

CB 2 approves community residence

By MICHAEL ANDERSON
ADVANCE STAFF WRITER

In a relatively uncontentious meeting last night, Community Board 2 approved the use of a home in Concord as a residence for five developmentally disabled adults.

Three residents spoke about their objections to the home at 602 Britton Ave. during the meeting, held in the Nurses' Residence Building on the grounds of Sea View Hospital Rehabilitation Center and Home.

When the board's Health Services Committee approved the home last week, at least 30 area residents were in attendance. Last night, fewer than half that number showed up.

Tom McAlvanah, assistant executive director for residential services for Lifespire, which is purchasing the home, said the purpose of acquiring the one-story ranch home was for clients who are getting older.

"They need a facility that will better serve them," he said. The clients currently live in a two-story home.

Lifespire is a Manhattan-based social services agency that has been in operation for almost 50 years. The agency operates 30 residential facilities — four on Staten Island — and serves 300 people.

Two men and two women, all in their 60s and with limited mobility, will live in the home. The fifth resident is not yet known.

Two of the clients have been in Lifespire residences for more than 20 years, and the other two have been with Lifespire for over 10 years.

The house will be staffed with a full-time manager and assistant manager, several part-time maintenance employees and several other part-time workers.

Adrienne Ferenczy, of 618 Britton Ave., a real estate agent, said she felt the house was too small for all the residents.

She felt the rooms were not big enough, noting both a small kitchen and dinette area.

"We feel they're overcrowding the home," she said.

Charles Langere, a Concord resident and chairman of the Youth Committee of Community Board 1, echoed her sentiments.



ADVANCE PHOTO ■ HILTON FLORES

Michael Coccozza, who lives near the location of a planned community residence, gives his views at a Community Board 2 meeting on the issue.

"I just think the home is a little too small for five adults," he said.

Dana Magee, Board 2's first vice chairman, said the state has regulations in place detailing how many square feet is considered ample room. He said the home is not in violation of size minimums.

Michael Coccozza, of 612 Britton Ave., was worried the home could be expanded to add more bedrooms for more clients.

Several other residents were given the chance to address their

concerns, but more than 10 people passed on the opportunity because they felt they would be repeating what had already been said.

Various Board 2 members said they visited other Lifespire residences as well as other residences for the developmentally disabled in the Board 2 area and did not find a problem with any.

Edward Salek, public service chairman, said he has two similar homes in his area and said the residents make wonderful neighbors.