

about potential problems. He said he discussed additional police coverage* for the neighborhood if the community residence goes in.

"It may be the best thing that ever happened to the block," he suggested to residents, who then worried about an increase in parking tickets.

Ms. Papineau and other residents said they received phone calls from real estate agents informing them about the community residence and warning them to move.

Some South Shore residents lent support to the plan. "I come to the aid of anyone in the community who needs help and I would not fight this project. Where are you people when we try to fight housing on the South Shore?" asked Lorraine Sorge, president of the Staten Island Taxpayers Association.

"I'm certain there is no one in the room who has ill will. I can testify that they have the same dreams and desires as other kids. Fears will fall because you are going to monitor the home," predicted Monsignor Peter Finn, co vicar of Staten Island.

In terms of property values, Deputy Borough President Jim Molinaro pointed to a community residence in Emerson Hill that opened in 1978; now, multimillion dollar homes are being built nearby.

Eugene Spatz, executive director of On Your Mark, attested to his "high quality staff."

"We are all educated. We do care and try to help the community. We get joy out of the of the job and are not paid a lot of money," said Kathy Denmark, a manager at another On Your Mark community residence.

The agency requires criminal background checks but not drug tests — a practice neighbors question.

"How many of you have been tested for drugs at your job?" quizzed Councilman Stephen Fiala (R-South Shore) to the show of approximately 20 raised hands. "If it is a concern, the route to go is through legislation to require drug testing," he advised.

Residents wanted guarantees their real estate values will go up and kids will be safe. Spatz guaranteed the potential residents pose no risk to children or property values.

Another concern was that once the sale is approved, the house could potentially be used by other social service agencies with more controversial missions, such as drug treatment or homeless services. Spatz said the community residence is a permanent home for the young adults.

Although residents were notified about the home approximately a month ago, they feel the residence is being "snuck" into the community. Spatz confessed the site was identified in May, but family and architects also had to approve the house.

Last night was the first time a Board 3 committee has voted on a community residence since it unanimously rejected a similar facility in Greenridge in March. Residents vehemently opposed the plan.

Introduced by HeartShare, a Brooklyn-based social services provider in Brooklyn, the March proposal was to house six mildly and moderately retarded Islanders, ages 19 to 24, at 119 End Pl.

HeartShare appealed the board's stance, which the OMRDD commissioner vetoed on May 25. The home will open in November.

The Padavan Law — also known as the Community Residence Site Selection Law — gives community boards three options when faced with a proposed site for a community residence for the developmentally disabled: Accept the site, suggest an alternative or object to the site on the grounds the neighborhood is already saturated with similar residences. In this case, similar residences mean other community residences for the developmentally disabled.

Reflecting on the tragedies of Willowbrook State School, where patients were "treated like prisoners" and "found in their own feces," Fiala said community residences are the answer to such abuses.

The full board will vote on the proposed Huguenot home at its monthly meeting on June 27 in Staten Island University Hospital, Prince's Bay.

Representatives for Assemblyman Robert Straniere (R-South Shore) and State Senator John Marchi (R-Staten Island) attended the meeting.