A Short History Of Montgomery Town Meeting Venues: Every Building Tells A Story

Montgomery's first Town Meeting was in 1802 and was held at the home of Joshua and Naby Clapp the Town's first settlers. The Town's population then was about 34. It elected the Town's first officers:

Town Clerk - Samuel Barnard
Treasurer - Joshua Clapp
Selectmen - James Upham, Elijah Larned, and Stephen Gates
Listers - Trajan Richmond, James Upham, Jockton Goodspeed,
Constable - Trajan Richmond

After that, Town Meeting was usually held at the home of one of the Town Officers until a suitable location in a centrally located part of the Town could be built or designated the Town House, a place to store town records and carry on the town's business. The Town House in Montgomery would eventually be located in the Center very close to the location of the old Town Office and Post Office. It appears in maps of the Town in 1857 and 1871. This inset of the Center from the 1871 Beers Atlas shows the Town House.

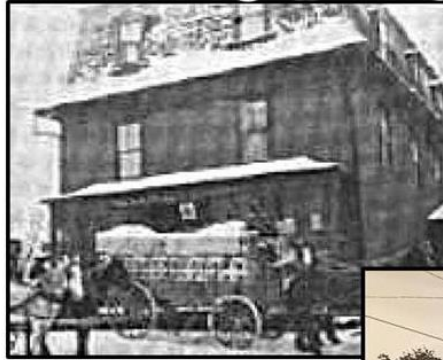Town Meetings were Warned and held in the Town House up until 1924.

In 1925 the meeting was moved across the street to Gardyne Hall which also housed a store and post office.   Gardyne Hall would host Town Meeting for the next seven years. Today it is occupied by the Jay Cloud Cyclery, and Flowers and Ferns.

Nelson and Hall Company Store ca. 1898
Would Become Gardyne Hall

Gardyne Hall 1983. aka
Joe's Trading Post, Kilgore Trout's Saloon,

In 1922 the Congregational Church, two properties east of Gardyne Hall (also on the Beers Atlas map above), was sold to C.T. Hall, a mill owner who lived in the home now serving as The Inn.   He was a prosperous business leader and owned many of the homes on Main Street. He converted the church into the Crescent Theater, closing up the bell stage of the tower and adding a new front portion that would house a balcony, and projection and ticket booths. The theater would become the venue for a variety of community gatherings and in 1933 it became the new home for Town Meeting. Town Meeting would be held at the Crescent Theater until 1953 when the building was sold again.

Congregational Church

Crescent Theater Modifications

The building's new owner was the recently formed Montgomery Grange No.548, and while the name and ownership transferred, the hall would still host a variety of community activities as before. Town Meetings were Warned for the Grange from 1954 until 1979. When the Grange was disestablished, ownership was transferred to the Town and it officially became the Montgomery Town Hall.

The Hall needed some TLC from the many volunteers who stepped up to the challenge.   A drop ceiling was removed showing the magnificent pressed tin ceiling and partitions were removed exposing the balcony and other theater features. A new roof, hardwood floor, windows, and kitchen equipment were all added over time. 1980 was the first year Town Meeting was Warned for the "new" Town Hall. At least one meeting was held at the school while renovations were underway.

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Union Church
1835
St. Bartholomew's
1897
Pratt Hall
1977

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