

Board to mull site for guidance office

A Community Board 1 area committee will discuss tomorrow night the latest site eyed by the Staten Island Developmental Center as a location for offices to provide services to former residents of the center.

The meeting, called by the Port Richmond area committee, will be at 7:30 p.m. in the Port Richmond Catholic Youth Organization center. The new site is at 100 Park Ave., and it would contain offices for the center's Community services staff.

The center first sought space in Port Richmond in November 1977 for offices and workshops for retarded and developmentally disabled persons in the

former Garber Bros. site on Richmond Ave.

Port Richmond residents and Community Board 1 opposed the idea and center officials decided in the light of the opposition to develop two sites, one for programs, on-site counseling and workshops, and the other for administrative work.

Now, according to Elin Howe, director of the Willowbrook facility, there are no plans for a large workshop site in the Board 1 area, but there is still a need for office space.

The former Pantry Pride store on Forest Ave. in Port Richmond was suggested as an office site about a year ago, but since then the chain has filed bankruptcy proceedings and the board has decided to halt plans for that site.

According to Miss Howe, the Park Ave. building, a former computer center, would house the same offices and perform the same functions that were planned for the Pantry Pride store, in an application that was approved last year.

At Park Ave., the 280 former residents of the center, who now live in the Board 1 area, would have access to social workers and coordinators. Persons who have never been affiliated with the center would also be eligible for guidance at proposed Park Ave. offices.

Miss Howe specified that there will be "no workshops, no programs and no training" offered at Park Ave. While some clients may visit the offices from time to time, she added, "we don't expect a large number of clients to be there at any given time. The office will be run just like any other office."

While the Staten Island Developmental Center does not require community board approval of the purchase of the building, which contains about 9,000 square feet of space, the meeting will provide the community with an opportunity "to know what's going on," according to Thomas LaManna, chairman of Board 1.

A representative of the center is scheduled to attend the session, which is open to the public.