Montclair Historic Preservation Commission

Application No. : 2788

Project Location: 91-99 Maple Avenue (Block 4106, Lots 10, 11, and 12)

Received by Connolly & Hickey: 12 May 2023  Reviewed: 01 June 2023

The subject properties are located within the Wheeler Street Potential Historic Resource District along the east side of Maple Avenue. From south to north, Lot 10 contains a two-story mixed-use building with a plumbing supply store on the ground floor and basement level and residences on the second floor, Lot 11 is empty, and Lot 12 contains an unoccupied one-story garage building. All three buildings are accessed directly via the concrete sidewalk and face west-northwest (west) towards Maple Avenue.

The building on Lot 10 is five bays wide and constructed with cast stone block on the front elevation, parged masonry on the side elevations, and a flat roof. The façade is symmetrical with a storefront in the center bay of the first floor and a door in each of the two bays on either side. A small step with a wrought iron railing leads to the southern-most door, while a ramp with an identical railing provides access to the two northern doors. Fabric awnings cover the two outer bays on each side, and a belt course of soldier bricks sits above the awnings between the first and second floors. On the second floor, the center bay holds two one-over-one vinyl hung windows with segmental-arched brick lintels, while the remaining four bays each hold one of the same windows. The top of the façade has a stepped parapet with short projections at the corners. Behind the building is a parking lot and storage area for the business, and south of the building are additional angled parking spaces off of an asphalt driveway.

The unoccupied garage on Lot 12 is three bays wide with parged masonry walls and a terra cotta coping at the top of the parapet walls. The northern-most bay contains a one-lite aluminum storefront door with a solid transom panel above, the center bay holds a large one-lite fixed wood window, and the southern-most bay contains a solid rolling overhead garage door.

Project Description: The applicant proposed the demolition of the dwelling and detached garage on Lot 11, which have since been demolished following approval by the Historic Preservation Commission on June 22, 2022. In this location, the applicant now proposes paving the lot with angled parking spaces and a small, landscaped bed adjacent to the sidewalk. The application proposal for Lot 12 includes paving the area behind the building with additional parking spaces and the addition of a concrete ramp and loading dock at the rear elevation; closing the curb cut in front of the building and extending the sidewalk and
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grassy strip along Maple Avenue; and converting the building into a showroom and warehouse, which includes replacing all openings on the front elevation with storefront windows and adding a shed roof projection above them, making the existing window openings on the south elevation smaller, and replacing/adding two garage doors at the rear elevation. The proposed work for Lot 10 includes creating a basement entrance to the store from the south side of Lot 11 between the angled parking spaces; the entrance would include a block wall with a railing on the north and west sides. General site improvements include widening the curb at the driveway on Lot 11 to 24 feet, installing new security lighting on the south and rear elevations of the Lot 10 building, and various plantings on Lot 11.

Project Comments:
The following comments are based on two-page architectural plans prepared by John Guadagnoli, Architect PC, dated 05 April 2023, the Historic Design Guidelines for the Township of Montclair, and the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and are meant as an observation against historical precedent and understands that the proposed building form does not necessarily require an exact holding to precedent as long as the design fits within the aesthetic of the neighborhood/district.

1. The proposed alterations to 91 Maple Avenue are compatible with the historic character of the proposed district.
2. The detail of the proposed pent roof on the façade of 91 Maple Avenue shows the material ‘Fypon’ for the brackets. Synthetic materials are not compatible materials for historic buildings and are not permitted.
3. The existing terra cotta parapet copings at 91 Maple Avenue shall remain at the sides and rear of building in place of the proposed aluminum coping.
4. Applicant shall confirm that the proposed new signage conforms with the Township’s current sign ordinance.
5. Is the applicant proposing new façade-mounted exterior lighting as part of the proposed work?