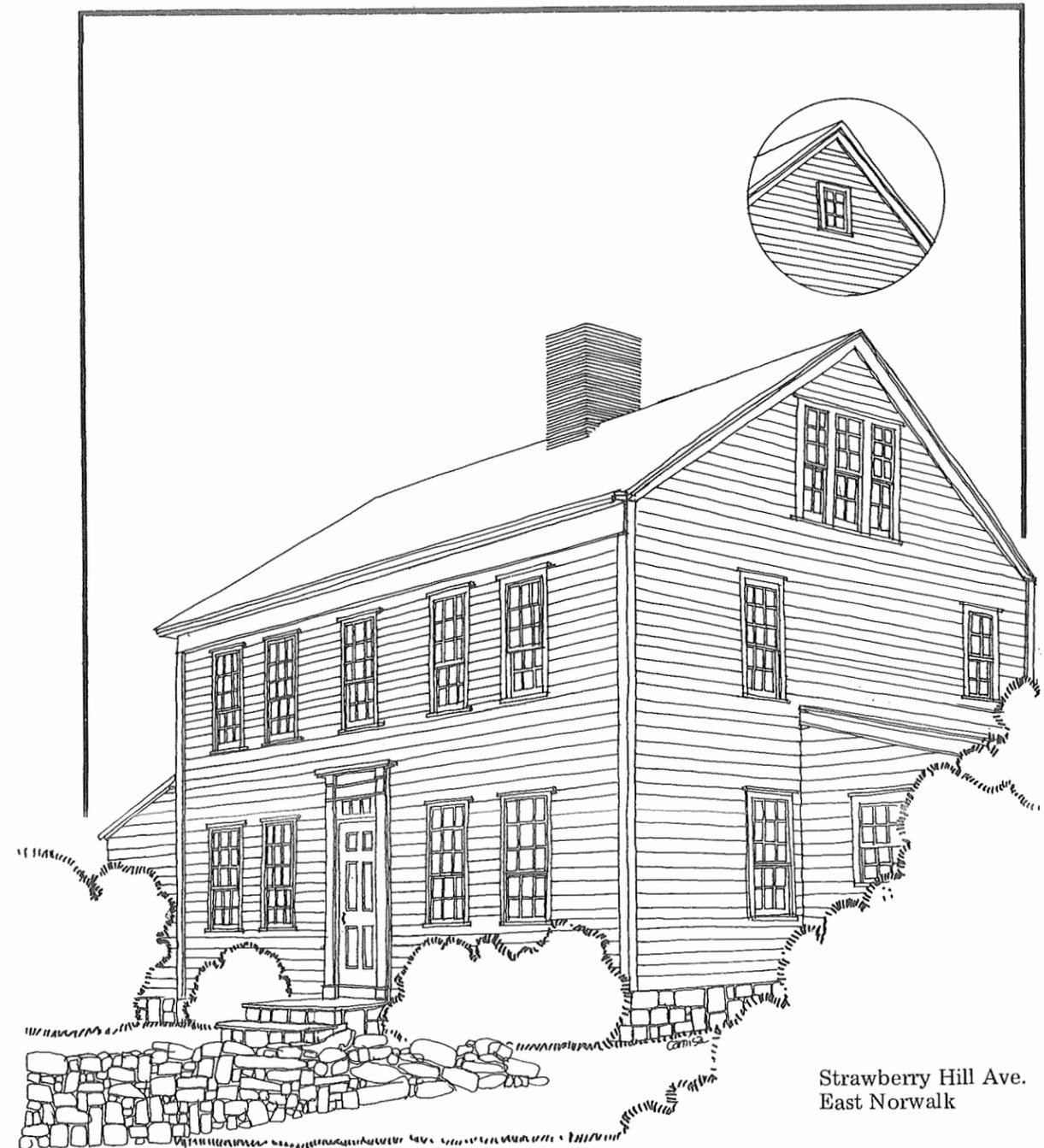
The small insert on the drawing illustrates the most probable original attic window; the triple window now on the building is of later vintage.

Entrances were very plain; 17th Century doors were of heavy planks; later doors were usually six panel with no glass. Sidelights, transoms, porches and dormers were sometimes found on Colonial houses, but were almost always later additions.

Roofs were fairly steep because the steeper the pitch, the better the wood shingles would shed the rain — not, as is often said, “so the snow would slide off.” A typical roof pitch would be 10/12 (10” up for each 12” horizontal).

Solid plank shutters were used on the earliest examples, for both privacy and protection, but were seldom found later.

Hardware was of wrought iron; thumb latches and strap hinges were typical. Fine brass locks and latches for the well-to-do were imported from England and are now collectors’ items. Following the Revolution, fine hardware was made in America.



Strawberry Hill Ave.
East Norwalk

Federal (1760-1830)

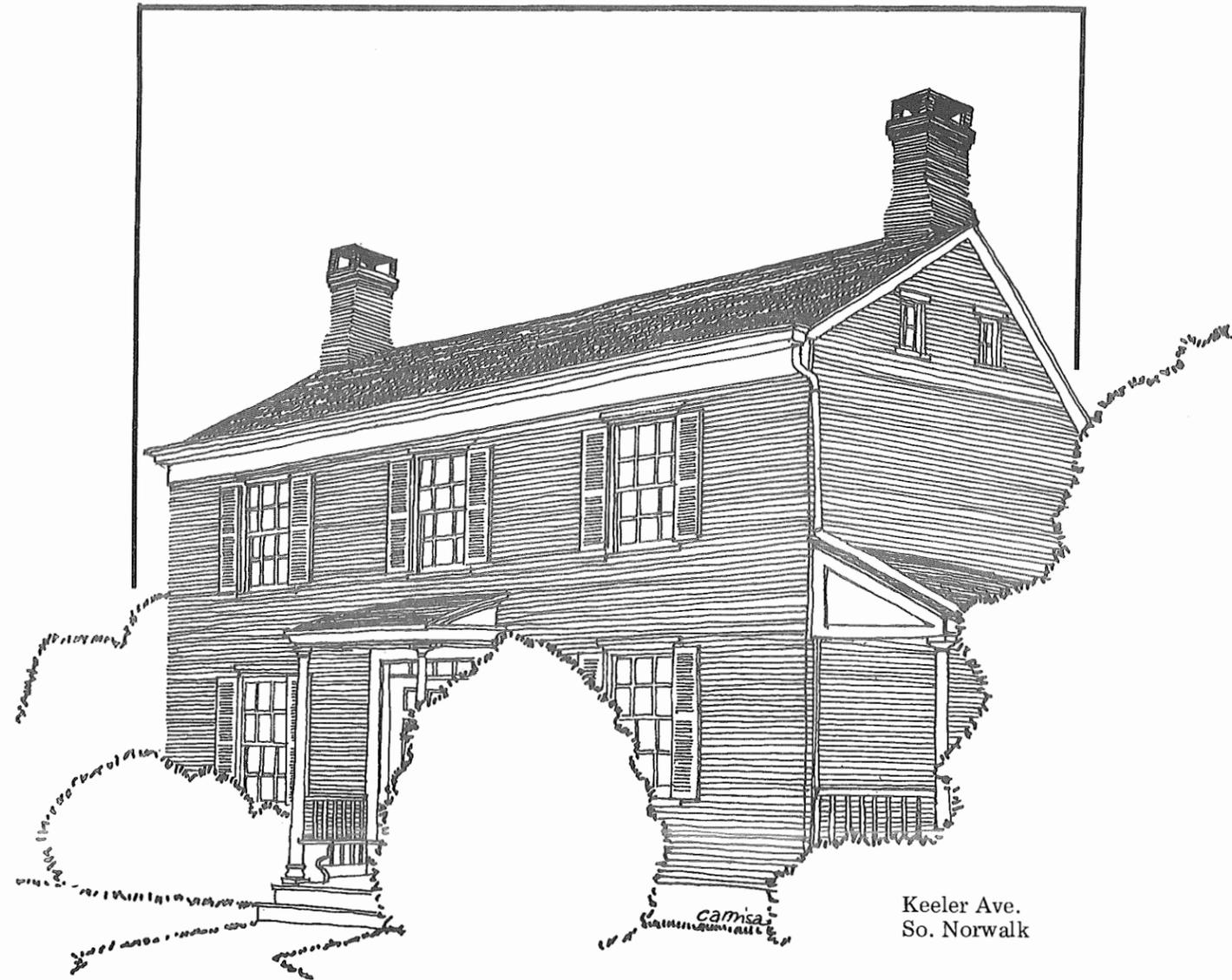
The typical Federal house was simply a modified Colonial or simplified Georgian building. The center chimney gave way to two chimneys, one on each end gable, permitting a center-hall plan, which was very popular and made the staircase a handsome feature instead of a steep, cramped necessity. The advent of iron stoves for both cooking and heating meant that chimney sizes could be greatly reduced.

Entrances became more elaborate, often graced with an elliptical fan-light over the door, which was usually six or eight panel. Windows became somewhat larger, as glass became available in 8" x 10" or 10" x 12" and even larger sizes. Both sashes were movable in some cases, as pulleys and counterweights were developed.

Panelled shutters were sometimes used on the first floor, with fixed-slat blinds on the bedrooms above.

Cornices became more elaborate, with the modified classic proportions and details of the English Georgian style. Wall surfaces were of narrow clapboards, cut corner boards were often treated as pilasters, with cap and base moldings. Woodframes were apt to be of sawn rather than hewn members because sawmills were now in operation. Brick appeared as a wall material when suitable clay was available. The house shown is of brick, although this material was not prevalent in Norwalk.

Houses typically faced the road or street. Roofs continued to have 8/12 to 10/12 pitch. Hardware was less massive; doors were often hung on butt (leaf type) hinges rather than the earlier straps, and thumb latches gave way to box locks of brass or iron on entrance doors. Thumb latches of the "Norfolk" pattern were still used on secondary doors and interiors.



Greek Revival (1820-1845)

Archeological research into the remains of classic Greece during the first two decades of the 19th Century resulted in the publication by 1820 of drawings of Greek temples, complete with Doric and Ionic columns, pilasters, cornices and pediments. Almost instantly, the Greek Revival style became the rage.

Houses suddenly were turned ninety degrees so the gable end, now a classic low-pitched pediment over a four- or six-columned porch, faced the street. (If the porch was missing it was only because the owner was of modest means.) Wood columns, molding and details were very careful copies of the Greek originals.

The flatter roof pitch called for by the Greek design meant that roofs had to be covered with sheet metal — usually tin; wood shingles being wholly impractical on pitches flatter than 8/12.

A four-column porch meant the entrance door had to go to one of the end bays, with the other two bays taken by windows in the parlor or living room. Only with a six-columned porch could the entrance door and hall remain in the center, since this arrangement meant a much wider house in order to have one reasonably-sized room on each side of the hall. Fireplaces were located on the side wall or walls opposite the stair; hence, chimneys ranged along the eaves instead of coming through the ridge. In most cases, a chimney would serve a fireplace on both first and second floors.

Windows were quite large, since glass was available in sizes ranging from 10" x 12" to 12" x 18". Most windows were double-hung arranged with six lights in each sash. Occasionally triple-hung windows were used, bringing the glass almost to the floor — a direct reflection of the increased elegance of living and the lack of fear of Indian attack. The attic was lighted by a window, elliptical, triangular or rectangular and located in the center of the gable or pediment.

