

56-1770

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

historic name 390 Ocean Avenue
other names/site number _____
name of related multiple property listing N/A

Location

street & number 390 Ocean Avenue

 not for publication
city or town Massapequa vicinity _____
state New York code NY county Nassau code 059 zip code 11758

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,
I hereby certify that this X nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide X local

Michael P. Lynch Deputy SPO 7/27/17
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- X entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register
- other (explain:)

[Signature] 10/27/17
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
2	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC / Single Dwelling

DOMESTIC / Single Dwelling

DOMESTIC / Secondary Structure

DOMESTIC / Secondary Structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY

foundation: Concrete

REVIVALS / Colonial Revival

walls: NATCO tile
Stucco

roof: Ludowici roof tile

other:

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Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

The house at 390 Ocean Avenue is at the southwest corner of Ocean Avenue and Seaview Avenue in the town of Massapequa, Nassau County, Long Island. The house is within Massapequa's earliest planned residential neighborhood, situated at the heart of the town. The neighborhood is framed by Sunrise Highway and the Long Island Railroad's Massapequa station to the north, Broadway to the west, Merrick Road to the south, and the Massapequa Preserve to the east. Unlike the surrounding area, the neighborhood has vertical streets running north-south and relatively large lots. The streets are lined by sidewalks and mature trees are common throughout the neighborhood. Immediately to the north, across Seaview Avenue, is a two-story, single-family dwelling with attached garage and surrounding lawn. To the east, across Ocean Avenue, is a two-story, single-family home with attached garage and similarly sized lawn. To the south is a comparably sized two-story house with attached two-car garage, and to the west, facing Lincoln Avenue, is a single-family home and pool.

The house at 390 Avenue is approached from a straight path made of contemporary pavers leading from the public sidewalk to the two stone steps directly in front of the door. This nomination includes the entire lot on which the residence at 390 Ocean Avenue stands. The site consists of the single family dwelling, a freestanding garage, and the surrounding open land in and around the structures. The property is quite flat, composed of roughly three-tenths of an acre. There is a significant front yard, as well as an enclosed back yard bounded by a white wood fence.

Narrative Description

The residence at 390 Ocean Avenue is a two-story, three-bay by two-bay Colonial Revival house with a hipped red Ludowici clay tile roof. The walls, which are covered in stucco, are constructed of NATCO Hollow Tile; each tile is 12" by 5" and was designed to serve as a lightweight, fireproof, and efficient building material. Only the exterior walls were constructed of NATCO tile; the interior walls were traditionally framed. The façade is symmetrical across the central axis. One-story stucco sun porches set back slightly from the main façade extend from the north and south elevations. Originally, these were built as screened-in porches to increase air flow through the house, but they have since been enclosed. Two triangular dormer windows and two white-painted brick chimneys with red chimney tops extend from the roofline. The steel gutters at the base of the roofline are painted red to match the tile.

On the first floor, the central bay features a single wood paneled door with five-part sidelights. The surround has a pair of fluted pilasters, topped by the entablature with a band of guttae in the architrave and a cornice supported by modillions that are attached to the frieze. The entrance is flanked by single full-height French windows. On the second floor, a small, central, three-panel, stained-glass window is located in the central bay and flanked by eight-over-one, double-hung windows. While all of the windows are contemporary replacements, they retain their original black louvered shutters and wide window surrounds. Meeting the top of the central window crown molding is the building's entablature. The modillions seen in this molding match that of the front door surround. Each of the one-story enclosed porches has a pair of full-height French windows recessed into the façade, with a segmental-arch lunette above, topped by a sloped tile overhang the width of

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the window opening. Above the tile is a simple entablature made up of a flat plain frieze and simple cornice ornamenting the flat roof.

The north and south elevations are nearly identical. At the first-story, on each side, sun porch extensions are visible. Both single story structures with flat roofs have two pairs of six-over-six windows with segmental-arch lunettes above, divided by engaged columns. Each pair of windows replicates the sun porch's east façade. The only difference between these windows on the north and south elevations and those seen on the east elevation is that here the windows are standard length (and not door height as they were on the elevation). The north and south elevations are organized by continuous tile overhangs and entablatures above the engaged columns and flat friezes. Above the sun porch rooflines, the second story of the main house is visible. The second story of both sides has a pair of six-over-one double-hung windows with black louvered shutters matching those on the east façade. The top molding and modillions from the east façade continue across the north and south facades, above which is another face of the sloped roof.

The west elevation faces the garden patio and backyard. On the first floor, a one-story, one-bay-wide addition with a gable tile roof extends from the building slightly off center to the north side of the building. This small addition has a side door reached by three stairs and an eight-over-eight double-hung window with half-lunette window above. This non-historic extension dates from 2000 and serves as a mudroom; it is close in design to one that originally appeared on a contemporary NATCO house. The house at 390 Ocean Avenue's plans and records indicate that such a room was originally planned for the house though never realized. The addition is flanked by single windows: on the north, a small bay window with six panes on each side, topped by a tile roof, and on the south, a simple eight-over-one double-hung window. On the second story, the house features six different window shapes, all with thick casings, and lacking symmetry. None of the windows on this side has shutters. The roof matches the east façade, with two triangular dormer windows. The sun porches mirror the east façade, though here the French windows are operable on both sides, with stairs leading down into the garden.

