

Manhasset Park Civic Association

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Attention: Board of Zoning Appeals

Reference: Appeal #21154

The overall character of the neighborhood on Orchard Street is primarily residential. The four single family homes just east of the proposed development at 25 Orchard Street have been converted to office use. At the end of the street is Georgetown Commons with 28 townhomes. The scale of these single-family homes and 28 townhomes, in my opinion, is important to maintain.

The character of Maple Place is completely different from Orchard Street with its private homes. Maple Place has the Post Office, two office buildings, and a garage all bordering the Long Island Railroad tracks. The two streets are not comparable since Orchard Street borders private homes on Gaynor Avenue.

The proposed senior housing with five apartments requires major variances. The regulation stipulates a lot must have at least 40,000 square feet. The proposal is for a lot that contains 7,031 square feet which is only 17% of the required minimum square footage. Senior housing requires a minimum lot width of 100 feet. The subject lot is only 60 feet wide which is comparable to all but one lot in the immediate area of more than 100 single family homes.

The second and third floors of the proposed building are 48 feet wide and 83 feet long, approximately 4,000 square feet each, which is 57% coverage of the lot. This far exceeds all other comparable lots in the neighborhood and the Town of North Hempstead. There is a distance of only 20 feet from the rear of the building to the property line of the neighboring single-family homes.

There is limited space to build a drywell and install a septic system for approximately 15 residents and a management office under the second floor. Since the building has a basement, the drainage for the drywell and septic tank will have extreme limitations on this lot. The objective seems to be to squeeze facilities for five families in a space that normally accommodates one or two families.

The six parking spaces, the garbage container, and the five HVAC compressors further reduce the overall open space. The only unencumbered spaces are the 10-foot-wide driveway and the 13-foot front lawn.

Snow removal from the rear lot, driveway, and sidewalk is another major concern. There is no on-site storage space for the snow so it must be removed completely from the property. Orchard Street is congested, and the Town ordinance prohibits placing the snow on the street.

A smaller senior building requiring variances of much less magnitude would enable the property to be developed as a residential property while also maintaining the scale and character of the overall neighborhood. Consideration must be given to the precedent that oversized development sets upon the future development of the four adjacent properties when they become available. I ask the Board to seriously consider the residential character of the area. It must be maintained without negatively impacting residents of Gaynor Avenue or Georgetown Commons, and the surrounding area of Manhasset Park.

