



## City Planning Commission

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December 19, 2007/Calender No. 10

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**IN THE MATTER OF** a communication dated November 8, 2007 from the Executive Director of the Landmarks Preservation Commission regarding the landmark designation of the Voelker Orth Museum, Bird Sanctuary and Victorian Garden, 149-19 38<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Flushing (Block 5017 Lot 31 in part) consisting of that portion of the lot bounded by a line beginning at the southeasterly corner, extending northerly along the eastern property line, westerly along part of the northern property line to a point 75 feet from the eastern property line, southerly along a line at an angle of 90 degrees to a point 44 feet from the northern property line, westerly along a line at an angle of 90 degrees to the western property line, southerly along part of the western property line, and easterly along the southern property line, to the point of beginning by the Landmarks Preservation Commission on October 30, 2007 (Designation List 397/LP-2272) Borough of Queens, Community District 7.

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Pursuant to Section 3020.8(b) of the City Charter, the City Planning Commission shall submit to the City Council a report with respect to the relation of any designation by the Landmarks Preservation Commission, whether of a historic district or a landmark, to the Zoning Resolution, projected public improvements, and any plans for the development, growth, improvement or renewal of the area involved.

The Voelker Orth house was constructed c. 1891 as part of the development of the section of Flushing known as Murray Hill. At the time, due to newly expanding transportation networks, Flushing was quickly transformed from a rural area to a suburban one. The house was one of the earliest built in the neighborhood and its architectural style and large garden reflected the exuberance of the late nineteenth century. The variety of materials, colors, textures, and roof angels used was a way of showing the wealth and success of the owner. The streets of Flushing had many such houses at the time, but very few of them remain today. Because the house was lived in by members of the same family for nearly 100 years, the house survived in excellent condition.

The Voelker Orth family purchased the house from its original owner in 1899. The house remained in the same family until 1996 when the last surviving heir bequeathed the home to three local non-profit organizations in accordance to her will. At that time the house and grounds were converted to a small museum of Queens history, environmental education and a

bird sanctuary.

The subject lot is in a R5 district which allows a floor area ratio (FAR) of 1.25 for residential uses. Transfer of development rights is not permitted for landmark sites located in an R5 zoning district.

All landmark buildings or buildings within Historic Districts are eligible to apply for use and bulk waivers pursuant to Section 74-711 of the Zoning Resolution.

There are no projected public improvements or plans for development, growth, improvement, or renewal in the vicinity of the landmark building.

The subject landmark designation does not conflict with the Zoning Resolution, projected public improvements or any plans for development, growth, improvement or renewal in the vicinity of the landmark.

**AMANDA M. BURDEN, AICP, Chair**  
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