

Montclair Historic Preservation Commission

**Application No.:** 2023-43

**Project Location:** 330-346 Bloomfield Avenue (Block 3104, Lot 21)

**Received by Connolly & Hickey:** 7 December 2023    **Reviewed:** 12 December 2023

The subject property is located in the Town Center Historic District along the south side of Bloomfield Avenue and faces north-northeast (north) towards the street. The commercial building is composed of nine storefronts split between a four-bay wide, three-story structure at the east end and a seven-bay wide, two-story structure at the west end; both sections of the building are buff brick with limestone detailing. At the three-story structure, the first floor contains three storefronts with parged bulkheads, one-lite fixed windows, one-lite recessed entrances, and fabric awnings. Above, each bay at the second and third floors each hold a pair of one-over-one vinyl hung windows with a cast stone lintel. There is a band of patterned brick above the first floor, and the parapet is stepped at the center with additional patterned brick. A metal fire escape is attached to the two central bays of the upper floors. At the two-story structure, the first floor contains six storefronts matching those at the east end of the building but signage on a solid transom panel in place of the awnings. Moving east to west, there is a one-lite aluminum door with a one-lite transom after the first and fourth storefronts that lead to apartments on the second floor. At the second floor, the center and both outer bays each contain two one-over-one vinyl hung windows with limestone labels and scrolled keystones. The remaining bays each hold two of the same windows set in a paneled wood surround with a projecting wood cornice. A deep, detailed cast-stone cornice lines the top of the building, and there is a simpler cornice above the first floor. The cornice is stepped in two locations, above the second and third bays from both the east and west elevations. All storefronts are accessible directly off the concrete sidewalk along the street.

**Project Description:** The proposed work at the three-story structure includes updating the storefront bulkheads to wood or composite with cast or natural stone bases, removing the awnings, and restoring the wood crown at the first floor. Above, the work includes repairing and repainting the fire escape as well as replacing the existing windows with new wood clad double hung sashes. The existing face brick will be removed, the inner wythes of masonry stabilized, and new face brick installed to match the existing. Existing limestone elements will be salvaged and stockpiled for reuse to the greatest extent possible. At the two-story structure, the applicant proposes repainting, repointing of the brick, and flashing replacement as required.

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**Project Comments:**

The following comments are based on a set of drawings provided by Sionas Architecture, P.C., 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 arrangement of the brick units and bonding patterns, together with brick color, size, texture, width of joints and tooling play an important role in defining the visual character of the building. The submitted drawings do not accurately indicate number of brick coursing or location of stretcher and header brick at important locations such as the brick window surrounds. Detailed drawings shall be provided of the brick panels at the parapet, window and door surrounds, etc. to allow for an accurate reconstruction.
2. No detail 2/A2 for the soldier course above the display windows has been provided as called out on Proposed North Elevation & Façade Plan.
3. No work is noted for existing aluminum conductor heads or corrugated aluminum leaders.
4. The Applicant shall provide brick and mortar samples and in field mock-ups for review and approval by the HPC for both buildings.