

## Commissioner sees pooling of resources

# CSI move to SIDC urged

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Advance Staff Writer

The head of state services for the mentally retarded says he hopes the College of Staten Island acquires land soon to be vacated by the Staten Island Developmental Center (SIDC) in Willowbrook.

The move would provide an "absolutely wonderful opportunity" for the college to pool re-

sources with programs serving the handicapped, said Arthur Webb, commissioner of the state Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (OMRDD), which operates the SIDC.

"I have already talked with the chancellor (of the City University of New York) and the president (of CSI) about sharing resources, like the Institute for

move. I'm almost tempted to ask them as one of the conditions to help us run the community-based services."

SIDC is scheduled to close in 1987, and after that, Webb plans to keep only 90 acres of the 382-acre campus — the retained area will include the Institute for Basic Research, four group homes proposed for construction, and existing group homes

housing about 75 clients.

The bulk of the campus — including almost 50 brick buildings which once housed more than 6,000 clients — will be turned over to the state Office of General Services. A state task force is currently considering the future of the property.

CSI has expressed interest in acquiring part of the land to

consolidate its two campuses. Although City University officials are still drafting a formal proposal, Webb said the college wants about half of the approximately 300 acres available. Of the remaining land, Webb said he supports local efforts to establish recreational facilities for the retarded, including an Olympic-size pool and a 60-acre camp. The commissioner added that SIDC's ball fields will probably be maintained for public use, and he hopes other areas will be preserved as natural woodlands.

The woodlands issue is particularly touchy because Webb wants to build the four proposed group homes on a portion of the Corson's Brook Woods area, a 40-acre tract which environmentalists and city officials have tagged for inclusion in the Greenbelt. The Protectors of Pine Oak Woods, a local environmental group, is seeking a permanent court injunction to prevent the state from building there.

Assuming the group homes are built there, Webb said he is willing to turn the remaining 31 acres of Corson's Woods over to the state Department of Environmental Conservation to ensure that the land will not be developed further.

Despite the headaches sur-



Arthur Webb

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