The Martin L. Parsons House sits on the south side of New Britain Avenue. Trees and shrubs surround the house which stands in the center of the property. Other residences built during the late nineteenth-century exist in the neighborhood.
This square, hip-roofed, Colonial Revival-style building exhibits features typical of its style. The three-bay facade displays four one-over-one windows, one of which is paired. An oval window with tracery and four encircling keystones complements an extended entry porch. This porch has been enclosed with full-length, multi-paned panels of glass. Sidelights, also full length, are found on either side of the wood door. Further up towards the roof, note the overhanging eaves and plain cornice. A gable-roofed dormer with a rectangular window is placed in the center of the roof. Its gable peak features decorative half-timbering. A small brick chimney rises from the roof and a two-story rear addition is found on the south elevation.

This property once belonged to a larger tract of land known as "the Sand flats", situated along New Britain Avenue in Unionville. In 1888 James L. Cowles mortgaged this tract to the Farmington Savings Bank with "a dwelling house thereon;" however subsequent transactions fail to indicate where on the soon to be subdivided property the house stood, if they mention it all (FLR 66:690, 67:210). An 1894 property transfer from Cowles to builder Martin L. Parsons for $100 does not mention any buildings, while an inventory of Parsons' estate in 1897 lists "one piece of land across the river," valued at $100 (FLR 71:36; FPR 25:94). However, the probate ordered sale of this latter property, also in 1897, describes the property with buildings (FPR 26:36). Despite the conflicting land descriptions the house at #56 New Britain Avenue displays characteristics similar to those of other homes built by Martin L. and his sons John Stanley (1863-1908) and Luke A. If this house was built previous to 1894 it was later altered by the Parsons. Martin founded a successful contracting and building firm along with a lumber business and general store. John S., a carpenter by trade, formed a partnership with his father in 1888 until the elder's death in 1897. John was joined by Luke and they purchased the remainder of "the Salt Flats" (sic) for $200 from their mother Georgia A. (Thompson) Parsons, executrix of their father's estate (FLR 74:23). They promptly sold half of this for $100 and the final piece "with a dwelling house" was sold to Henry C. Wagner in 1898 (FLR 71:360,369). (SEE CONT.)

Henry C. was married to Emma Brouillard and worked as a boltmaker. As soon as he purchased this property he mortgaged it to the Collinsville Savings Society for $2000, only to sell it to the bank a year later in 1899 (FLR 72:57, 71:445). The bank did not resell the property until 1913 (FLR 77: 481).

The Martin L. Parsons House is a typical example of Colonial Revival-style architecture, the dominant building mode of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries commonly used throughout the United States.