Entrance doors were usually 4-panel or 6 equal panels, flanked by glazed sidelights and topped by a glazed transom. Fixed slat shutters were usually installed on all windows. Hardware continued the Federal usage of large surface locks, usually operated by brass knobs and a hinge brass key.

Cornices, pilasters and moldings carefully followed Greek designs, although full Greek cornices with all the parts of the originals appeared most often on churches, banks, town halls and other public buildings rather than on houses. The style was quite formal and dignified, and eminently suited for public buildings, where it continued in favor for many years after it was largely abandoned for houses.



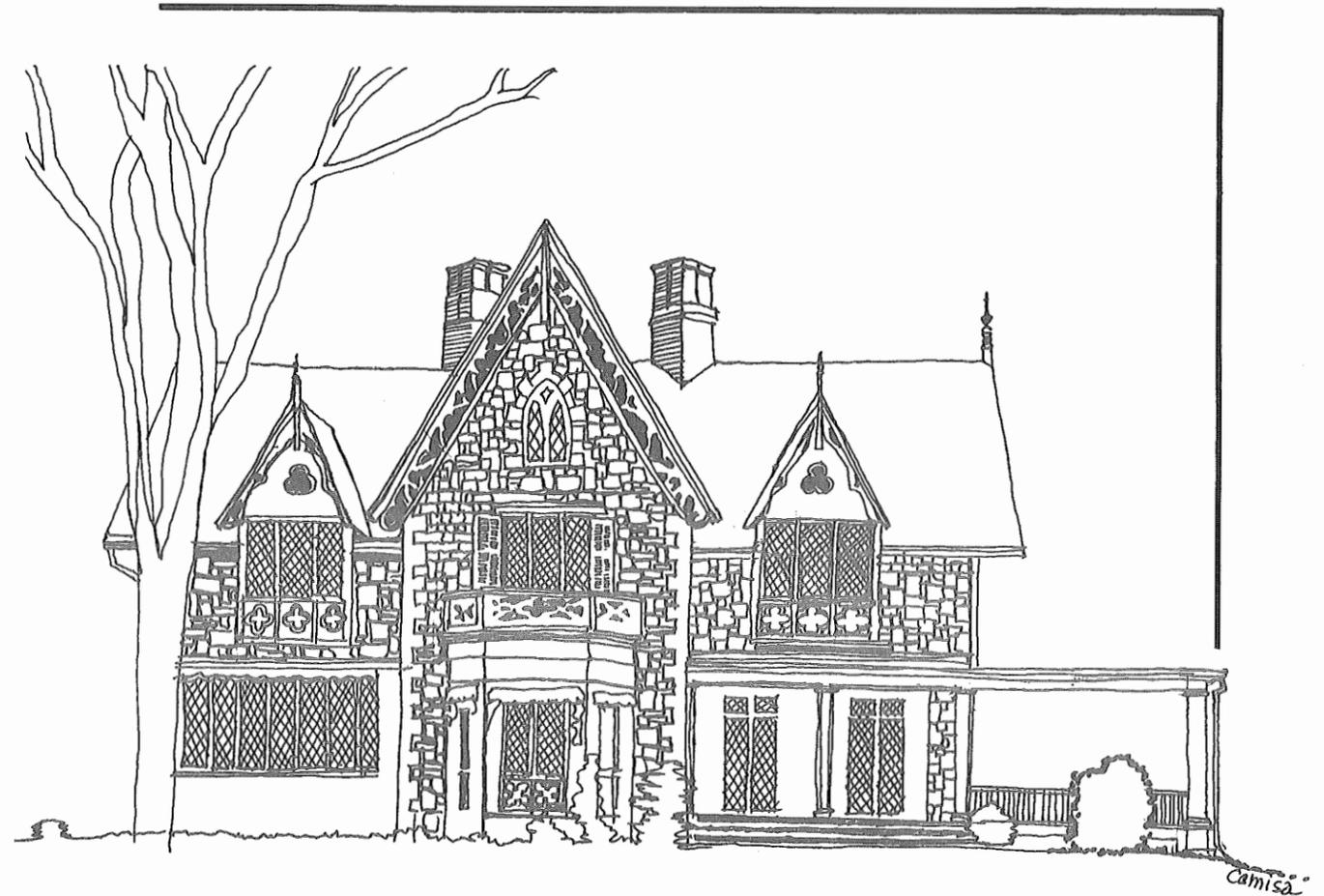
France St.
Norwalk

Gothic Revival (1840-1860)

A conscious effort to break out of the rigid box and the classic forms of the Greek Revival was strongly advocated in the 1840's by Andrew Jackson Downing, one of the most influential of the "taste-makers." Downing urged people to forget their Greek temples in favor of more irregular and picturesque designs.

In simpler versions, this was a wooden house with gable roof, sharp, peak-roofed dormers, porch with scroll decoration at post tops and in railings, elaborate cut-out verge boards and finials on all gables.

The example shown happens to be stone, but has all the characteristics of the style, even to trefoil and quadrifoil ornaments and gothic type windows in gables. Bay and oriel windows appeared. Diamond window panes were used in more elaborate examples. Roofs were of wood shingle, slate or metal.



Point Road
Wilson Point
So. Norwalk

Stick Style (1840-1876)

The so-called "stick style" was also introduced about 1840 by Andrew Jackson Downing. Most of his contemporaries and associates followed his lead.

The essence of the style was the deliberate expression on the exterior of the wooden house frame of vertical studs and diagonal braces. This was often done by the use of vertical siding with battens over the joints, or a pattern of vertical, diagonal and horizontal boards with infill of stucco, wood siding or shingles. Gables and eaves were often excessively wide, supported by wooden brackets.



Cove Ave.
East Norwalk

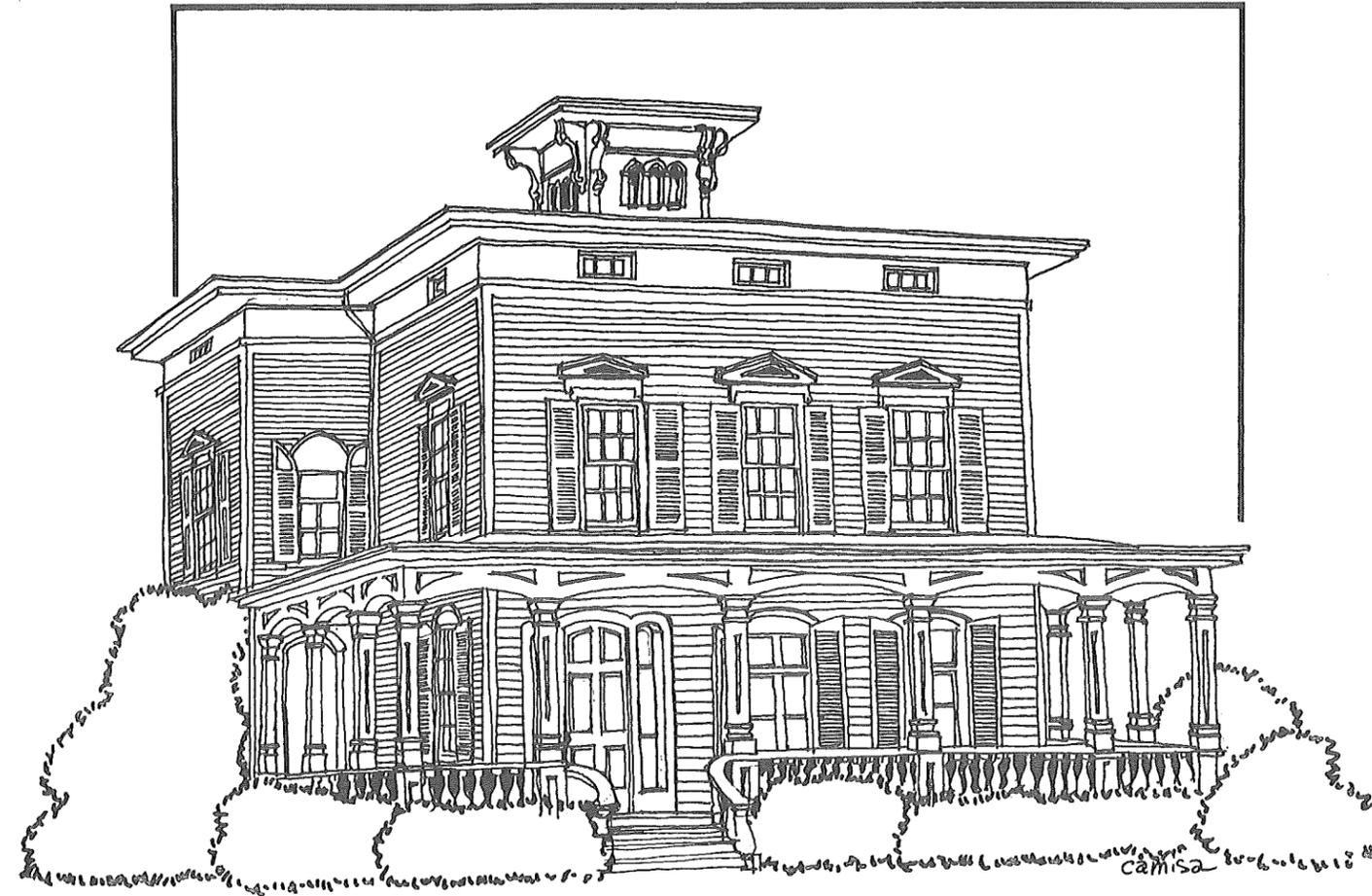
Italianate

(1850-1865)

Less complicated and more easily maintained than the Gothic Revival, the Italianate style followed closely and often the two styles were built on the same street at the same time.

The form returned to the simple box, with a very flat roof, which therefore had to be metal. Cornices showed a characteristic wide overhang, sometimes with simple outlooker-type blocks under the soffit. Windows were large, still usually 6/6 lights. Trim varied to suit the whim of the owner or builder — no longer was design restricted to a careful reproduction of an earlier classic style. There was great variety in window and door-heads, from small pediments to segmental arches.

Towers were characteristic of this style, usually square in plan, attached along one side or at a rear corner. Porches varied a great deal, but were widely used as outdoor living rooms, complete with wicker furniture, swings and/or hammock.



Park St.
Norwalk

Second Empire (1865-1885)

Following the Civil War, a great elaboration in ornament and roof style took place. The example shown has all the salient characteristics of the style, although many much larger houses were built.

The outstanding characteristic is, of course, the mansard (i.e. mansart) roof, first used by Louis Mansart in many of his buildings in France over a century earlier. This roof style permitted a whole additional floor of useful space, with a very flat metal deck above, and no attic at all. Dormer windows pierced the mansard, which was almost always covered with slate.

The cornice at the top of the second floor was carried by many elaborate brackets, easy to produce with the newly available woodworking machines.

Materials were wood frame, brick or stone. Window sash were typically 2 lights over 2 (divided vertically). Shutters with movable slats were common. Plans were irregular, with wings, bays and porches.