In plan, the ground floor of the house is composed of a formal entryway, a living room, kitchen, and formal dining room. At the north and south sides of the house are the enclosed porches, which feature a secondary sitting area or sun room to the south, and another dining room to the north. The house is entered through a central hall, off of which there is the living room and secondary sitting room to the south, kitchen to the west, and two dining spaces to the north. While cosmetic updates have been made, the house largely retains its historic plan and details such as historic doors, trim, and woodwork.

The staircase is located at the rear of the central hall, with the living room and dining room on either side. The wooden staircase has closed stringers and single panel treads. All of the stairs have a uniform depth and rise, though the bottom stair extends further than the staircase, ending in a semi-circular curve. This extension supports the square newel post ornamented in rectangular paneling and an urn shaped cap. Rising with the stairs, there is a simple fluted handrail and simple square balusters.

The living room is a large rectangular room with windows on the east and west sides. The radiators and moldings appear original to the house. Beyond the living room to the south, the sun porch sitting room is a smaller rectangular space running parallel to the living room. Given the room's later transition from porch to enclosed space, it is likely none of the moldings are original. To the north of the entry area is a modestly sized, square dining room. Like the living room, moldings and radiators appear original. Similar to the south porch,

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the north extension is a rectangular space lacking original details. The kitchen is located to the west of the dining room, also roughly square in size.

The second story is divided into four bedrooms and two bathrooms, while the attic remains open and largely unfinished. The rooms are simple and retain historic doors, molding, and flooring. During a previous ownership the attic was broken up into additional rooms likely used as staff quarters, but the space remains unheated and unfinished. The home is heated by a steam system, for which radiators are seen throughout the first two stories of the home. There is also a useable full height basement.

On the northwest corner of the property is a historic freestanding, two-bay by two-bay garage with a hipped roof. The front façade faces Seaview Avenue. While some of the houses in the Haight development were built with NATCO garages, 390 Ocean Avenue's garage is wood framed. The garage's exterior is covered in white stucco to match the house.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture

Community Planning and Development

Period of Significance

1913

Significant Dates

1913

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Allen & George Haight (developers)

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance reflects the building's date of construction.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The house at 390 Ocean Avenue is locally significant under Criterion C as an example of residential single-family home construction employing National Fire Proofing Company (NATCO) tile and Ludowici roof tile and as an example of the greater fire-proof movement and its effect on American residential buildings at the turn of the twentieth century. In the late nineteenth century, after fire safety became a significant concern, particularly for buildings in urban settings, the National Fire Proofing Company grew to prominence through the development of a fireproof hollow tile construction system for skyscrapers. Facing competition by steel companies, NATCO began to focus on the residential market during the early decades of the twentieth century. NATCO's residential design competitions and direct advertisements to builders appealed to numerous developers throughout Long Island, including Allen and George Haight, two brothers in Brooklyn, who decided to build a 40-home development of NATCO tile homes in Massapequa. The house at 390 Ocean Avenue is one of the dozen NATCO tiled residences that the Haight brothers constructed, and it was the last to be built in the neighborhood, which, unfortunately, failed to develop into the large suburb the brothers envisioned. The house at 390 Ocean Avenue's Colonial Revival design with a stuccoed façade, classical door surround, decorative modillions, side porches, and tile roof is typical of the designs promoted by NATCO and other hollow tile companies during the period. Stucco proved an ideal covering for the smooth hollow tile walls, and was well suited to the Colonial and Mediterranean-inspired designs that dominated the development. The house is a well preserved example of NATCO and Ludowici tile construction and fits into the histories of the National Fire Proofing Company, Ludowici Roof Tile, and the development of the town of Massapequa.

The house at 390 Ocean Avenue is additionally locally significant under Criterion A in the area of community planning and development for its association with Allen and George Haight's development of NATCO homes in Massapequa. A quiet, rural area with a small resort center, Massapequa remained largely undeveloped into the early twentieth century. Anticipating increased resort and residential development, the Haight Brothers purchased a 3,000-acre parcel in Massapequa in 1905. They laid out roads, installed utilities, and, from 1910-1913, began building a residential development entirely made of homes constructed from NATCO tile. Ten of the twelve homes they built remain extant. The house at 390 Ocean Avenue, which was speculatively built, is the last house the Haight brothers constructed before their development was halted by legal and financial challenges. Although their development project ultimately failed, the neighborhood is scattered with impressive NATCO homes and reflects their vision for innovative, attractive seasonal and year-round housing in Massapequa; the house at 390 Ocean Avenue quite literally represents the final days of that vision.

History of Massapequa

The history of Massapequa can be traced to the histories of a few key families and individuals. In the 1600s, thousands of acres of Native American land were acquired by the Jones family, some of the earliest and most successful Dutch settlers in the area.¹ The Joneses continued to thrive on Long Island for centuries, and by the early 1900s most of this land remained in their family.² For this reason, the development of Massapequa

¹ Paul Bailey, ed., *Long Island, A History of Two Great Counties, Nassau and Suffolk*, 2 vols (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1949).

² John H. Jones, *The Jones Family of Long Island* (New York: Tobias A. Wright, 1907).

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differed - and was much delayed - from that of neighboring towns like Amityville and Seaford.³ While nearby communities had infrastructure and school systems by the turn of the twentieth century, Massapequa remained far less developed, as a significant portion of the land was still controlled as private estates, serving primarily as a vacation destination for the family. The land was gradually subdivided into large estates for relatives. The Jones family's control of Massapequa extended beyond land ownership to infrastructure and town access; the family built and owned the local railway station. The station, called the "Jones Depot," was a stop on the railroad primarily for visitors who would frequent the area as a weekend vacation resort, staying at well-known Massapequa Hotel Resort & Golf course located only about a half mile south of the station.

