



Marilyn Mammano



Alan Novetsky



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Rabbi Jay Marcus of Young Israel of Staten Island said his congregation strongly supported the group home concept. "Every block surrounding the site has members of our community," said Rabbi Marcus, whose temple is located a few blocks from Corson's Woods. "We feel very strongly that these homes should be built: we're looking forward to having these people in our neighborhood and involving them in our community."

"We feel a moral and ethical responsibility to support these homes," added Dr. Alan Novetsky, president of Young Israel. "We feel destroying two acres of woods will not destroy the Greenbelt; it won't even destroy Corson's Brook Woods."

Parents of the mentally retarded were also on hand to give impassioned pleas for the group homes. "You put our children on trial," one parent raged at the environmentalists. "Go home and kiss your children tonight and tell them how you sunk a home for retarded children. And you live with that."

Some of the environmentalists expressed frustration that their views were interpreted as bias against the disabled. "No one here has suggested not building the homes," one speaker said.

Said Sally Williams of the Sta-



Several small discussion groups form during an intermission at the hearing held at the state Institute for Basic Research in Mental Retardation, adjoining Corson's Brooks Woods.

ten Island Planning Committee: "I think we can all understand the frustration in finding homes for the mentally retarded. But that does not preclude the orderly

evaluation of sites for those facilities. It's important to have dialogue — it's difficult when the state has already taken a position — but we can do it."