Arch St.
Norwalk

Mixed Styles

(1840-1875)

The example shown on the opposite page is a mixture of styles. Such applications were very common throughout the latter half of the 19th Century. For this example, a square tower (an Italianate motif) with a Second Empire mansard roof, has been attached to a rear corner of a simple three-bay house which has had a fourth bay added and the whole strapped together by an Italianate porch. The ensemble is quite pleasing. A try at dating might be: original three-bay house — 1840; fourth bay added — 1845; tower and porch — 1855; mansard roof and dormer on tower — 1875, (actual dates not researched).



Bayview Ave.
So. Norwalk

Queen Anne

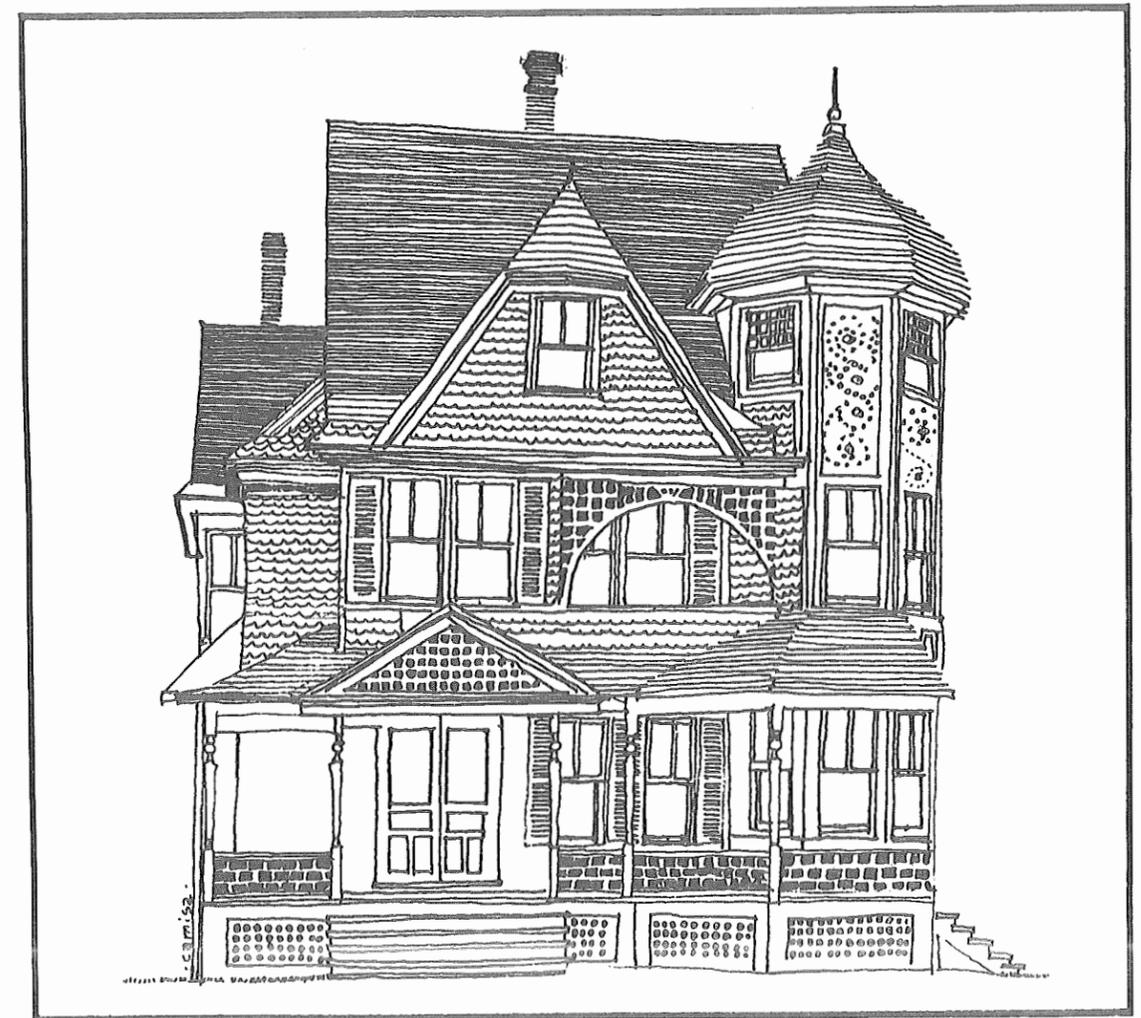
(1885-1895)

Plans became very irregular, marking the complete oblivion of the simple box. Books of house designs of almost unbelievable complication and variety appeared, and were widely used by builders. Complicated shapes, turrets, bays, and porches in infinite variety took full advantage of all the shapes of shingles, spindles, and other ornaments that could be cheaply made by woodworking machinery.

These houses were built to accommodate large families, and usually at least one live-in servant. Where site location made it possible, much thought was given to orientation and views.

Windows were varied in layout and dimensions on the same house, all made of wood. The porch, with ornamental wood railing and spindles, became very important as an outdoor living and entertaining area in the summer months.

The calming influence of the "Great White City," the Chicago World's Fair of 1893 — had not yet been felt. The excessive maintenance cost of such elaborate wooden work was not yet a factor — although once these houses were forty or fifty years old, rot and deterioration affected many of them.



Arch St.
Norwalk

Shingle Style

(1885-1895)

The “shingle style” is really another version of Queen Anne, typically shingled from ridge of roof to foundation. Hundreds of these were built along beaches and salt-water shorefronts in the East, where the weathering ability and low maintenance cost of wood shingles was a distinct advantage over other materials. Another advantage of wood shingled side walls was the ability of shingles to follow a curved shape — something patently impossible with clapboard.

Some very impressive houses in shingle style were done by leading architects of the period at Newport and other fashionable seaside resorts.



Morgan Ave.
Norwalk

Typical Worker's House (1870-1920)

Such simple three-bay boxes, usually balloon-framed, were built by the hundreds in all 19th-Century communities, sometimes by factory or mill owners for their workers. There was a parlor beside the entrance, with living room behind it, and kitchen at the rear of the hall. A rear extension served as general catch-all and service entrance. The bathroom, when it occurred, was over the front entrance with a large bedroom over the living room and two smaller bedrooms across the rear. There were stairs to the large attic.

This simple house represents the most numerous and most widely distributed type in Norwalk. While it is practically style-less, it provides basic, simple, easily-maintained housing, and remains in demand even today, over 100 years after its appearance in the Norwalk area. Houses of this type were built from ca. 1870 to 1920, after which it was replaced by the pseudo-Cape Cod and two-story "Colonial" builders' houses of the 1920's and 1930's.



Jefferson St.
Norwalk

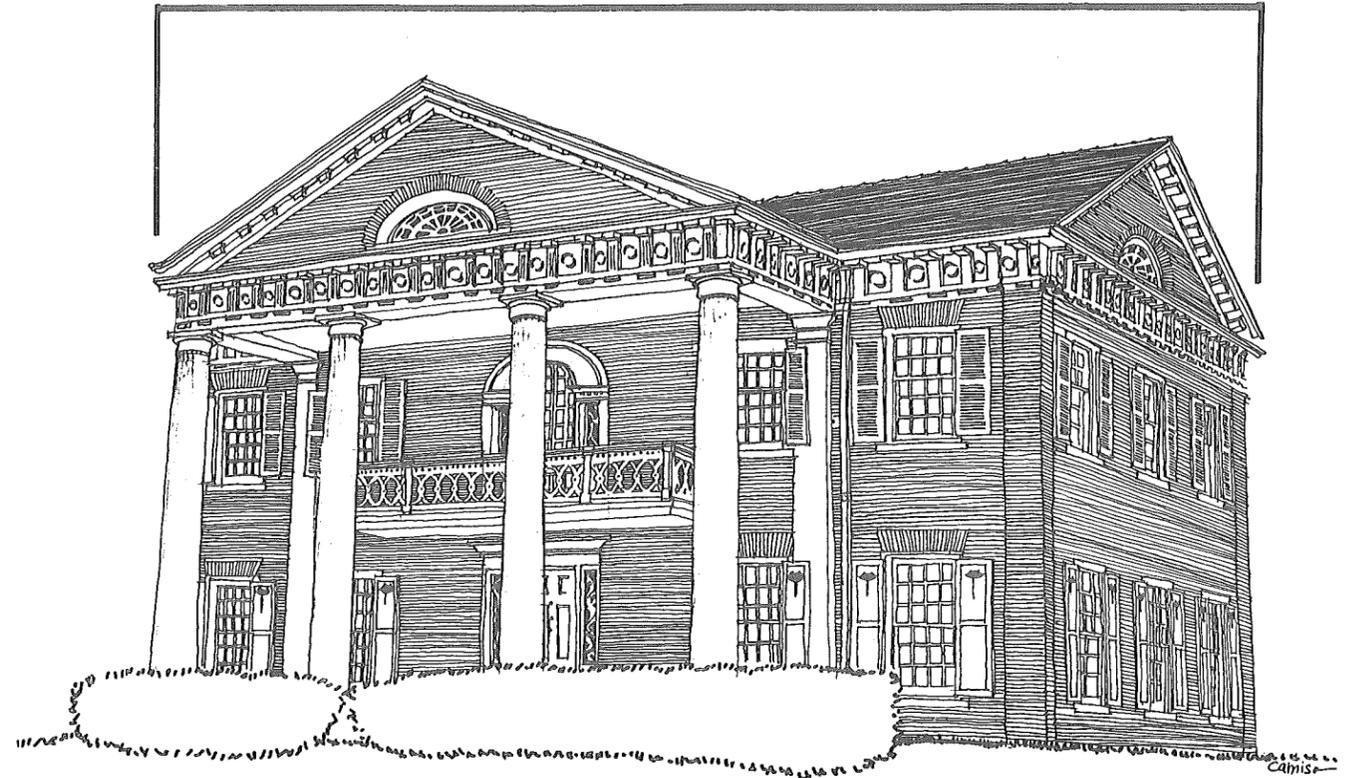
Classic Revival (1900-1920)

(sometimes called "Colonial Revival")

Following the 1893 World's Fair, a great revival of interest in classic forms took place, manifested very widely in public buildings of all kinds (libraries, railroad terminals, schools; town halls, etc.).