The early twentieth-century development of Massapequa can be largely credited to Allen and George Haight. The Haight brothers came from differing backgrounds: Allen was in the healthcare industry selling medical equipment in Chicago, while George worked in stone production in the Cleveland area. Later in their careers they both pivoted professionally and geographically, moving to New York and entering the real estate profession together on Long Island. In 1905, the Queens Land & Title Company, owned by George Haight, purchased three thousand acres of land from the Jones Estate. This area encompassed the village of Massapequa, which the Haight brothers had identified as a relatively undeveloped landscape by comparison to neighboring towns, that was ripe for development.⁴ Prior to their arrival, the area had remained a somewhat quiet vacation destination centered on Massapequa Lake and the Massapequa Hotel, which was a popular resort until 1914 when it closed its doors due to fire. At any one time up to 300 guests could be found playing tennis, fishing, horseback riding, bowling, golfing or gambling. It was common for the affluent upper middle class society, dignitaries, politicians and actors of Brooklyn and Manhattan to vacation at the hotel. However, the brothers were determined to rebrand the area as "New York's greatest suburban development- the building of a city."⁵ Among their first projects was the acquisition and renovation of the Massapequa hotel, including electrification of the building, which was to function as a clubhouse for the promotion of local development of their future housing projects.

The brothers saw this potential and wanted to build out the area, initially selling the individual lots of land after subdividing their 3,000 acre purchase and laying it out into neighborhoods similar to those they were familiar with in Brooklyn where they lived.⁶ The Haight brothers launched their campaign to modernize Massapequa with the acquisition and improvements to the hotel, bringing electricity to the area, and this clubhouse.⁷ They also had to enlist the help of local and regional authorities to make many of these improvements.

In buying substantial acreage from the Jones estate and planning a new development, the Haight brothers were following the lead of many other enthusiastic Long Island developers during the early twentieth century. Across the island, and especially in Nassau County, large, previously undeveloped tracts were transformed into new planned communities, often referred to as "residential parks," "garden suburbs," or "home colonies." By creating entire neighborhoods instead of selling parcels individually and speculatively, developers became

³ Barbara F. Cahn, ed., *An Illustrated History of Massapequa* (Massapequa, N.Y.: Massapequa Pub. Co., 1968).

⁴ "Prominent South Shore Developers," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, July 13, 1907, 19.

⁵ "For a Year You've Heard About It - We Now Show You Massapequa," *The Evening World*, June 15, 1907, 9.

⁶ "City of Massapequa As It Is and Is To Be," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, May 25, 1907, 25.

⁷ "Massapequa Hotel Sold," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, March 12, 1910, 20.

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responsible for the substantial costs of landscaping and infrastructure but also maintained more control through deed restrictions and stylistic requirements.⁸

However, none of these large projects would have been possible, or profitable, without major advances in transportation during the early twentieth century. Prior to the Haight brothers' work in the area, railroads and local roads provided the only transportation to Massapequa. To improve this, the Haight brothers improved and built additional roads. After the Pennsylvania Railroad acquired the Long Island Railroad in 1900, it committed to building new tunnels that would better connect Manhattan and Long Island. Completed in 1910, the East River tunnels expanded the area's demographic, by facilitating commuters; previously the only train line had left from Brooklyn, and overcrowded ferries presented challenges. The brothers took advantage of this new route, even running a promotional line with a direct train to Massapequa every Sunday called the "Massapequa Special."⁹ In addition to accessibility for visitors, the brothers also tackled availability and transport of cargo for construction. When the US Army Corps of Engineers dredged out the main canals, which allowed for deeper water access to Massapequa, delivery of cargo for construction was simplified.¹⁰

With the availability of materials and resources to the area, and significant land acquisition, the Haight brothers began creating their development in earnest in 1910. The Haight brothers parceled land into unbuilt lots in a twenty block radius in the town and launched a speculative housing project. They began building houses to attract buyers before attempting to sell the property; although no specific companies have been identified, they likely worked with local builders. Their speculative forty-house development, located near the hotel was targeted to other Brooklyn and Manhattan families seeking summer homes outside of the city.

The modest size of the original development may have been driven, in part, by the unusual choice of material for the houses. Not only did they seek to establish a community quickly, but they aimed to do so employing modern construction methods, with lofty ambitions. The community they envisioned would have been an early fireproof residential community. Between 1910 and 1913, the Haight brothers built the first twelve of these homes, using fireproof NATCO tile construction.¹¹

History of the National Fire Proofing Company

After the Great Chicago Fire of 1871, fire safety became a significant concern, particularly for buildings in urban settings. Fireproof materials, such as brick, stone, or iron, were preferred, and sometimes required, in both residential and commercial contexts. During the 1850s, hollow clay tiles were invented as an alternative to traditional masonry. Originally, they were constructed from a heavier, brick-like material, but improvements in technology allowed for lighter terra cotta tiles by the end of the nineteenth century. Between 1910 and 1950, hollow clay tiles were at the height of their popularity and were used for both interior and exterior walls. The number of companies producing hollow tiles gradually increased; during the early twentieth century, several

⁸ Robert MacKay, "The Residential Park Phenomenon on Long Island," in *Gardens of Eden: Long Island's Early Twentieth-Century Planned Communities*, edited by Robert B. MacKay (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2015), 10-11.

⁹ "Take the Massapequa Special," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, June 3, 1906, 64; MacKay, "The Residential Park Phenomenon on Long Island," 11-12.

