

**Daughters of Israel, Inc.  
1155 Pleasant Valley Way  
West Orange, New Jersey  
Block 171, Lot 12**

**Proposal**

Application Form, Section G. – Requirements for Variances, Item 4A)

**Background**

Daughters of Israel, Inc. (“Daughters”) is a not for profit organization that has provided housing and services to the elderly of Essex County for over 100 years. Since 1962, Daughters has operated a skilled nursing facility in West Orange. Daughters currently offers its residents a variety of services including long-term care, sub-acute rehabilitation, memory care, hospice/palliative care, and respite stays.

With the passage of time and the evolving preferences for where and how people wish to live as they age, demand has risen for living arrangements which facilitate aging in place. These are often referred to as “continuing care retirement communities” or “continuing life communities” because they provide apartments for independent living, as well as assisted living, memory care and skilled nursing components, thereby allowing residents to age in place and transition from one component to another as their needs change, without having to relocate to a different facility.

To remain vibrant and to better serve the community’s needs, Daughters is commencing a multi-year program to become a “continuing life community.” This will involve rebuilding, renovating, and augmenting its campus along with the amenities and services it offers.

**Project Description**

The subject property consists of approximately 18 acres and is within the R-2 zoning district, which does not permit the proposed continuing life community (or the existing skilled nursing facility). The application to the Zoning Board of Adjustment (“Board”) seeks preliminary and final site plan approval, use and bulk variances to redevelop the campus into a facility which offers independent living, assisted living and skilled nursing components. The specific relief requested is detailed on the accompanying document titled “Variances & Design Standard Exceptions.”

- The **independent living component** will consist of 80 1-bedroom apartments and 78 two-bedroom units (some with a den), ranging in area from 813 square feet (1 bedroom unit) to 1,540 square feet (2 bedroom + den, larger end unit).

- The **assisted living component** will consist of 60 beds, some of which will be memory care beds.
- The **skilled nursing component** will consist of 80 beds. By comparison, the existing facility is licensed for 303 beds, but in recent years, only approximately 130-150 have been occupied at any given time.

A community center will serve the independent living and assisted living components, consisting of approximately 52,560 square feet at full buildout, and will include amenities such as a fitness center with a pool, an auditorium, theater, library/reading lounge, game room, art studio, salon, and meditation center. The facility will have a full kitchen for meal service to assisted living and skilled nursing residents, a formal dining room, a café, a pub serving alcoholic beverages (subject to obtaining a liquor license), a small store selling sundries to residents, and will offer a variety of health and wellness services together with resident support. This may include physical and occupational therapy, physician visits, and other medical services.

As a continuing life community, it will be important to have the ability to introduce similar supportive and accessory uses, facilities and activities as the need for them arises, and to allow Daughters' to be responsive to the demands of its residents.

The project was designed with the neighbors in mind, by keeping the higher building elements close to Pleasant Valley Way (five stories above an underground parking garage) and the lower elements to the side and rear of the site where it borders the residences along Parsons Drive and Skyline Drive (three stores on grade). Those homes are at a substantially higher elevation, and there is a significant wooded buffer, which will not be disturbed so that it can continue to provide extensive screening as it does today.

Construction will be phased. Three phases are presently anticipated, as follows:

- **Phase One** will include 91 independent living apartments, 20,560 square feet of common and community areas, and all of the proposed assisted living units. Skilled nursing would continue to be offered in up to 165 beds in portions of the existing building, which would remain until a subsequent phase.
- **Phase Two** will include 25 independent living apartments, an additional 26,000 square feet of common and community areas, and 80 new skilled nursing beds. During this phase, 106 existing skilled nursing beds would remain.
- **Phase Three**, which represents full buildout, would involve development of the final 44 independent living apartments, along with an additional 6,000

square feet of common and community areas. All of the remaining existing skilled nursing beds would be removed in this phase.

The construction phasing plan continues to evolve and may be further refined as this application advances.