



The City of New York

Queens Community Board 11

Serving the Communities of Auburndale, Bayside, Douglaston, Hollis Hills
Little Neck and Oakland Gardens

Michael Budabin Chairperson / Joseph Marziliano District Manager

TO: All Board Members

FROM: Bernard Haber, P.E., Committee Co-Chair
Laura James, Committee Co-Chair

DATE: August 20, 2020

RE: 29 Center Drive
Block 8064, Lot 76

On Wednesday, August 19, 2020, the CB11 Landmarks Committee met via Zoom teleconference to discuss the above-referenced application to the NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC). Participating were Bernard Haber, P.E. and Laura James, Committee Co-Chairs, 3rd Vice Chair, Henry Euler, and Committee members, Christina Scherer and Ed LaGrassa. District Manager, Joseph Marziliano, and staff member, Jane Bentivenga, were also present. Also participating was the architect, Jose Diaz.

Mr. Diaz explained that this application is for an addition to the front and rear of the garage, an extension of the cupola to its original height and the addition of some railings. Mr. Diaz shared his screen for the members showing a copy of the drawings.

Mr. Haber asked when the house was built. Mr. Diaz said it was prior to the 1900s. Mr. Diaz said there will be an extension of the terrace and garage and a change to the front stairs to accommodate vehicles going into the garage. Mr. LaGrassa asked about the grading along the retaining wall on the driveway. He explained that the grading goes down. However, they are keeping the same height of the retaining wall. LPC suggested that a railing be added for safety. The existing stone will be used in the retaining wall. Mr. Haber questioned why windows were being removed from the basement. Mr. Diaz advised that the owner requested two windows be removed. Mr. LaGrassa asked about a shed. Mr. Diaz said a firewood shed will be added in the next set of drawings. He stated he would email the updated plans to the Committee.

Ms. James commented on the disrepair of the sidewalk on the Forest Road side of the property. Mr. Diaz made a note to include repair of sidewalk in the plans. Mr. Haber asked if the Dept. of Buildings had any comments about the height of the building; with the cupola, it is 46 feet. Mr. Diaz said he will have to check that. Mr. Euler asked if the garage was being enlarged and how

many vehicles it will hold. The garage is being enlarged; it will be for one car. Mr. Haber asked how wide the garage is. It is 36'6" wide. Mr. Haber said that two vehicles could fit in tandem.

Mr. LaGrassa commented on the replacement of the hung windows in the front with casement. He asked what exists now. Mr. Diaz stated he believes what exists now is work that was done previously. He will double check. Mr. LaGrassa questioned the windows on the right. Mr. Diaz said they are full-height windows. Further discussion ensued regarding some windows being transom and some not. Mr. Haber remarked that the window plan needs to be explained in detail.

Mr. Haber questioned the outdoor patio with pizza oven and a stove out in the open. How it will be protected? Mr. Diaz said it is an exterior kitchen and just stays out in the open. Mr. Haber also asked how the patio/deck will be reframed. Mr. Diaz stated that will be shown in the construction drawing phase. Mr. Haber also asked about the access to the cupola. The staircase has been removed. It will be accessed by ladder.

Mr. LaGrassa inquired as to the type of lift that is being shown. Mr. Diaz will have to find out. Mr. LaGrassa also inquired about the large amount of brick being used on the left elevation and if there is a way to "soften" that look. Mr. Diaz said the area by the stairs doesn't need to be brick. Ms. James suggested landscaping between the garage and the walkway to break it up.

Mr. Haber inquired as to their upcoming schedule with LPC. Mr. Diaz stated LPC wants further details regarding materials etc. He will submit new drawings to clear up any confusion over existing and proposed items. He believes he will have the new drawings in approximately three weeks; then LPC will schedule a hearing which will most likely be in October. Mr. Diaz will email revised plans to CB11 taking all suggestions into consideration. He would be willing to meet with the Committee again.

Ms. Scherer gave a short history regarding this house; it was built between 1848 and 1859. It served as the original Clubhouse until the new one was built (which is based on this house). It is the second-most important house in Douglas Manor.

Mr. Haber stated there are a lot of questions regarding this application and inconsistencies with the drawings.

With all in favor, the Committee decided to send a letter to LPC regarding their questions about the application and suggestions that were made.

Respectfully submitted 8/20/2020