¹⁰ "Want Waterway Widened" *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, September 9, 1906, 6.

¹¹ "A Hollow Tile Stucco Fireproof Home," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, May 4, 1912, 13.

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manufacturers formed the Hollow Building Tile Association to promote the use of the material and best practices for construction.¹²

NATCO Hollow Tiles were produced by the National Fire Proofing Company. Established in 1889, the National Fire Proofing Company thrived across the United States for nearly forty years as a leading producer of durable building materials. The company's manufactured products competed with traditional mined stone products like granite and marble primarily used in the construction of commercial buildings at the turn of the century. The company had a range of products that were used in the construction of everything from single family homes to skyscrapers.¹³ Their presence was substantial: "We manufacture everything in the line of hollow tile fire-proofing material. If you don't see what you want, ask for it."¹⁴ Based in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, the company had over twenty-five factories across the country. Although it was hidden by more dramatic cladding materials, NATCO tile formed the structure for many iconic American buildings constructed at the turn of the century. In New York City, these include Grand Central Station, the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company building, and the Singer Building.¹⁵

In the company's early years, they targeted larger-scale urban developments with their products. National Fireproofing Company products were said to have been used in the construction of 90 percent of the "famous skyscrapers" by the year 1908.¹⁶ The advantages of using their manufactured clay block products were compelling. Their products were consistent in size and shape, which helped save time and labor during construction and as durable and as fire retardant as stone with cheaper manufacturing costs. At that time most granite and marble products were mined overseas and shipped to the US from quarries in Europe. However, as Carnegie made the price of steel more affordable, skyscrapers could grow ever taller with steel frames. Masonry buildings, however, could not grow to such heights; there is a height cap in high-rise masonry construction for safety and code-based reasons. The transition towards steel frame construction put tremendous pressure on the National Fire Proofing Company to meet the needs of a changing industry.

As the demand for taller commercial buildings grew to heights outside of the limits of masonry construction, and builders turned to more affordable steel-frame alternatives, the National Fireproofing Company focused more on the residential market. The 'NATCO' tile was the National Fire Proofing Company's residential product and brand. The smaller, hollow, clay blocks were advertised as creating fireproof, inexpensive, easy to construct, and extremely durable homes: "NATCO Hollow Tile is absolutely unaffected by fire. It stands eternal against decay. A home built of NATCO is not alone for today or ten years hence, but for your children's children."¹⁷ In addition to print advertising targeting consumers and familiarizing them with the product, the company ran a design competition for architects. This competition was a request for single-family home

¹² Jeremy C. Wells, "History of Structural Hollow Clay Tile in the United States," *Construction History* 22 (2007), 27-31; The Hollow Building Tile Association, *Handbook of Hollow Building Tile Construction* (Chicago: Hollow Building Tile Association, 1922).

¹³ The National Fire Proofing Company, *The NATCO Tex-tile House* (Boston: Rogers & Manson Company, 1917). Available online at: <<https://archive.org/details/NationalFireproofingCoThenatcotextilehouse0001>>.

¹⁴ The National Fire Proofing Company, *Natco Hollow Tile Fireproofing as used in the Construction of Standard Steel Frame Fire-Proof Buildings* (Pittsburgh: National Fire Proofing Company, 1915). Available online at: <<https://archive.org/details/NatcoHollowTileFireproofingAsUsedInTheConstructionOfStandardSteel>>.

¹⁵ "Modern Office Buildings." *Architects' and Builders' Magazine*, 39, 1907: 447.

¹⁶ "By the Way: Some Industrial Information Worth the While." *The Architect and Engineer*, 13, 1908: 91.

¹⁷ C.S. Grove, "Practical Building Construction," *Building Progress* 2, 2, Winter 1912: 50-55.

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designs ranging from bungalows to mansions that employed NATCO tile in their designs, in exchange for monetary prizes. The winning designs were then compiled and published into an annual catalogue to educate about NATCO and promote the use of the material.¹⁸

While the Haight brothers' specific rationale for selecting NATCO tiles for their speculative housing is unknown, it is likely the brothers were exposed to this advertising, as well as a local trade show demonstration. In 1909, at the height of George Haight's career, a large trade show was held at Madison Square Garden, where the National Fire Proofing Company constructed a miniaturized NATCO tile home with stucco-covered walls and a Ludowici tile roof. Given his background in the stone industry, work in real estate, and base in New York, it is likely that he attended. Even if he hadn't, however, hollow tiles would have been inescapable as a popular building material. Developers across Long Island were attracted to the fireproof, easy to assemble material and to the manufacturer's claims that the buildings were "cooler in summer and warmer in winter." As developers and individual builders took to residential hollow tile construction, stocky, stuccoed homes in Mediterranean, Spanish, Moorish, and Colonial Revival styles rapidly began popping up across Long Island.¹⁹

'NATCO' Tile & Construction

NATCO tiles are hollowed clay bricks. Each unit is approximately twelve inches long by five inches high by eight inches deep, and can be understood to take the place of approximately six traditional bricks. This standard NATCO size "will lay up a wall heavy enough for buildings of average proportions," yet lower overall cost and reduce installation time.²⁰ The hollow air paths were said to help with insulation, retaining heat and preventing moisture transfer. While the size of six bricks, because of the air cavities, each lightweight tile could still be carried by the mason in one hand.²¹

The tiles quickly gained popularity with the construction industry's movement towards fireproof materials at the turn of the twentieth century. The clay tiles were understood as an affordable alternative to wood in residential construction. Made of clay fired at extremely high temperatures, they were said to withstand much higher temperatures, and therefore marketed as fireproof.²² The NATCO tiles were advertised in trade publications as "big and permanent tile units" that were not only practical as fireproof, but also aesthetically versatile: they could be faced with decorative stucco outside, and plaster within.²³ Despite its additional cost, hollow tile construction increased in popularity during the early twentieth century.