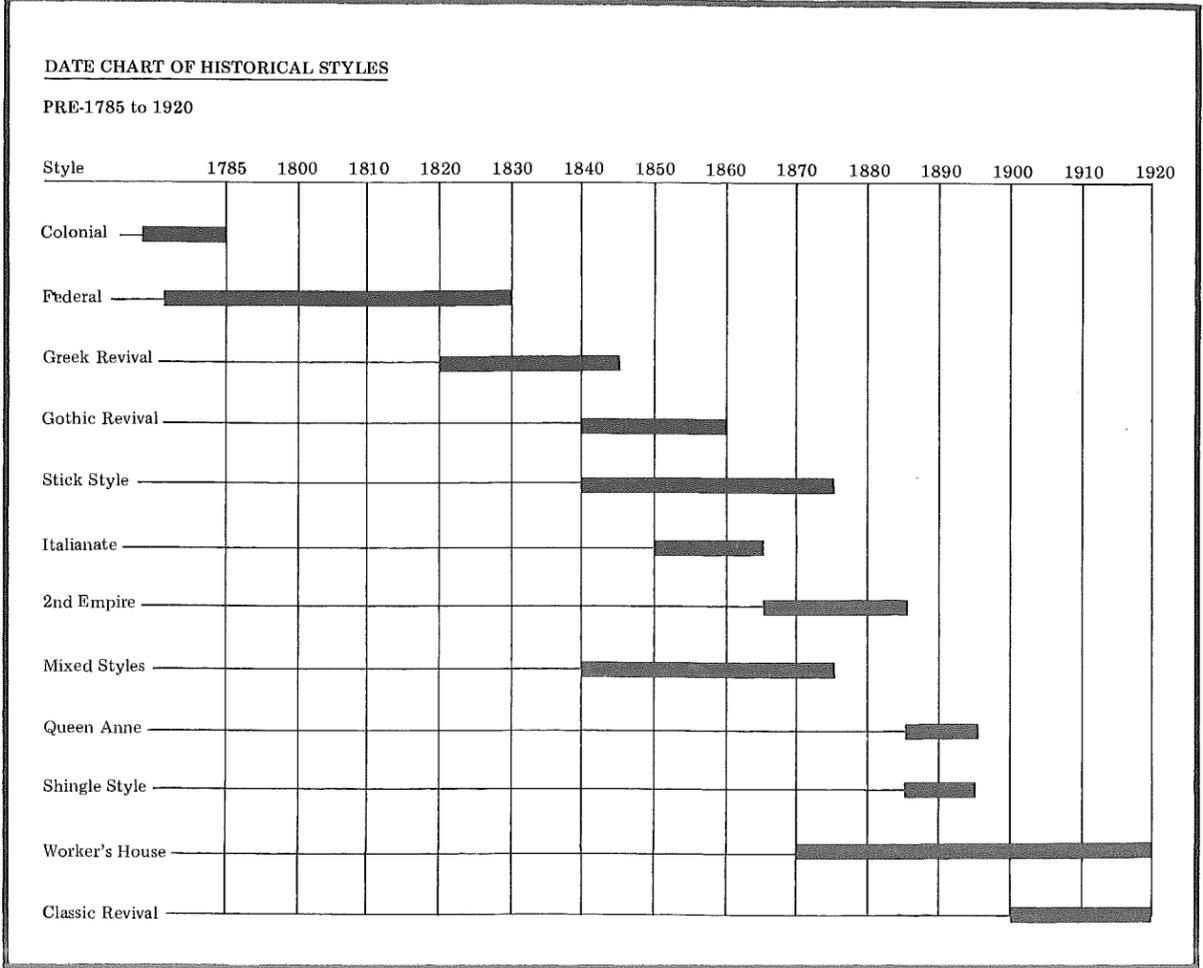
In the residential field, the strange and wonderful complications of Queen Anne, Shingle and Stick were replaced by a return to simpler forms, often using classic columns and entablatures, coupled with Colonial and Georgian type windows, fan-lights and other details.

The woodwork details were heavier than true Federal work of a century earlier and occasionally took on amusing and meaningless forms like the cut-outs in the first floor shutters shown here. The inconsistency of the multi-pane windows (a form from the 18th Century) with the large, heavy scale of the porch columns and the elaborate, heavy cornice was typical of this style.



Elmcrest Terrace
Norwalk

V. Guidelines for Renovation, Repair and Maintenance



Inappropriate Additions or Changes

Gable sash eliminated

Shutters eliminated

Any type of shingles historically inappropriate on any building except Queen Anne, shingle and stick style.

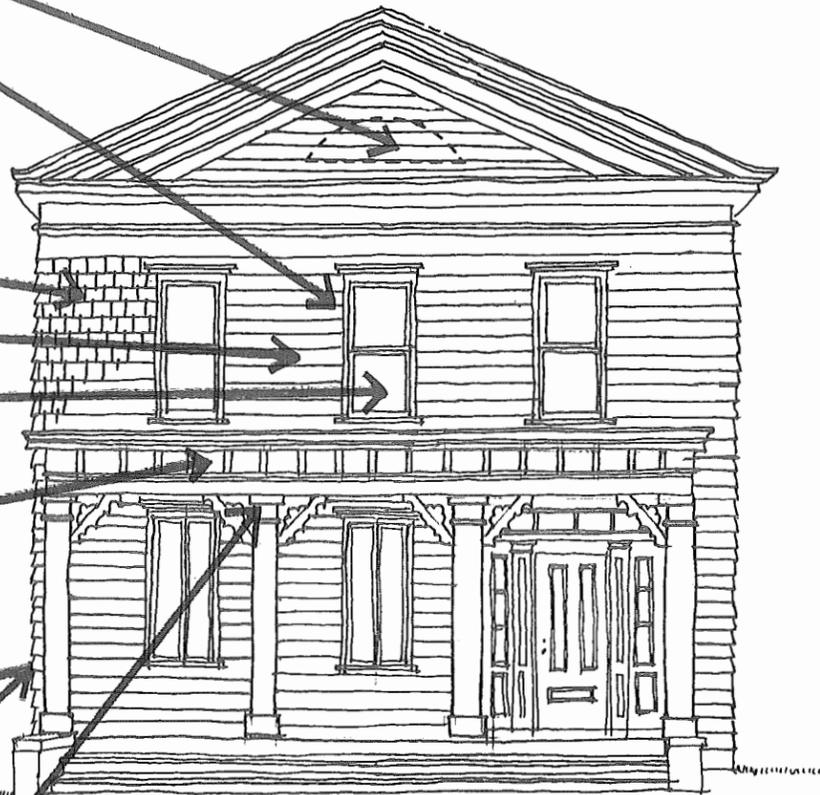
Aluminum siding inappropriate

1 over 1 or casement windows unsympathetic to the style of the house

Victorian brackets and porch posts inappropriate. Such features were often added to early houses later in the 19th Century.

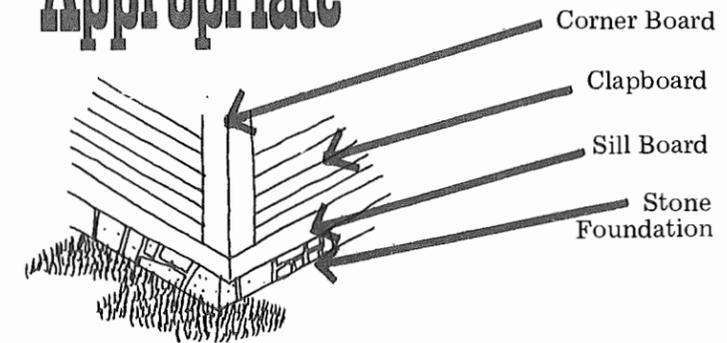
Original wide corner boards eliminated

Square posts and ornate brackets only appropriate on Gothic Revival and simpler Italianate houses.

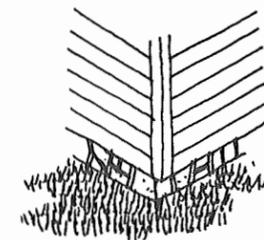


Siding

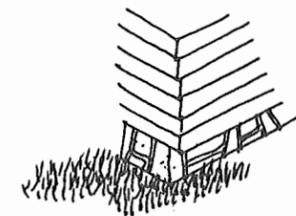
Appropriate



Inappropriate



Corner Board too small.
No Sill Board (often occurs with the use of vinyl siding)



Corner and Sill Boards missing (most often occurs with the use of aluminum siding)

Vinyl and aluminum siding are usually installed on the grounds that they are maintenance-free. This is more true of vinyl than of aluminum; the latter will fade in time, and is subject to denting and deformation from impact which is all but impossible to repair. Both vinyl and aluminum have a recently researched drawback in that they cannot "breathe," but will trap moisture against the wooden house structure, leading to eventual problems with rot. Replacement wood siding is, therefore, much to be preferred.

ADDITIONS

Additions to pre-1920 houses should be made with care, keeping in mind the following:

1. Materials, windows, doors, trim, and colors should match those on the original building.
2. If the addition is a wing, it should be subordinated to the original building in design i.e., the roof should be lower and the mass or bulk should be less.
3. If the addition is an extension or lengthening of the original building, introduce a setback to preserve the corner of the original and hence the design arrangement and balance of the original facade.

CORNICES AND DECORATIVE ELEMENTS

Original members, brackets, moldings, etc, should be preserved if at all possible. Replacements of missing parts should be exact copies of the originals. Often this can be accomplished by removing intact members from the rear to replace missing ones on the visible facades. If this is done, the replacements at the rear should closely resemble the originals in size and scale. Avoid mixing new and original members on one facade unless the match is perfect.

Many early cornices were Victorianized by the addition of brackets when these became fashionable in the 1850's. They should be removed. Likewise, ornate Victorian doorways and hoods were frequently added to Colonial, Federal and Greek revival houses. These should be removed and replaced with elements typical of the style of the house.

It should be needless to say that aluminum awnings and door hoods should not be used.

ROOFING

19th Century roofs were either wood shingle, metal or slate. Wood shingles were hand split only in the earliest times — by 1800, sawed shingles were the rule. The very heavy, rough split shakes often seen on "restorations" are entirely inappropriate and should not be used for remodeling or restoration. Correct length is 16"-18" or 24" and thickness 1/2" to 5/8" at the butt. These are now available with special fireproofing treatment, which lengthens their life and reduces the danger of fire. Wood shingles should not be applied to roofs flatter than 8 in 12 pitch, and should not be applied over a tight (usually plywood) deck, as this will prevent them from drying, and will induce rot. They should be installed on 1" x 12" or 1" x 3" wood strips spaced at 5-1/4" on centers for 16" shingles, 5-3/4" for 18's and 7-1/2" for 24's, thus accommodating the essential triple lap of courses.

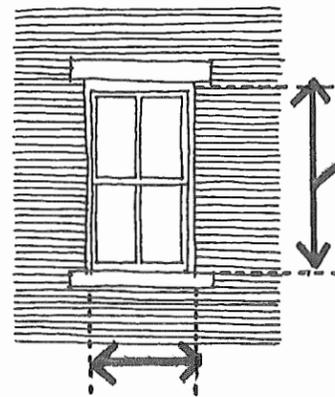
Metal roofs were usually of tin sheets, and are suitable for the flatter pitches typical of Greek Revival, Italianate and top deck of Second Empire buildings. Once these have deteriorated from neglect, they are very difficult to repair. No one but a thoroughly experienced roofer should attempt such work. Joints should be made with proper allowance for expansion and contraction from temperature changes. Material should match the original.

Slate roofs, often in elaborate patterns of varying colors, were typical of the Second Empire mansards. Again, repairs and replacements should be made only by a well-qualified roofer.

Asphalt shingles offer a practical and inexpensive replacement for wood or slate, and if carefully chosen as to color and weight, can be acceptable in rehabilitation work. Naturally they are not acceptable in a true restoration. Colors such as white, blue, red or bright green are inappropriate. Dark browns, slate grey or blacks are acceptable.

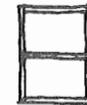
Windows

Appropriate



Full height and width of original window opening are retained.

Storm Windows

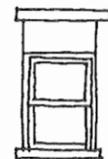


1 over 1 layout is best, as it permits muntins of window sash to be seen.

