

# Fountains board wants UCP out

By JULIE MACK  
Advance Staff Writer

A protracted, seven-year battle over three West Brighton co-operative apartments is pitting the rights of the handicapped against the right of a co-op board to chose its tenants.

The battleground is the Fountains, located at 1000 Clove Rd. On one side of the conflict is the nine-member co-op board; on the other side is United Cerebral Palsy of New York State, which rents the apartments to house 12 severely retarded, multi-handicapped clients, and Nathaniel Ratner, Herman Geiser and Stanley Ginsberg, who lease the

apartments to UCP.

The latest confrontation occurred after the tenants of one of the apartments moved out in April while the apartment was being renovated. When the tenants were ready to return to the unit in mid-June, they found the co-op board had changed the locks on the apartment door.

The state Human Rights Division has gone to court on behalf of UCP in an attempt to force the co-op board to hand over the new keys. But even resolution of that matter would leave the larger issue still open: The co-op board wants UCP out of the Fountains; UCP says its clients have as

much right to live there as any of the other tenants.

A dispute over reasons for the attempted eviction lies at the heart of the struggle. Keith Penman, UCP regional director, says the real issue is discrimination against the mentally retarded. The co-op board denies that: Their attorney, Robert Bruno, says the real issue is power struggle between the co-op board and the three men who sponsored the co-op conversion and own the UCP apartments.

A little background is in order: Ratner, Geiser and Ginsberg built

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An assistant gives Doug Desderdick, a resident of the Fountains, a helping hand with his coat.

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