Ludowici Tile Company

Similar to the rise of hollow tile construction, Ludowici terra cotta roof tile quickly gained popularity at the turn of the twentieth century as a residential roofing material. Archaeological evidence suggests that clay tiles have

¹⁸ NFPC, *The Natco Tex-tile*.

¹⁹ MacKay, "The Residential Park Phenomenon on Long Island," 16-17.

²⁰ NFPC, *The Natco Tex-tile*.

²¹ C.S. Grove "Practical Building Construction," *Building Progress* 2, 2, Winter 1912: 50-55.

²² National Fire Proofing Company, *The Natco Bungalow for Four Thousand Dollars: Attractive, Economical, Durable, Fireproof* (Boston: Rogers and Manson Company, 1913). Available online at: <http://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/000645211>.

²³ "Who Lives Here?" *House Beautiful* 42 (1917): 51.

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been used as a roofing material for thousands of years. It was commonly used in the Middle East, Europe, and Asia, particularly in areas with warmer climates, and even saw some use in colonial America.²⁴

The Ludowici family was involved in the industry in Italy for generations. When Carl Ludowici immigrated to the United States in the late 1800s, he established the roofing company that would be used in American construction on a nationwide scale. The popularity of the Italian Villa and other revival styles during the mid-nineteenth century resulted in a resurgence of interest in clay roofing tiles and new manufacturing methods made it a more affordable material. The Ludowici Tile Company, which was founded in 1888 in Chicago, Illinois, was among a number of companies that was established to meet growing demand.²⁵ The clay tile industry benefited from the popularity of the Spanish, Mediterranean, and Mission Revival styles during the early twentieth century. Used in a range of building types from massive institutional buildings to more modest bungalows and single family homes, the tiles were recognized for their “natural warm and permanent beauty.” As the Ludowici Company states, the tiles are extremely durable; while some tiles at 390 Ocean Avenue have been replaced, the vast majority of the roof is original.²⁶

Massapequa NATCO Houses

On September 25th, 1905 the Queens Land & Title Company, owned by the Haight brothers, purchased approximate 3,000 acres of land in Massapequa. Soon after, the Haight Brothers began to develop the land, building roads and sidewalks, and selling individual residential building lots to many people looking to invest and potentially build primarily summer homes in the resort town. In 1910, the Queens Land & Title Company transferred the land to the Massapequa Construction Company, which was also owned and operated by the Haight brothers. Between 1910 and 1913, the company built twelve speculative NATCO houses near the established summer community in Massapequa.

Due to its proximity and improvements in transportation, Massapequa, as well as Nassau County’s shoreline communities more generally, became a summer destination for middle-class families from Brooklyn and New York City. The Hights, both initially Brooklyn residents, eventually owned and became full-time residents of two of the homes in their new development. The houses were built with the intention of resale to their Manhattan and Brooklyn based business associates seeking summer residences outside of New York City. The Hights’ choice to use NATCO tile was suited to this clientele. NATCO tile and stucco construction promised protection against fire and was likely comforting to urban residents used to living in masonry buildings. Even if the risk of fire was likely lower due to Massapequa’s relatively rural, unbuilt location, fireproof construction may have also been viewed as extra security for a seasonal home. Most of the homes were built with garages, suggesting that they aimed to attract buyers who owned cars. Today, ten homes remain and continue to serve as a representation of the successful use of residential NATCO construction.

²⁴ Anne E. Grimmer and Paul K. Williams, “The Preservation and Repair of Historic Clay Tile Roofs,” NPS Preservation Briefs, <<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/30-clay-tile-roofs.htm#history>> .

²⁵ Ludowici Company, “Historical Success,” Available at: <<http://www.ludowici.com/about/historical-success/>>.

²⁶ Ludowici-Celadon Co., *Ludowici Clay Roofing Tile* (Chicago: Ludowici-Celadon Co., 1958); Anne E. Grimmer and Paul K. Williams, “The Preservation and Repair of Historic Clay Tile Roofs,” NPS Preservation Briefs, <<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/30-clay-tile-roofs.htm#history>> .

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The nine additional NATCO houses are located in the vicinity of 390 Ocean Avenue. These houses are located along Ocean, Lincoln, and Massapequa Avenues. They include: 399 and 406 Ocean Avenue, 36, 43, 44, 50, and 57 Lincoln Avenue, and 381 and 382 Massapequa Avenue. The majority of these houses, eight of the ten, were constructed on large, corner lots; as a result, they are separated from each other by houses developed later in the twentieth century. While the Hights planned to develop the entire neighborhood, it is clear that they intended to build their most attractive and substantial homes first to attract new buyers of means. The house at 44 Lincoln Avenue, one of the two center-block buildings, was George Haight's personal home, where he lived until his death in a car crash in 1932.²⁷

While the Hights' NATCO houses have a degree of stylistic similarity, each has a different design. However, no architect has been identified for the development. Instead of working with an architect directly, it is plausible that the Haight Brothers drew from the extensive number of available plans. During the early twentieth century, NATCO held a series of competitions for residential designs and frequently included drawings and floor plans in their publications.²⁸ As hollow tile homes typically feature applied stucco, architects tended to gravitate toward a handful of popular architectural styles that lent themselves to that treatment. English cottages, Spanish, Mediterranean, Mission Revival buildings, Colonial Revival buildings, and Bungalow variations were particularly common in NATCO's publications. With varying degrees of detail, the Haight homes also drew from these styles; two are Spanish/Mission Revival, three, including 390 Ocean, are Colonial Revival, and the remainder are sturdy variants of popular Bungalow styles.