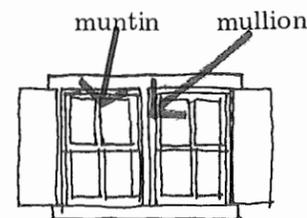
Storm windows can often be successfully installed inside.

Aluminum storm and screen combinations can be pre-finished white or brown. Avoid natural aluminum.

Inappropriate



Window opening is partially closed by blocking down

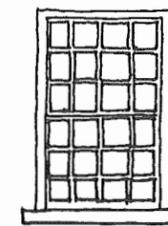


Mullion windows came with Gothic revival and Italianate styles, not before. Blinds would appear as shown, but would be doubled like most interior ones.

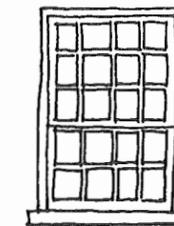
Appropriate

TYPES OF WINDOWS

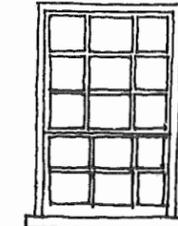
Colonial



12/12

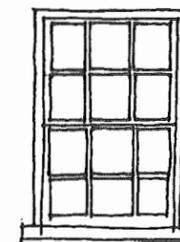


12/8



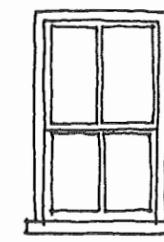
9/6

Federal/Greek Revival

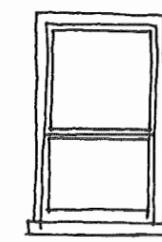


6/6
Before 1850

Victorian

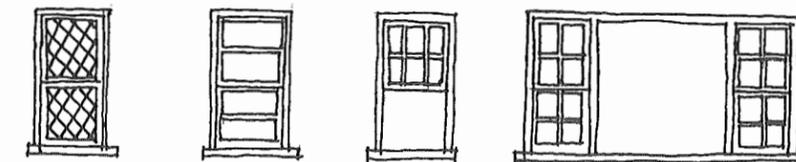


2/2
After 1850



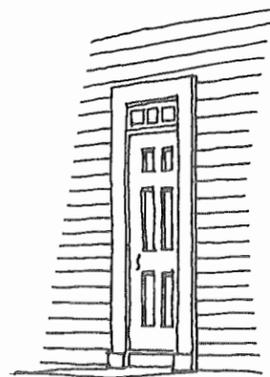
1/1
After 1890

Inappropriate

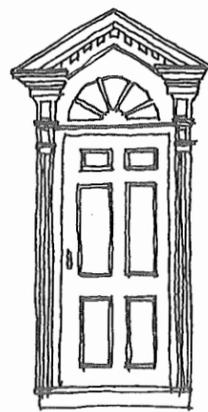


Doors & Entrances

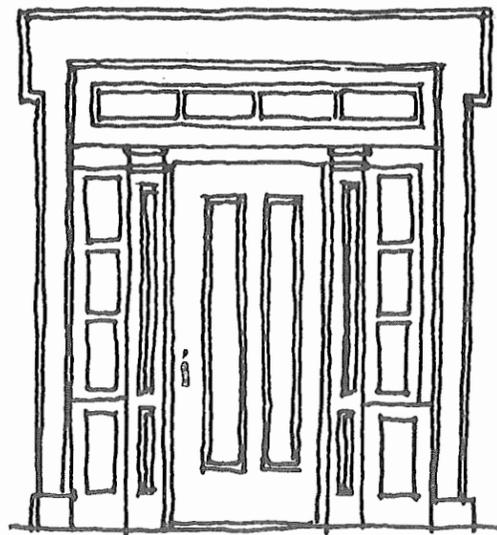
Appropriate



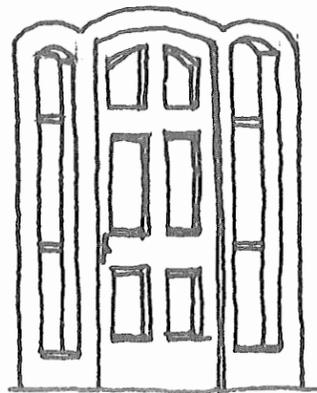
Colonial



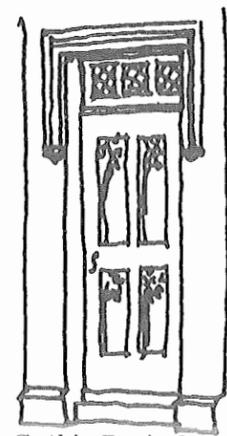
Federal



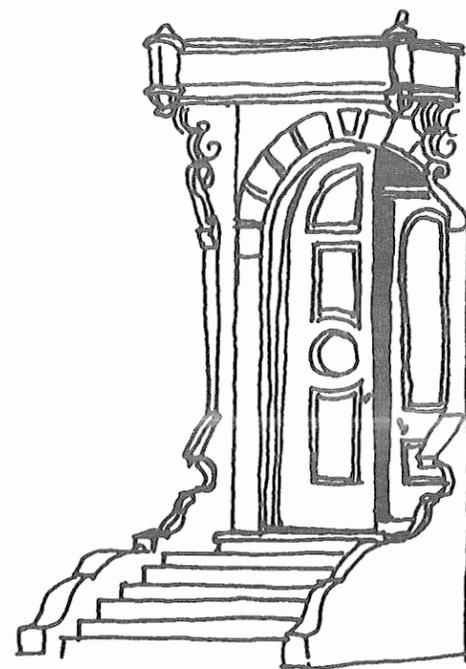
Greek Revival



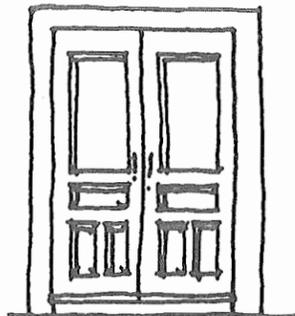
Italianate



Gothic Revival

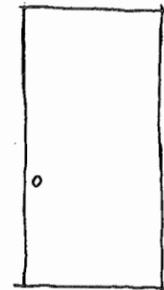


2d Empire

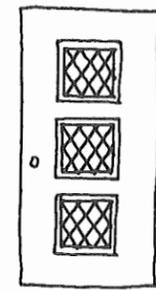


Queen Anne, stick, shingle

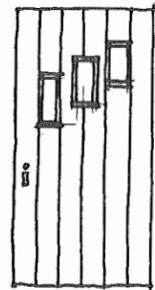
Inappropriate



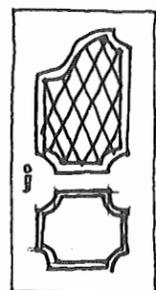
Any flush door



Strange panel lights



Grooved plywood face



Shutters & Blinds

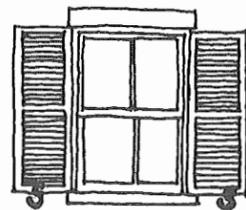
Appropriate

Traditional painted wooden slatted blinds are appropriate, except on 1st floor of Colonial and Federal houses, where solid panel shutters were more often used for security reasons.



Shutter

Shutters or Blinds should close to cover the full window opening and be placed so they cover about 1/2 of the window trim.



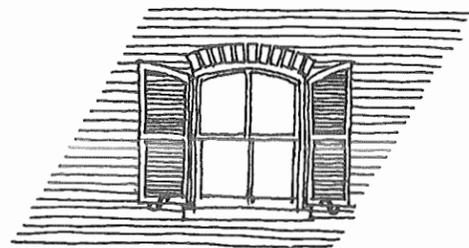
Blind

Replacement windows complete with double glazing and frame are available and acceptable if original size and arrangement of panes can be obtained.

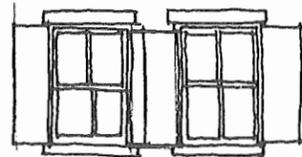


Shutter Dogs

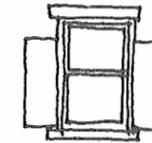
Shutters must be proper shape to fit the opening. This arched window-head is quite common in brick buildings.



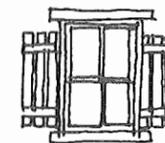
In this condition (which was rare) blinds were usually overlapped, the outer one being hooked back over the other.



Inappropriate



Vinyl blinds are marginally acceptable if correct size. Aluminum can readily be dented, and is not recommended.



Ranch, vinyl aluminum shutters are not appropriate.



PORCHES

Colonial houses had no porches. Federal houses had small entrance porches which were little more than shelter for the visitor awaiting the opening of the door. Greek Revival houses had either small entrance porches or full-width porches, with classic Greek Doric columns and cornices. In larger and more impressive houses and churches, the Greek Ionic column sometimes appears. By 1840, people sometimes had enough leisure time to be able to enjoy the outdoor living-room afforded by the porch, and very few houses built after this date were without a porch.

In all cases, porches should conform to the style and detail of the original. Wood rails should be replaced with wood rails, not brick walls. Floors and steps should be wood, not concrete. Wood porches and steps, if properly built of the right materials and if properly painted and cleaned, will last for many decades. Allowing dirt to accumulate in corners, where it retains moisture, will induce rot that can easily be avoided by simply sweeping it away regularly.

COLOR

Perhaps the most influential and widely-followed advice on appropriate colors for houses of the first half of the 19th century was contained in Andrew Jackson Downing's "The Architecture of Country Houses," pages 198-206, first published in 1850. Downing takes a very dim view of white, "a color which we think should never be used except upon buildings a good deal surrounded by trees, as to prevent its glare." Instead, he strongly recommends avoiding "all colors which nature herself avoids" and the use of the colors "of the soil, rocks, wood and the bark of trees — the materials of which houses are built." (He fails to reconcile this theory with the color of brick, which does not occur in nature, but to which he does not object.) In any case, his treatise went through nine printings and sold over sixteen thousand copies by the end of the Civil War. Its influence was reflected in thousands of buildings built by 1893, the year of the Chicago World's Fair, known as the "Great White City," which swept away Downing's doctrine of following nature and replaced it with more formal, symmetrical classical forms.

APPROPRIATE COLORS				
	WALL	TRIM	DOOR	SHUTTERS/BLINDS
Colonial	Natural Dark brown Barn red Yellow ochre Deep Buff	Same as wall	Natural Dark brown Black/green Dark blue Dark gray	If any, same door
Federal	Pale yellow Off white Soft beige Pale green Medium gray Medium blue	(lighter than base color) White Buff Pale yellow Medium blue	black natural	Same as door
Greek Revival	White Buff Pale yellow Blue-gray Pale gray	Olive green Gray-blue Dark bottle-green Buff White	Dark green Medium blue Black	Same as door
Gothic Revival	Natural, if masonry Buff Pink Light gray Mustard	(Darker than wall) Brownstone Red Dark gray Dark green Dark brown	Oak (Stain and Varnish)	Same as trim
Italianate	White Buff Yellow ochre Green-gray Blue gray Pale gray Dark brown Medium red	(strong contrast) Pale yellow Dark green medium gray	Dark brown Black	Same as door
2nd Empire	Deep blue Medium gray Dark ochre Tan Slate	(Strong contrast usually darker) Dark gray green/black Dark brown Dark red olive green	Oak Dark red Black	Same as door
Queen Anne, Stick, Shingle	Great variety, generally in grays, buffs browns. Natural in shingle style	Lighter than wall - usually a lighter shade of wall color	Darker shade of of wall color or contrast	Same as door

**UNIT PRICES FOR TYPICAL ITEMS OF WORK USUALLY
ENCOUNTERED IN RESTORATION OR REHABILITATION —
NORWALK AREA**

NOTE: Listed items are not necessarily to be found on any one building, nor are prices quoted guaranteed to hold for any length of time. These are listed only for purposes of comparison, and for the roughest kind of preliminary pricing in any actual situation. Prices must be verified or obtained from local reliable builders.

