

Awareness spurs support for homes

By DOUGLAS PATRICK

Although a proposed group home for the mentally retarded might still provoke opposition from the immediate community where it will be placed, community board officials agree that board members are much more inclined to support such a group home because of an increased awareness of the nature of mental retardation.

"It's been a process of education for the community boards,"

said Frank Beraud, district manager of Community Board 3.

"When the group homes for the mentally retarded first started coming before the community boards, board members did not know anything about mental retardation and many viewed it as a threat to a neighborhood," Beraud continued.

Lillian Prado, district manager of Community Board 2, agreed with Beraud's assessment. She also pointed out — like Beraud — that board

members are also aware now that these home are for mentally retarded people who have been born and raised on Staten Island.

"Before, some thought that Staten Island had to take care of a problem that was thrust upon them because the Staten Island Developmental Center in Wilbrook couldn't," Mrs. Prado said.

"Board members realize that many of these people are from our community," she said.

Last month, Community Board

3, which covers the Island's South Shore, voted unanimously to approve a proposed group home for the mentally retarded at 165-167 Dewey Ave. in Great Kills. "We were happy to approve it," said Beraud.

The group home will be operated by the Association for Children of Retarded Mental Development. Mickey Marlib, associate executive director of the association, attended the board



Every resident of the group home shares in household chores, including meal preparation.

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