In 1913, a dispute arose between Queens Land & Title Company and the Insurance Company which held the Haight brothers' mortgage to acquire the original 3000-acre land purchase. The Niagara Life Insurance Company (eventually acquired by the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company) held the deed on the entire original parcel, regardless of any later subdivisions established by the Haight brothers. The primary dispute involved discrepancies over the actual principal reductions to the approximately \$300,000 mortgage. These disputes escalated and eventually resulted in the foreclosure of the Queens Land & Title land and all ten homes within the NATCO development.

390 Ocean Avenue

As the last of the NATCO homes built by the Haight brothers, the house at 390 Ocean Avenue has had few owners since its construction around 1913. At the building's construction, it was owned by the Massapequa Construction Company. Shortly after completion of the homes, the Haight brothers had some financial difficulties, leading to the September 29, 1913 foreclosure by Niagara Life Insurance Company. There were liens on the homes, and they were not occupied or, in the case of 390 Ocean Avenue, even deeded. No evidence could be found in the 1920 census that the house was occupied or even rented in this time. It wasn't until March 16, 1923 that the houses changed hands in a liquidation of Niagara Life Insurance, transitioning to the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company. However, roughly a month later, on April 27, 1923, the homes were sold back to the Massapequa Construction Company, which was still owned by the Haight brothers. The house was once again in their possession, if only briefly. They quickly sold the house on August 26, 1924, to

²⁷ "Massapequa Pays Final Tribute to George F. Haight," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, February 9, 1932, 25.

²⁸ National Fire Proofing Company, *The NATCO House for Six Thousand Dollars* (Boston: Rogers & Manson, 1912); National Fire Proofing Company, *The NATCO Bungalow for Four Thousand Dollars* (Boston: Rogers & Manson, 1913); National Fire Proofing Company, *The NATCO Suburban House and Garage* (Boston: Rogers & Manson, 1915).

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Charles T. Hutcheson. According to the 1930 census, Hutcheson worked in the bond industry and lived in the home with his wife, Lillian, and children. Unfortunately, he committed suicide not long after, possibly due to the stress of working in the financial industry in the early years of the Great Depression.²⁹ After Charles's death, Allen Haight repurchased the house but under the name Allen Haight Realty Corporation. However, Allen struggled personally and financially during the Great Depression; the house was owned by the Homeowner's Loan Corporation between 1937–42.

Between 1942 and the present day, 390 Ocean Avenue has had only four owners. From 1942-1980 the home was owned by John and Gloria Martin. The next two owners had the home for roughly a decade each: Steve Winkler from 1980-1989, and the Fox family from 1989-2000. Since 2000 the home has been owned by David Lorenzo, who is responsible for the majority of the renovations to the house.³⁰

The materials chosen for 390 Ocean Avenue, NATCO and Ludowici tiles, were selected for their durable, fireproof qualities. At 390 Ocean Avenue, NATCO tiles were used in the construction of the outer load bearing walls of the house. The inner walls were traditionally framed and plastered, likely as a cost-saving measure; this made the houses not entirely fireproof as the Haight brothers advertised. Additionally, the garage at the rear of the property was built as a simple, frame structure without a foundation or flooring.

Architecturally, 390 Ocean Avenue is similar to those advertised locally and within the New York metropolitan area, as well as some of the neighboring houses built in the same Haight NATCO development between 1910 and 1913. In a photograph from a 1912 article in the *New York Tribune*, a house of nearly identical form is shown as an "attractive home of Massapequa."³¹ Of the Massapequa homes, 58 Lincoln most resembles the *Tribune* photo, although significant ornament has been added to the facades. Similarities are immediately apparent between 390 Ocean Avenue and 58 Lincoln Avenue in both form and layout; the interior plans of the homes are nearly identical. 58 Lincoln Avenue even has the mudroom that was originally planned for 390 Ocean Avenue, but was never built historically.

Conclusion

The house at 390 Ocean Avenue is a good example of a NATCO hollow tile residence built at the turn of the twentieth century. The house also ties into the early history of residential development in Massapequa. The Haight brothers set out to transform Massapequa into a modern suburb through the use of fireproof building materials. They are largely responsible for creating infrastructure and marketing the area as a modern destination community, and setting out to establish a fireproof suburb.³²

²⁹ Federal Census, 1930.

³⁰ Interview with current owner, David Lorenzo. April 13, 2016.

³¹ "Home Builders Like Long Island," *The New York Tribune*, April 14, 1912, 7.

³² "Every New Yorker Should See the City's Greatest Suburb, Massapequa," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, June 10, 1906, 64.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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"Prominent South Shore Developers." Brooklyn Daily Eagle, July 13, 1907, 19.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property .28 acres
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>18</u> Zone	<u>629244</u> Easting	<u>4503671</u> Northing	3	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing
2	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing	4	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary is indicated by a heavy line on the enclosed map with scale.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary was drawn to include the parcel historically associated with 390 Ocean Avenue.

