

# Reviews snag plan for home for retarded

By WILLIAM HUUS

Plans to use a 240-bed facility in Concord to house mentally retarded adults in need of nursing care have apparently been delayed on two fronts as both state and city officials have begun to review the proposal.

A week ago, the Advance disclosed negotiations between state health and mental hygiene

officials and the administrator of the Island View Care Center at 1000 Targee St. which called for the licensing of the previously unused facility and the agreed-to transfer of residents from Willowbrook State School to the center.

The plan was criticized by several Island organizations involved with the care of mentally retarded and was questioned since it was ap-

parently developed outside the normal procedure involved in the opening of such private health facilities.

Yesterday, Robert Patton, deputy commissioner of the state Mental Hygiene Department, met with Assemblyman Lucio Russo and later announced the state "will not take any precipitous action" regarding the use of the care center.

He pledged that no further action would be taken concerning the transfer of Willowbrook residents to the Concord home until the agency discusses the proposal "in detail with community groups" on the Island.

Meanwhile, Dr. Robert Reich of the city Social Services Department, which would assume the responsibility of paying for the medical care for any residents moved into the center, said a review panel

which he chairs has been given the proposal but will not act until certification for use of the facility is forthcoming from the state.

The review panel consists of representatives from both city and state agencies dealing with health and care for the retarded. It must approve any facility intended to serve a "special population" before medical funding for such residents is appropriated.

In the developments revealed last week, Israel Fogel, who runs a large nursing home in Manhattan, has leased the Concord building, originally built several years ago as the Danude Nursing Home but never licensed by the state for use as a nursing home.

Fogel and officials at Willowbrook then negotiated a "working agreement" based on a plan which calls for the licensing of the now-named Island View Care Center as an "intermediate care facility" to serve mentally retarded in need of nursing care.

Under the agreement, the state Health Department licensed the facility for "exclusive use" by Willowbrook residents who would be transferred. Willowbrook and mental hygiene officials agreed to supervise care programs and train the center's staff.

Dr. Reich said yesterday his committee has not yet received a notice of the licensing agreement and will not act until the state provides one.

Once the license is produced, he said, the panel will review the programs and care proposed at the center before medical approval and a funding

commitment is granted.

"The people we are dealing with here are helpless," Dr. Reich noted, "and we must be certain they will receive proper care before we agree to the plan."

If approval is granted, individual cases of residents to be transferred would be processed by the city social services which would foot the bill for those living in the care center.

Patton and Russo discussed the problem at the assemblyman's request after Russo said he was opposed to "all the secrecy" which surrounded the plan.

"If it weren't for the Advance article last week, neither I nor Sen. (John) Marchi would have known about it. And we're apparently not the only ones who weren't told."

Russo said Patton told him he wants to hear public reaction to the proposal before the agency reevaluates the agreement.

Since the building is to be used "exclusively" by Willowbrook residents, according to the state agency, the facility will apparently remain empty until the city and state reviews are completed.

Fogel, meanwhile, indicated yesterday that he intends to contact community leaders on the Island to arrange a meeting to discuss the proposal.