

# Dream House Only Nightmare

## As 2 Boroughs Tax Same Lot

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By Evelyn Schnoor

ALLENDALE—George B. Russell of Seaman Ave., New York, may one day be able to tell his grandchildren about the house he tried to build in Ramsey and/or Allendale . . . and they will have to agree that he tried, for his efforts will be a matter of public record.

Last Summer Mr. Russell, an engineer with Curtiss-Wright in Wood-Ridge, saw a building lot that he and his family decided was the ideal spot for their dream house. It was in Ramsey, or so he thought, and he purchased it from the Ramsey Country Club Estates.

He had plans drawn by an architect and received a building permit from the borough of Ramsey. Because it was pointed out to him the Allendale-Ramsey boundary line ran through his property he decided to seek a building permit from Allendale, too, so that there would be no hold-up of any kind. That appears to have been his mistake, for he is no nearer to building now than he was six months ago.

The Allendale building inspector, Edwin Grosman, turned down the application for the permit because, according to the Allendale tax map, about 90 per cent of the property was in Allendale's AA zone calling for 115 foot frontage, while the lot has only 75 foot frontage, which is,

O. K. by Ramsey if it is in Ramsey.

Checking with the Ramsey tax map showed that about 80 per cent of the land is in Ramsey.

Mr. Russell and his attorney appeared before the Allendale Board of Adjustment to find out what to do. He was referred to the Council, last November.

He appeared before that body, and asked what to do. The then borough engineer, Florio Job, suggested Mr. Russell send him a certified survey. Mr. Russell had a survey made by James Conklin, which was sent to Mr. Job, who noted it was not certified.

At a later council meeting a letter from Mr. Russell's attorney, Daniel Amster, was read, asking for some ruling to permit his client to start building.

Mr. Job was requested to look into the charters of both boroughs to see where the boundary was set. He found out the Ramsey charter, later than the Allendale charter, showed the boundary to "follow along the Allendale boundary line." This left Mr. Russell where he started.

Meanwhile, Mr. Grossman had made further investigation on his own and found several lots shown on the Allendale tax map as being mostly in Allendale were shown on the Ramsey tax map to be mostly in that bor-

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ough. He reported this to the Board of Adjustment and suggested this borough might be losing money in taxes. The board suggested, by letter, that the Mayor and Council have the entire boundary line resurveyed.

Last Thursday Mr. Russell appeared before the new mayor and council to seek a solution to his problem. Among other things he was advised to go before the Board of Adjustment to seek a variance, but he actually cannot do this until the boundary line is settled.

The new engineer, Earle W. Bailey, was requested to look into the matter. He was to contact Mr. Conklin about his survey and if he is assured the line was drawn out "on the field" he will accept the survey. Up to Tuesday he had been unable to get in touch with Mr. Conklin.

Members of the council became concerned about loss of taxes—the Russell lot had never been on the Allendale tax rolls—and about the cost of surveys.

Mayor Albert O. Scafiuro asked Mr. Russell if he would be willing to underwrite the cost of a survey by Mr. Bailey of the boundary line, but his answer was an emphatic "no."

The way things look now, Mr. Russell may find himself the innocent center of a boundary line dispute between Ramsey and Allendale, as Tax Assessor Leonard Baum informed the council that Mr. Russell's lot had been placed on the Allendale tax rolls for this year, while it is also on the Ramsey tax rolls.