390 Ocean Avenue
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Nassau County, NY
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390 Ocean Avenue
Massapequa, Nassau Co., NY

390 Ocean Avenue
Massapequa, NY 11510



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter

1:12,000
1 in = 1,000 ft



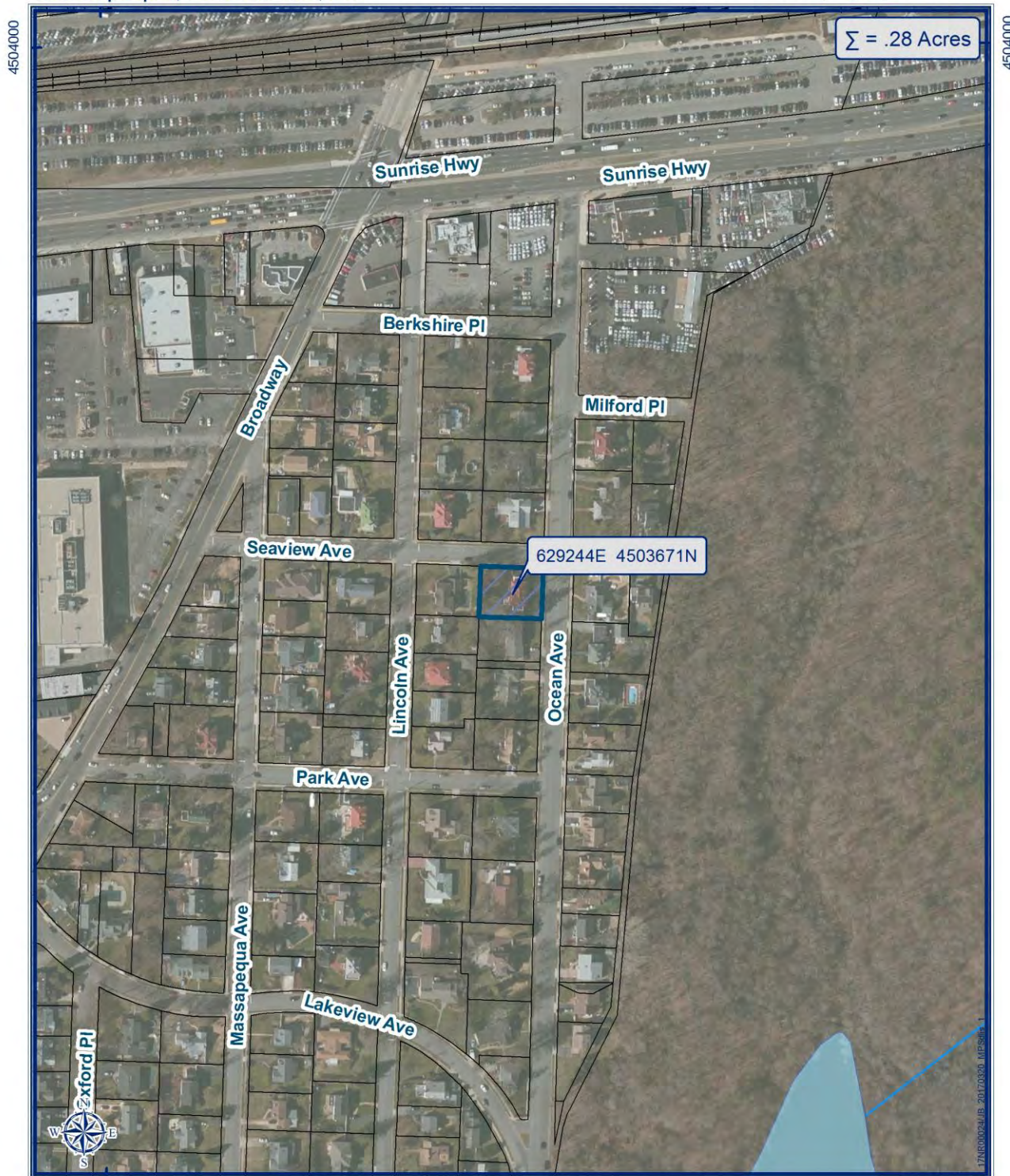
NEW YORK STATE
Parks, Recreation
and Historic Preservation

390 Ocean Avenue
Name of Property

Nassau County, NY
County and State

390 Ocean Avenue
Massapequa, Nassau Co., NY

390 Ocean Avenue
Massapequa, NY 11510



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter

1:3,000
1 in = 250 ft



390 Ocean Ave.



390 Ocean Avenue
Name of Property

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County and State

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Marisa Alexandra Kefalidis and David Lorenzo (edited by Jennifer Betsworth, NY SHPO)
organization _____ date February 2017
street & number _____ telephone _____
city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____
e-mail _____

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: 390 Ocean Avenue

City or Vicinity: Massapequa

County: Nassau State: NY

Photographer: Marisa Alexandra Kefalidis

Date Photographed: April 2016

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

NY_Nassau County_390 Ocean Avenue_0001
Façade (east elevation), facing west

NY_Nassau County_390 Ocean Avenue_0002
Rear (west) elevation, facing east

NY_Nassau County_390 Ocean Avenue_0003
North elevation, facing south

NY_Nassau County_390 Ocean Avenue_0004

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Interior, central staircase, facing west

