



Citizens.

The state originally planned to build four new houses in Corson's Brook Woods but was forced to change its mind when Gov. Mario Cuomo stepped in on behalf of outraged environmentalists. The buildings were placed near the New Springville Little League fields.

Walsh said the state delayed building the fourth group home because "I decided the concentration of four brand new homes would be too dense and would not be a good clinical decision." If the fourth home, a 24-bed facility, had been built, "before you know it, you have a mini-institution," Walsh said.

Some opponents to clustering

group homes on SIDC property have said in the past that building homes together "segregates" the residents from communities, which conflicts with the intent of community group homes.

But OMRDD officials responded by saying the houses will be home-like and they will be a vast improvement over institution living.

Walsh said he and the state soon will be accepting proposals from private agencies for the development of another group home somewhere on the Island. Eventually, in between 18 and 30 months, about 48 news beds will be built here. If no group presents an acceptable proposal, the state will develop them itself.