Item	Price Per Unit
Brick — 8" wall	\$ 8.50/ sq. ft.
Brick — 4" veneer	\$ 6.33/sq. ft.
Pointing brick	
Soft Mortar	\$ 2.80/sq. ft.
Hard Mortar	\$ 6.30/sq. ft.
Stucco	\$ 1.80/sq. ft.
With mesh	\$ 2.50/sq. ft.
Cleaning brick	\$ 1.03/sq. ft.
Wood windows, double glazed	\$13.10/sq. ft. & up
Exterior door	
1-3/4" x 3" 0" x 7' 0" pine	\$300.00
Mahogany	\$200.00
Hardware including lock set	\$ 75.00 & up
Exterior siding	
1 x 6 wood	\$250/square or \$2.50/sq. ft.
4 - 4 vinyl	\$200/square
Shutters — wood, including hardward, installed	\$ 60/pair & up
Roofing - Asphalt shingles	\$ 90/square & up
Built-up - 4 ply	\$160/square
Wood shingles - fire-rated	\$300/square
Painting — primer + 2 coats	\$ 60/square = \$.65/sq. ft.

Note: 1 square equals 100 sq. ft.

Prices in effect May 1980.

SITE WORK

For the period under discussion, driveways were never of blacktop or concrete. Only gravel of size and color available in the area is considered appropriate. A practical solution, given the correct authentic color and texture, without the maintenance problems of pot holes and ruts, is to embed the gravel in a concrete pavement while it is still plastic. This is now in general use in the finest restorations, such as Williamsburg.

Fencing should accurately reproduce original work of the period, whether it be wood picket, post and rail, wrought iron or cast iron. Needless to say, metal link fencing is entirely inappropriate.

Landscaping will usually call for severe pruning or even removal of very old plants, shrubs and trees. All of these will probably have passed their peak, and in the case of trees, may even be dangerous. Many excellent works on 19th century landscaping are available — notably, the writings of Andrew Jackson Downing, Frederick Law Olmsted and their associates. Basically, a simple, small house calls for a simple planting plan, while a large mansion may require a much more pretentious scheme. In any case, avoid planting trees and shrubs too close to the house — they introduce moisture, insects and even root problems in drains.

STREETSCAPE

Consideration of the streetscape involves the character of the street as now existing, and decisions involving many properties rather than one. If the neighborhood has been generally well maintained, nothing should be done that would strike a discordant note with adjacent properties and the character of the street as a whole. It may be possible to inspire a cooperative spirit in one's neighbors by setting a good example.

VI. Commercial Styles in Norwalk

PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE

The greatest enemy of the 19th Century building is water, simply because most of these buildings contained a great deal of wood. Even brick walls have been seriously damaged by the downpour of water from a broken or missing leader.

Defense against water is therefore of the first importance. This involves thorough inspection and careful repair of all flashings, gutters and leaders. Such work should only be entrusted to reliable roofing and sheet metal contractors who are willing to guarantee their work and make good any faults that may appear for a period of at least five years.

The second line of defense against water is repair of leaking basement walls, which can be accomplished from the inside if the condition is not too serious. In cases of active leaking, exposure of the outside by excavation may be necessary. Sometimes re-grading the ground adjacent to the building so surface water will be carried away from the wall may greatly reduce or even eliminate the problems. In any case, it should be done if the condition warrants it.

Finally, proper periodic painting can greatly prolong the life of such buildings. Old, thick, cracked, peeling or alligatored paint should be removed before new paint is applied. Electric pad heaters are effective where scraping will not remove all the old paint. Avoid the use of blow torches. They can start a fire inside a wall even when used by an experienced worker.

Paint can be removed from brick by the use of various liquid chemicals followed by a thorough wash-down with water. Sand blasting is absolutely murderous to all but the very hardest of brick, and even then should be used sparingly with non-harsh aggregate, such as walnut shells instead of sand. All restoration authorities agree that sandblasting should be forbidden. Far better to re-paint an already-painted brick building.



Italianate

Very popular during the period 1850-1890 for commercial buildings was the simplified Italianate style, usually of brick with stone or cast-iron lintels and sills, and the characteristic elaborate bracketed cornice. The example shown is unusually simple, but clearly belongs to this widely-used style. The street level was almost always devoted to stores or shops, while the upper floors typically contained apartments. Both shops and apartments were in strong demand because of convenience of location until the automobile changed the entire life of the central city business street, and both shops and tenants moved away from the former "downtown." With the current gasoline price problem, "downtown" is experiencing a resurgence of interest, first for shops, boutiques, and restaurants, and, secondly, for modernized apartments on the upper floors.



Water Street
South Norwalk

Gothic Revival

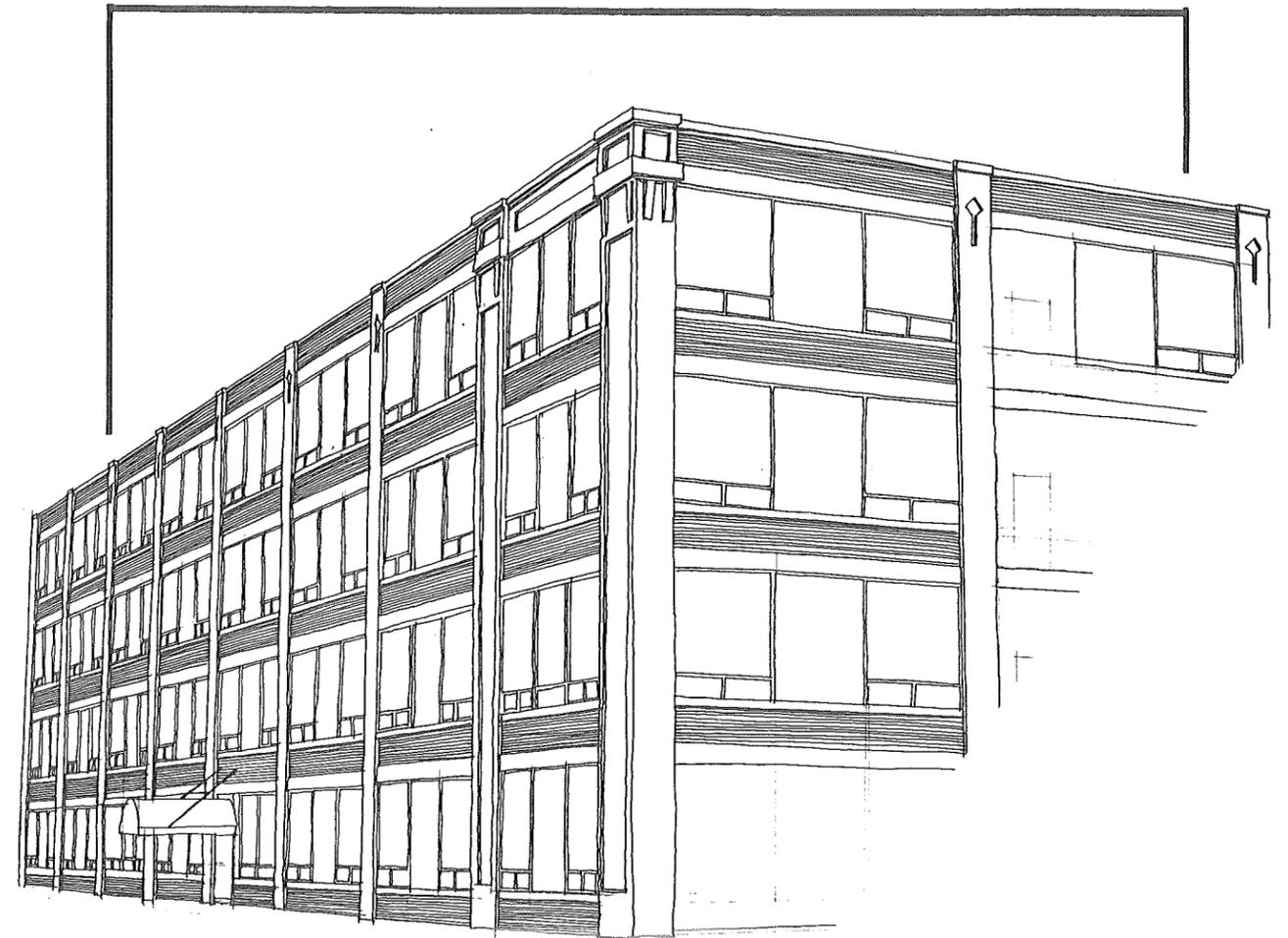
The example shown reflects, in a modest way, the same Gothic inspiration so dramatically employed by Cass Gilbert in New York's Woolworth Building. The facade is entirely of terra cotta, a material which allowed infinite repetition of motifs, and hence a somewhat sterile and uninteresting facade. This, of course, is always the problem when modern mass-produced elements replace the original hand-wrought carvings and ornamentation of the parent style. Nevertheless, this building facade shows good balance and rhythm, and a crisp, business-like aspect.



North Main Street
South Norwalk

20th Century Factory

This example is a most successful business block with excellent architectural quality, created by a skilled up-to-date treatment of a former hat factory. Once the use of steel entered the commercial building field, openings became larger and exterior expression of the steel frame often resulted in pleasing proportions. At the same time, the use of ornamentation of any kind was abandoned in favor of simpler and more easily maintained surfaces. Such buildings usually offer large, clear floor areas, permitting a great variety of possible uses.

