Montclair Historic Preservation Commission

Application No.: 2847

Project Location: 408 Grove Street (Block 3502, Lot 29)

Received by Connolly & Hickey: 24 May 2023   Reviewed: 02 June 2023

The subject property is located within the Wildwood Avenue Potential Historic Resource District along the west side of Grove Street, and the building faces east-southeast (east) towards Grove Street. The subject property is a four-bay wide, two-and-one-half story vernacular dwelling, currently holding two apartment units, with a one-bay, one-story wing on the south elevation. The building has a parged masonry foundation, wide wood clapboard siding, and asphalt shingles on a front gable roof with a shed extension over the two-story southern-most bay. Two interior brick chimneys puncture the roof, and there is a full-width enclosed porch with a hipped roof at the first floor of the main block. The typical window is a one-over-one hung vinyl window except where otherwise noted. A set of brick steps with wrought iron railings leads to the entrance, which is a solid eight-panel wood door located in the northern-most bay of the enclosed porch. The enclosed porch also holds a pair of one-lite vinyl casement windows in the second bay from the north elevation and a typical window in each of the two southern bays. The southern wing contains only a typical window and is topped with a shallow side-shed roof. At the second floor, there is a typical window in the first and third bays from the north elevation and a one-lite fixed vinyl window in the bay between them. The southern-most bay holds a pair of shorter typical windows, and a smaller typical window sits centered in the gable peak. An asphalt driveway immediately north of the house leads to the rear of the property.

Project Description: The applicant proposes two additions. The first is a one-story addition to be constructed on the west side of the existing one-story portion of the house (comprised of the enclosed porch and the southern wing). The second is a two-story addition to be constructed across the rear of the house. Both additions will enlarge only the first-floor dwelling unit. Additional proposed modifications include the addition of a bathroom and relocation of a bedroom on the first floor as well as the conversion and enlargement of the existing rear sunroom into a living room with a new stair leading to living space on the second floor; modifications to the rear sunroom would allow the first floor unit to include a new master suite with a bedroom, walk-in closet, and bathroom.
The following comments are based on three-page architectural plans prepared by Brinkman Architecture, LLC, dated 01 May 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 additions are compatible with the scale and proportion of the existing structure and will be minimally visible from the public right-of-way.
2. The existing and proposed plans and elevations are not drawn accurately. The one-story hip roof on the east (front) elevation does not start at the corner of the second floor. Please show the proposed one-story addition and second floor bay on the west (rear) elevation. Please indicate all chimneys on both the roof plans and elevations. Please show the one-story bay window and all stairs and landings on elevations. Please indicate all existing and proposed windows on plans and elevations.
3. The applicant shall consider adding a projecting eave that matches the existing eave on the one-story hipped roofed section at the front of the house on both the one-story addition and the addition that was added in 1968. The drawings indicate a projecting eave on the 1968 addition, as shown of the existing and proposed south (side) elevation, that does not currently exist.
4. The applicant shall provide information on all existing and proposed exterior materials and their detailing including but not limited to siding/cladding, roofing, doors, windows, railings and lighting.
5. Gutters and leaders shall be shown on all roof plans and elevations.
6. Applicant shall indicate all proposed and existing HVAC condensers on site diagram and shall consider relocating existing front yard HVAC condensers to either the side or rear elevations.
7. HVAC units shall be screened from view through inconspicuous placement, landscaping or fencing designed to blend with the building.