

CAPSULE SUMMARY

Marché Florists Building

PG: 68-041-03

4800 Rhode Island Avenue

Hyattsville, Prince George's County

1951

Private

The Marché Florists Building, located at 4800 Rhode Island Avenue in Hyattsville, Prince George's County, Maryland, was designed by architect John Robie Kennedy in 1951 for Augusta Marché, the matriarch of the Marché family. William F. Marché, Augusta's husband, was a successful florist that started his own shop in Washington, D.C., in 1908. After her husband's death in 1919, Augusta Marché moved the floral business to their house in Hyattsville. Two of her children, William and Louise, entered into business with their mother, becoming the fourth generation of florists in the Marché family. After many years of operating the floral shop from their house, the Marchés constructed a small shop c. 1939 in the southeast corner of their property, fronting Rhode Island Avenue. The success and growth of the business necessitated the construction of a larger building, which was designed by Kennedy with materials and architectural elements of the fashionable Modern Movement. The building was subsequently enlarged with two additions between 1955 and 1957 that reflect the immediate growth and success of the business. The property is historically associated with the Marché House (4200 Crittenden Street, PG: 68-010-62) and was subdivided from the larger parcel in 1959 as a gift from Augusta Marché to her children. The Marché siblings continued to operate the business until the death of Louise Marché in 1986. The property remained in the Marché family until 2001. Located on a prominent corner on an important commuter and commercial corridor in Hyattsville (Route 1), the Marché Florists property is reflective of the growth and development of the community in the first half of the twentieth century and its transition to an automobile suburb. The Marché Florists Building was one of more than fifty commercial and industrial buildings constructed along Rhode Island Avenue and Baltimore Avenue in Hyattsville between 1921 and 1954. The property is also significant for its association with the Marché family and the architect John Robie Kennedy.

This one-story commercial building was constructed in 1951 to the designs of Washington, D.C., architect John Robie Kennedy. Reflective of the Modern Movement, the masonry building is constructed of concrete blocks. The building is one bay wide and is veneered with coursed stone. The flat roof is obscured by a parapet with metal coping and is faced with narrow stretcher-bond bricks. A metal cornice extends across the façade and wraps around to the easternmost bay of the southwest (side) elevation. The original "Marché Florists" sign that was located on the entablature of the façade has been removed. The façade is fenestrated with bands of large one-light, metal-frame storefront windows. The center bay holds a double-leaf, metal-frame commercial glass door with a one-light transom. All openings on the façade are sheltered by green fabric awnings, which are not an original feature. A one-story greenhouse is attached on the southwest (side) elevation of the building. The shop was enlarged c. 1955 and c. 1957 with rear and side additions, respectively.