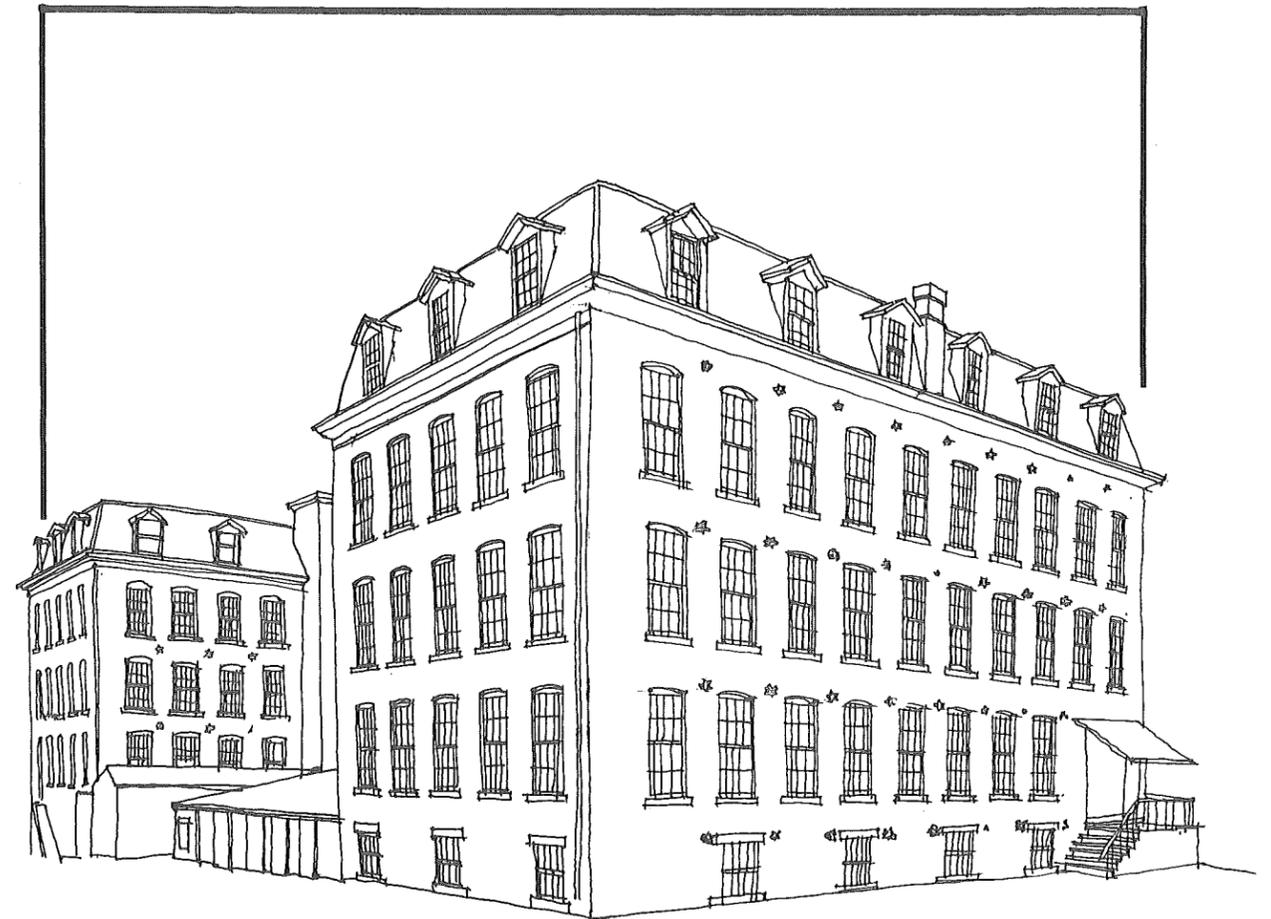


Van Zant Street
East Norwalk

Second Empire Mill Building

This building is an excellent example of the amount of fine architectural quality that was often achieved among the brick mill buildings of the 1860's to '90's. The spacing and rhythm of the openings, and proportion of window to wall are very satisfying to the eye, even though resulting from the purely functional demand of attaining enough light to permit workers to carry on their tasks in the days before modern artificial lighting had been developed.

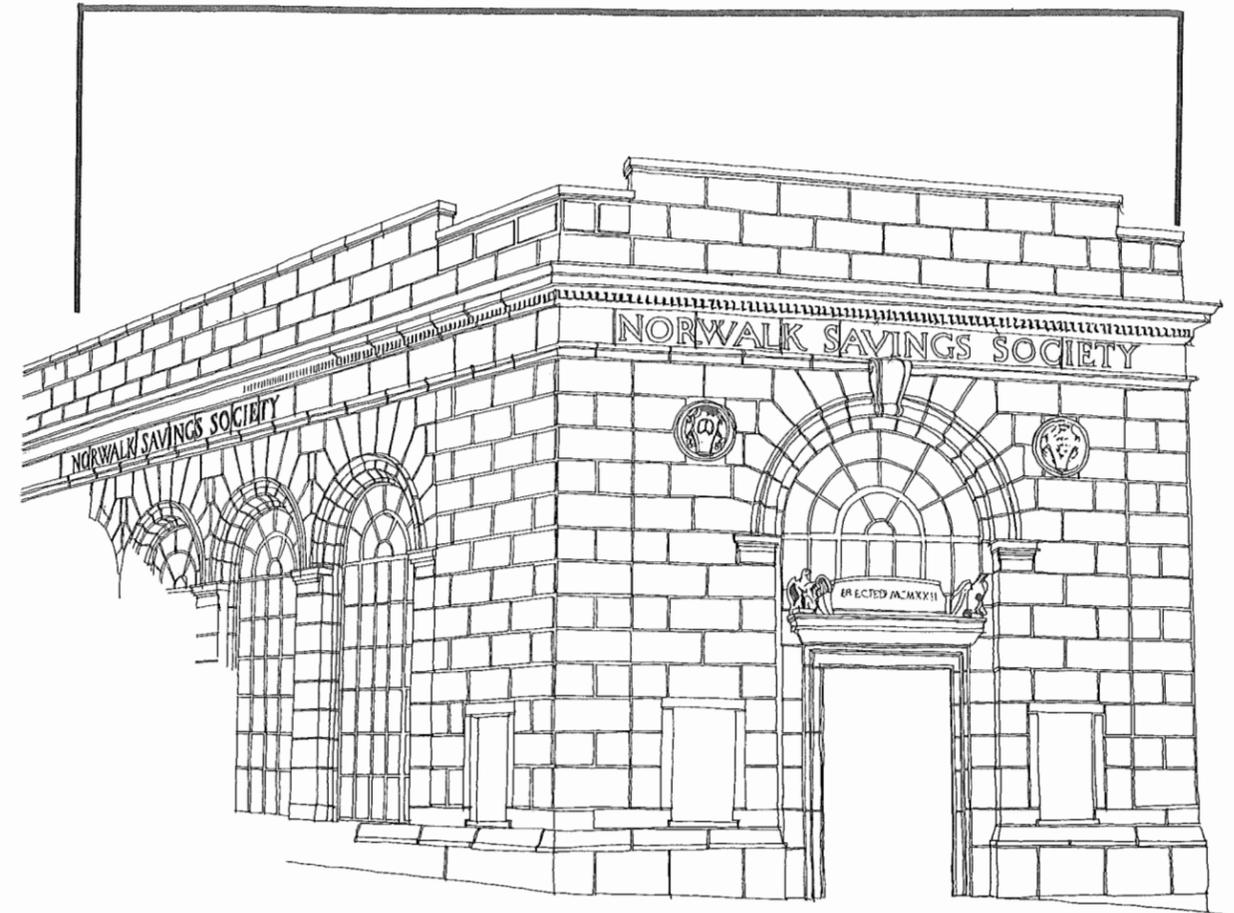
The mansard roof and dormers provide a handsome cap to top off a basically simple and functional multi-story block. Such buildings can sometimes be successfully adapted to completely new uses, such as apartments for the elderly, condominiums, and complexes of shops like Ghiradelli Square in San Francisco.



Ann St.
So. Norwalk

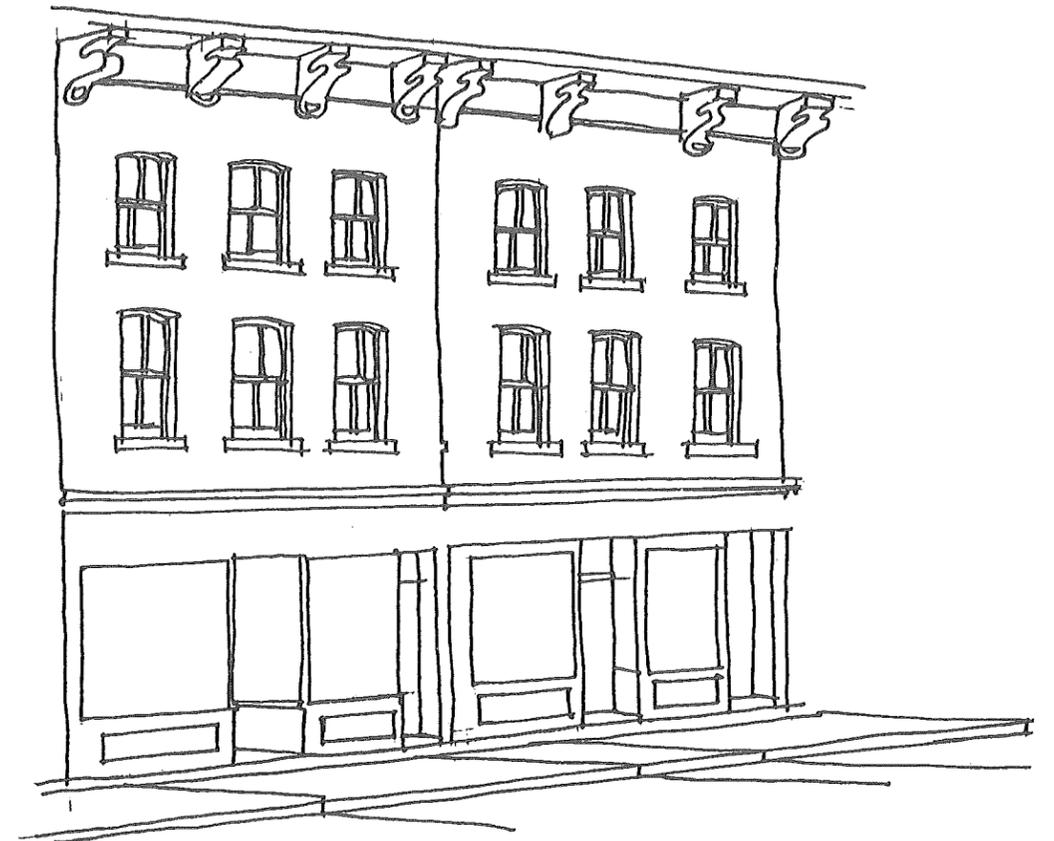
Classic Revival

The revival of interest in classic forms and detail which followed the 1893 World's Fair in Chicago, found expression in a multitude of public buildings. Every town and city had its share of banks, post offices, schools, libraries, etc. Usually of carefully tooled limestone and often with a granite base at street level, there was great emphasis on symmetry and restrained detail and ornament. The example shown is typical of the period 1900-1930 when this style was at its peak.



