

## House Republican Press Release

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Press Office: 860-240-8700

### Larry Cafero Secures \$10,000 State Grant



*Funds Will Launch a Campaign to Renovate West  
Norwalk Meeting House*

NORWALK--Plans to renovate the historic West Norwalk Meeting House received a boost with a state grant of \$10,000 secured by state Rep. Lawrence F. Cafero Jr., R-Norwalk, and the administration of Governor M. Jodi Rell.

The funds will be the first in a fundraising campaign organized by the West Norwalk Meeting House Society to raise money for painting, plastering, furnace, roof and landscaping work at the property located at 186 West Norwalk Road at Fallow Street.

“It is a pleasure to announce this \$10,000 state grant to help preserve some of Norwalk’s history,” said Rep. Cafero. “Thanks to Governor Jodi Rell and her administration for making this happen.”

Rep. Cafero presented the ceremonial check at an open house event held Aug. 5 at the meeting house property.

“The meeting house is really embedded in the history of the community,” said Tom Aikenhead, treasurer of the Meeting House Society. “Fewer and fewer buildings are left which take us so far back into history.”

“It’s a very attractive and usable building,” Aikenhead added, “and because of its location at a prominent location close to the road everybody knows where it is. It would be a shame to have to sell it or to let it further degrade.”

Originally called The West Norwalk Chapel, it was the first of three community chapels built in then rural areas of Norwalk in the late nineteenth century. These chapels were all located near existing schools and in two cases there was a general store nearby. This collection of buildings formed a community center. The West Norwalk Chapel functioned not only as a religious but also a social center for the community.

Religious services were not held in the building after 1961. In recent years, various community groups met in the building which became known as the meeting house rather than the chapel.

The West Norwalk Chapel is a rectangular, two story, Gothic Revival, wood building finished in 1868. It is painted white with a red door and grey trim around the door and front and rear windows but green trim around the side windows. The building is located on a .23 acre rectangular lot.

West Norwalk Road retains much of its historic rural character and the building is surrounded by several antique houses built in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Fillow Street is designated as a scenic road by the state of Connecticut. The building, now known as the West Norwalk Meeting House, is owned by the West Norwalk Meeting House Society, Inc., a nonprofit corporation.

