

# Group homes in woods get Willowbrook board backing

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Plans to build four group homes in Corson's Brook Woods are consistent with the city's 1982 Greenbelt study, despite protests by environmentalists to the contrary, according to members of the Willowbrook Board of Visitors:

"This is the Bible they (the environmentalists) are going by," said Michael Lumetta, president of the Board of Visitors, pointing to a copy of the Greenbelt study, "and everything which is being done conforms with that book. There is no hanky-panky going on."

"They are calling it a rape of the land, and the word 'rape' is a misnomer if there ever was one.

The land is not going to be raped," said Herman Fishman, another member of board, which serves to protect the interests of patients at Staten Island Developmental Center (SIDC).

The comments came in a meeting between the Board of Visitors and the Advance Editorial Board. The Board of Visitors, which had requested the meeting to discuss the state's decision to build the group homes, staunchly defended the plan.

The state wants to build the homes on a nine-acre parcel to house 72 mentally retarded and multi-handicapped people now living at the SIDC. The institution is scheduled to close in 1987, and the group homes are part of

a plan by the state Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (OMRDD) to move SIDC patients into community residences.

Arthur Webb, commissioner of OMRDD, says Corson's Brook Woods — located in the southeast corner of the SIDC campus — is ideal for the group homes because the site is located across the street from a residential community. Moreover, the woods are centrally located in a 90-acre tract which OMRDD wants to retain after SIDC closes.

But environmentalists want Corson's Brook Woods untouched. They point to the

(See WOODS, Page A 14)