Wall Street
Norwalk

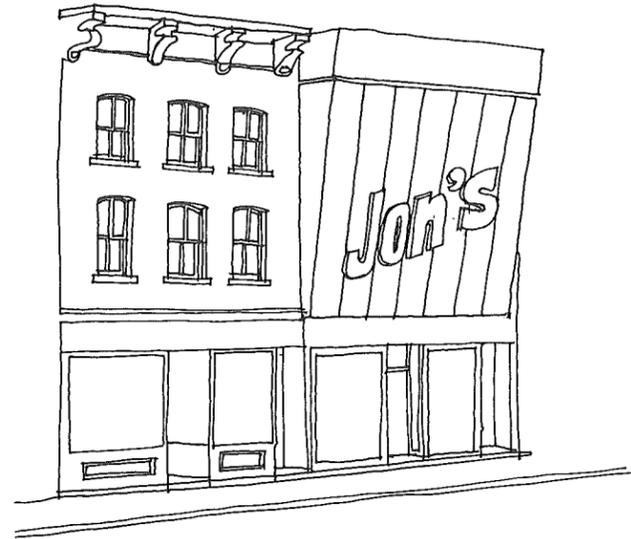
VII. Guidelines for Commercial Renovation



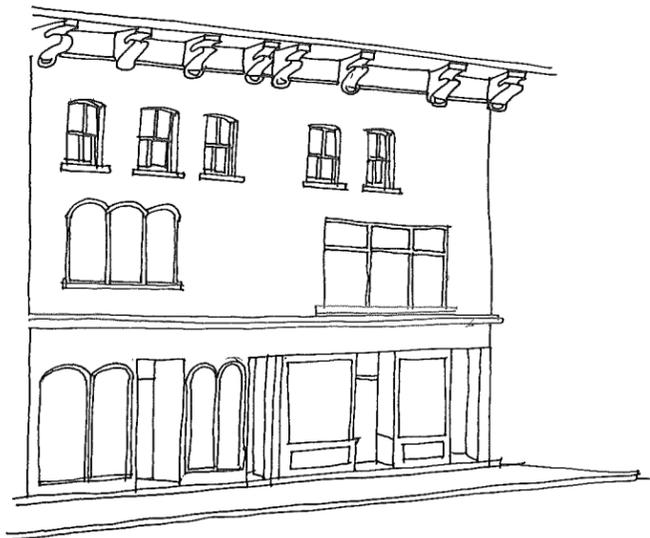
A sagging national economy has caused many cities to re-examine their older commercial structures in an attempt to revitalize these buildings through commercial renovation.

A renewed interest in our nation's architectural history has listed our cities' older buildings among our country's greatest visual treasures.

Therefore, from both an aesthetic as well as economic point of view, many of Norwalk's commercial structures make prime targets for commercial resurgence. The following is a list of guidelines for successfully achieving this end.



Avoid "fake modernism" or concealment of the original facade.



When a design scheme does not respect an existing building's window treatment it alienates any character that the structure may have possessed at one time.

FACADES

1. Avoid "fake modernism" or concealment of the original facade. Frequently, oversized signs or building panels are employed to conceal not only the original masonry work but windows and other important architectural details as well. As a result, the building becomes nothing more than a billboard. Such attempts at architectural renovation become architectural repression in which the original structure is lost.
2. When an existing building has a well developed and interesting facade and is obviously the product of attractive workmanship, efforts should be made to retain as much of the original materials and detailing as the budget will allow.

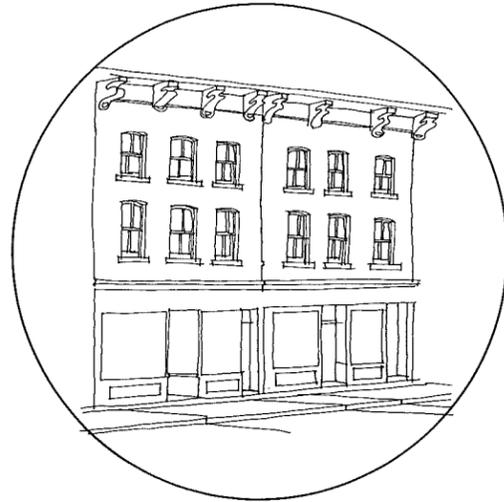
After uncovering the original facade, nothing gives a more startling and immediate effect than proper cleaning of the exterior surface by a qualified professional. Sandblasting is to be avoided because of the damage it can do.

3. Windows are an important architectural element which is most often disregarded. When a design scheme does not respect an existing building's window treatment it alienates any character that the structure may have possessed at one time. Windows are a building's eyes on the street and attention should be paid to their size, type (style), location and pattern (layout).

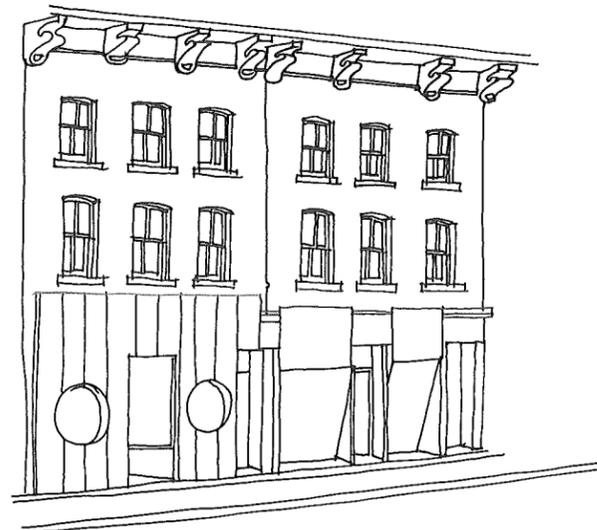
When original windows cannot be saved and it is necessary to replace them, it is a good basic rule that the new windows should be the same size and type as the originals.

However, in the event that over-sized interior heights of upper stories should be reduced to accommodate modern day usage, thereby altering window sizes, the design proposal should be sensitive to the original structure in order to make sure that modern touches respect rather than alter the original.

While older buildings require special treatment, they need not be treated as museums. Sensitive, intelligent architectural design can successfully inspire modern day usage within an historical framework. It is wrong to try to re-date a building's style by supplying details from an older style in an attempt at quaintness. An honest attitude will yield the best results.



It is wrong to try to re-date a building's style by supplying details from an older style.



The storefront is just one part of a large structure — the storefront cannot be designed as if it were standing apart from the rest of the structure.

4. When choosing colors, it is important to consider not only the building in question but any adjoining building since each color has an effect on the general character of the street or area.
 - A. Best colors would include whites, dark and light greys, olives, ochres and earth colors, in general. Avoid garish colors.
 - B. Avoid the use of too many colors. A color achieves its greatest effect when used against a neutral background.
 - C. Bright colors should be employed sparingly and then only to emphasize important architectural details and focal points such as doors or special architectural features.

STOREFRONTS

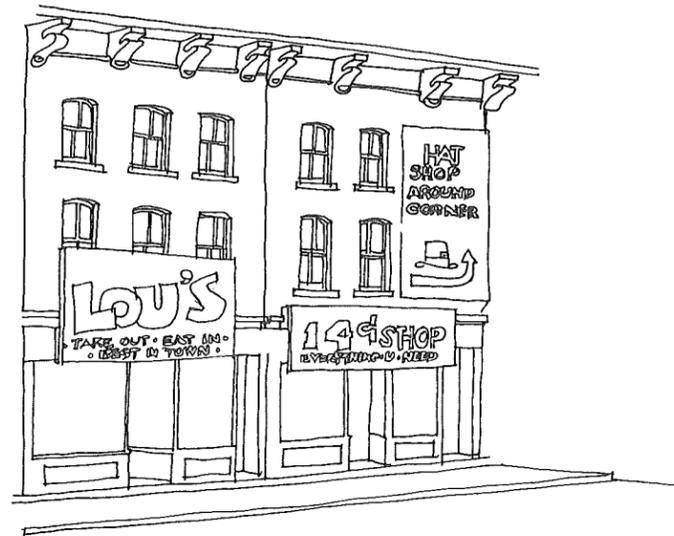
It is very important to remember that a storefront is just one part of a larger structure and while it is directly adjacent to the sidewalk, it is the entire building facade which will ultimately influence and make up the streetscape.

Therefore, the storefront cannot be designed as if it were standing apart from the rest of the structure. Its design should relate to the upper stories in regard to window layout, size and placement and the location of signs.

Secondly, a commercial building sometimes contains more than one storefront and in such a case, each individual storefront should harmonize design-wise, with its neighbors.

Adhering to these principles does not rule out individual expression for storefronts. In fact, storefronts should not be identical but should be of varying design within a framework of guidelines.

The use of colored awnings, window planter boxes and varied sign lettering can insure a storefront's individuality without impinging on one's neighbor or the overall structure in general.



No sign should ever cover any architectural feature of a building. All signs on a building should relate only to use in that building.

SIGNAGE

A sign is one of the most influential elements in the make-up of the overall streetscape. Well designed signs add interest and enhance the building's facade. On the other hand, there is very little that can be done to cushion the impact of an inappropriate sign.

The following guidelines are presented as a means to a well designed sign.

1. Aim for legibility by simplifying the amount of information to be transmitted. A graphic symbol is the most effective message medium.
2. Aim for visibility by choosing a proper location and appropriate details such as light colored letters against a dark, matte, background. Avoid large, flashy signs which succeed only in disorganizing a facade.

Also, use as few colors as possible and employ a lettering style which mixes upper and lower case letters.

3. Location

Older buildings usually had integrated areas provided for signage and it is a wise choice to locate new signs in these areas as this will naturally, most compliment the entire facade.

Generally, the area between the top of the display window and the bottom sill line of the first story window is the area in which to locate both flat and overhanging signs.

No sign should ever cover any architectural feature of a building.

Lastly, all signs in a building should relate only to uses in that building itself.

4. Lighting

For nighttime use, signs can be illuminated either from an indirect hidden light source or a light source can be placed behind the letters to create a silhouetted effect.

5. Materials

Use materials imaginatively. Nothing is duller than the constant repetition of the same color, texture and scale. Signs need not all be composed of lettering on a panel affixed to a wall. Placing metal lettering against cleaned and pointed masonry is extremely handsome and makes the most of masonry facades.

STREETSCAPE

The sense of "place" which a pedestrian gets as his eyes move up and down a street's vistas is a unique urban experience referred to as streetscape. Up to this point, the guidelines for renovation have been concerned specifically with architecture and with each building's facade treatment.

While these guidelines are extremely important, we shall see that streetscape is affected by more than just buildings. The following elements not only affect the streetscape but, in fact, help to create it.

1. Paving Materials

Materials which are used as part of the sidewalk paving treatment should be related to the materials which compose the buildings' facades. It is also recommended that a limited palette of sidewalk paving materials be chosen for use in a specific study area.

Such measures are necessary in order to bring about a simple and coordinated design scheme which will be most effective.

2. Landscaping

A tree planting program is a most vital element in the streetscape. Trees help buildings to be better related to the sidewalk and generally create a more interesting sidewalk atmosphere.

Any successful tree planting scheme must recognize and respect the entrances to buildings and stores. Sidewalks which are narrower than 10 feet in width, cannot readily accommodate trees. In other words, a tree planting program must be well thought out and not indiscriminate.

Sound advice must be sought in choosing a species hardy enough to withstand urban conditions. Avoid leaving tree wells exposed by using either an iron grate or setting masonry units in sand with allowance for proper drainage.

3. Lighting

Street lighting serves a dual purpose. It contributes to street security as well as being a visual element. However, function must not be sacrificed at the expense of aesthetics. Handsome light fixtures must relate to and compliment the architecture and overall streetscape. Due to the increased interest of cities in beautifying urban areas, the lighting industry now provides many good looking examples of modern as well as period light fixtures.

Different models should be investigated in seeking a suitable fixture which fits into the design proposed for an overall streetscape plan.

4. Street Furniture

Street furniture is another element which makes up the streetscape.

Street furniture refers to such items as benches, wastebaskets, lights, pots, telephone booths, mail boxes and street signs. These items must be designed and chosen so as to relate to each other and should fit into the overall design concept for the area.

All items in the streetscape should be preplanned in order to be a success. Last minute substitutions should be ruled out.

Good urban design will provide for continuity in all these items. It is the sum of such individual impressions that creates the character of the place.

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