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## GREATER NEW YORK

### Upper East Side Residents Oppose Planned Apple Store

*They fear long lines of customers camping out before the release of new products*

BY KEIKO MORRIS

Apple computers. The iPod, the iPhone, the iPad. Now, the Apple Watch. There's no doubt that the products put out by Apple Inc. can be pricey. An iPad Air 2 starts at about \$500, for example. The base model iPhone 6 is a couple of hundred bucks.

Still, the technology company does big business at its retail stores, particularly when a new gadget makes its debut. And those crowds are a problem for a group of New Yorkers who live on the Upper East Side near a retail space that public documents show Apple leased nearly a year ago.



The Apple store slated for Madison Avenue and 74th Street is still being built out, but the residents fear long lines of customers camping out, waiting for new products to hit the shelves. They talk about food carts with electronic signs, like the ones outside Apple's flagship Fifth Avenue location, and almost certainly more delivery and garbage trucks traveling the already clogged streets.

At 940 Madison Ave. sits an early 1920s two-story limestone building that will be Apple's sixth location in Manhattan. Across the street is the former home of the Whitney Museum of American Art. To the south and the north is a stretch of designer fashion brands that include Ralph Lauren, Carolina Herrera and Christian Louboutin.

"It [Madison Avenue] has been a fine retail corridor that doesn't generate the crowds that Apple does," said Herbert Feinberg, 89 years old, whose five-story townhouse on East 74th Street is just a few doors down from 940 Madison Ave. and who is leading a campaign to stop the technology company from coming into the neighborhood. "The Whitney didn't do that at all except for Friday events, but it was a dignified line. No shouting, no screaming, no tents, no sleeping bags, no barbecues."

Apple said all of its stores in Manhattan are tailored to fit the community.

"The Upper East Side store is designed to serve an important role in the neighborhood and respect the surrounding community. In this case, that means a smaller footprint, earlier closing time, and private shopping options for customers," the company said in a statement.

The Upper East Side's segment of Madison Avenue is in a historic district that delicately balances residential and retail. Apartments and single-family homes coexist with art galleries, jewelry stores and clothing boutiques that already attract a fair number of tourists. Within three blocks of 940 Madison Ave. are three hotels: the Carlyle, the Mark and the Surrey.

"One of the things that distinguishes Madison Avenue as a district is that residents live above the retail spaces and around the corner," said Matthew Bauer, president of the Madison Avenue Business Improvement District. "Many of the clients who shop around the neighborhood live here."

One real-estate expert predicts the complaints will subside once the Apple store opens and the community sees the financial benefits, including higher property values.

"This is just going to reignite the neighborhood," said Faith Hope Consolo, chairman of Douglas Elliman Real Estate's retail group.

Mr. Feinberg is unconvinced, though. For the businessman, the Apple store is sure to destroy the peacefulness of "the finest section of New York" and the place where those "who have made it" reside.

Late last year, Mr. Feinberg brought in an old friend, consultant George Osborne, to organize neighborhood opposition against the Apple store. Mr. Feinberg established a group that calls itself Saving the 74th Street Residential Neighborhood.

Members of the group along with people hired by Mr. Feinberg have handed out fliers describing a litany of ills they say the Apple store would bring and have collected 435 signatures to present to the local community board, Manhattan Community Board 8. The board is made up of appointed volunteers who make recommendations to city agencies on a range of issues, including land use and zoning.

Mr. Osborne said he has tried unsuccessfully to get the community board to vote on a resolution that urges Apple to find another location.

"The community board's mission is not to prevent a retailer from opening up," said James G. Clynes, chairman of Community Board 8. "What community boards do is quality-of-life and land-use issues."

Mr. Clynes said he has invited Apple officials to attend the board's public safety committee meeting on Wednesday, when he hopes the technology company will address the residents.

At an April 15 board meeting, several residents said they couldn't see an upside to the Apple store. Later, they even went so far as to suggest that Apple relocate its store to Third Avenue or farther north to 86th Street—but not on Madison Avenue.

Janet Rodgers, who has lived in the area for more than 40 years, said of the 940 Madison Ave. address: "It's so shockingly the wrong place."