NY_Nassau County_390 Ocean Avenue_0005
Interior, living room, facing south

NY_Nassau County_390 Ocean Avenue_0006
Interior, dining room, facing north

NY_Nassau County_390 Ocean Avenue_0007
Garage (north elevation), facing south

NY_Nassau County_390 Ocean Avenue_0008
Garage (south elevation), facing north

Property Owner:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

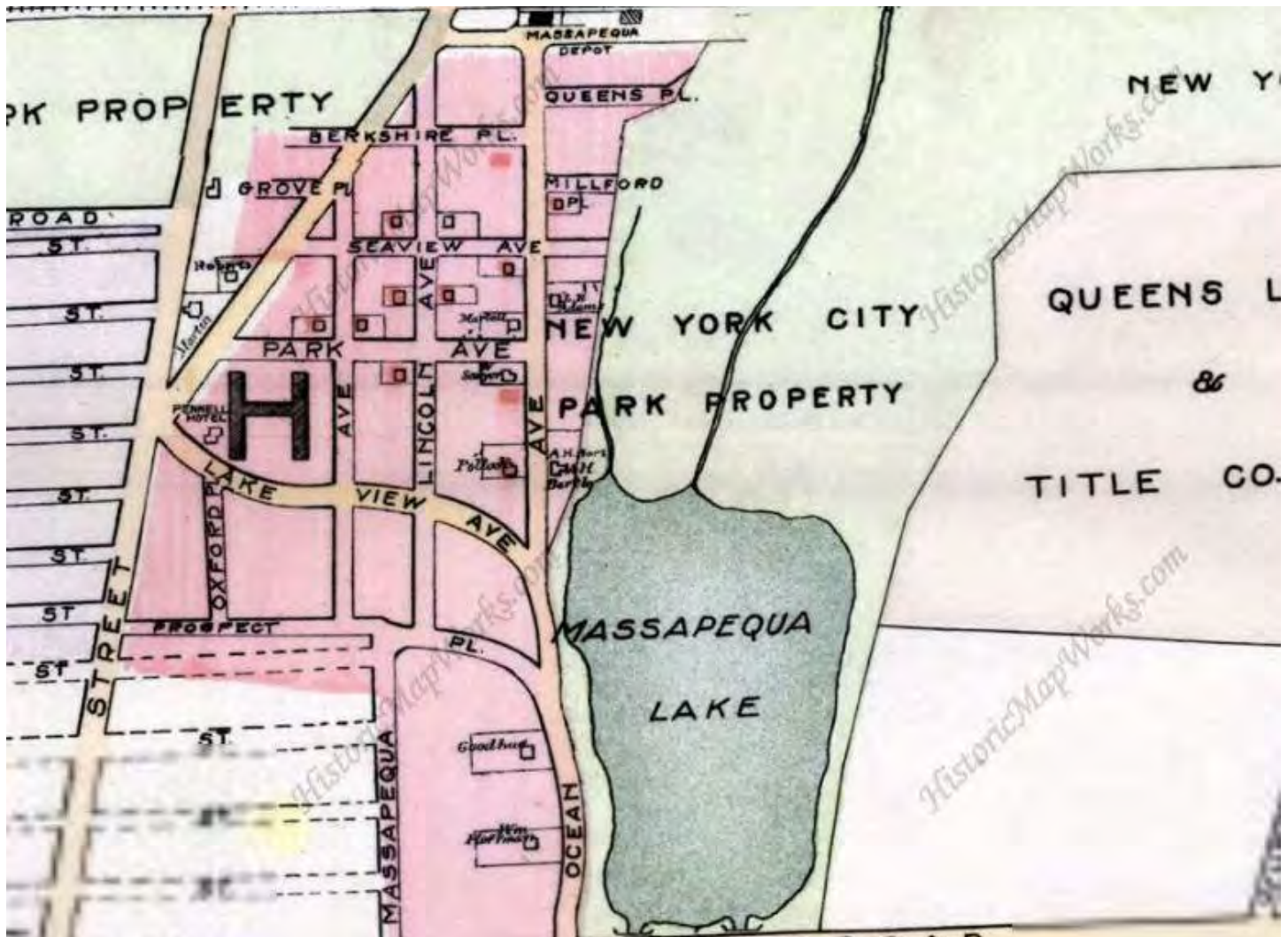
name David A. Lorenzo
street & number 390 Ocean Avenue telephone _____
city or town Massapequa state NY zip code 11758

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC

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1914 Nassau County Atlas. Shows the extent of the Haight Brothers' development, as well as their strategy of building the first homes in the community on large, corner lots.







Security
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800-328-1234











UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received: 9/12/2017 Date of Pending List: 10/11/2017 Date of 16th Day: 10/26/2017 Date of 45th Day: 10/27/2017 Date of Weekly List: 11/3/2017

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

Accept Return Reject 10/27/2017 Date

Abstract/Summary
Comments:

Recommendation/
Criteria

Reviewer Alexis Abernathy Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2236 Date _____

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



**Parks, Recreation
and Historic Preservation**

ANDREW M. CUOMO
Governor

ROSE HARVEY
Commissioner

6 September 2017



Alexis Abernathy
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places

Mail Stop 7228

1849 C Street NW
Washington DC 20240

Re: National Register Nominations

Dear Ms. Abernathy:

I am pleased to submit the following three nominations, all on disc, to be considered for listing by the Keeper of the National Register:

Coeymans Landing Historic District, Albany County
390 Ocean Avenue, Nassau County
First Lewis County Clerk's Office, Lewis County

Please feel free to call me at 518.268.2165 if you any questions.

Sincerely:

Kathleen LaFrank
National Register Coordinator
New York State Historic Preservation Office