

CB3 public hearings set for 2 new group home sites

Scheduled for same week as 3 site appeals from agencies

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Public hearings for two new group home sites in the Community Board 3 area have been scheduled for the same week that the state will hear appeals on three sites the board rejected last month.

The two new sites will be discussed at consecutive hearings Tuesday at the board office, Nelson Avenue, Great Kills.

The first site, 62 Justin Ave., Bay Terrace, will be discussed at an 8 p.m. hearing.

The Staten Island Developmental Disabilities Services Office (SIDDSO) is slated to develop two residences for a total of eight people at this address, according to Kathy Kennedy-Shields, who works in planning and development for the state agency.

The second site, 524 Lamoka Ave., Eltingville, will be discussed at a 9 p.m. hearing.

This is slated to become an intermediate care facility for 10 retarded people, run by the Brooklyn-based Independent Liv-

ing Association (ILA), a private, not-for-profit organization that runs several group homes on the island.

The single-family home will need minimal modifications in order for the agency to occupy it, according to executive director John Welch. "The home itself is well suited as a one-family home for a new family of developmentally disabled citizens," Welch said.

The board will speak with representatives from both the state agency and the ILA as well as

members of the community at these hearings.

Dates have also been set on administrative appeals for three group home sites that the board turned down in November.

The first hearing, concerning 192 Butler Ave., Tottenville, will be held tomorrow at the Manhattan Developmental Disabilities Services Office, 75 Morton St., in the first-floor conference room.

The Butler Avenue site was also slated for a home to be run by the ILA, and the board's rejection of it is being contested by the agency.

The state also set Jan. 17 as the date for hearings on 40 Nash Court, Great Kills, and 770-772 W. Drumgoole Road, Annadale. These two sites were to be group

homes run by the SIDDSO.

The Nash Court hearing will be held at 10 a.m. and the Drumgoole Road hearing will be at 1:30 p.m., both in the same location as the Butler Avenue hearing.

According to Ms. Kennedy-Shields, at the administrative appeals, both sides will present their case concerning whether the homes should open to an arbitrator. The transcripts will then be sent to the commissioner of the state Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (OMRDD), Elin Howe, who will make the final decision on the cases.

Ms. Kennedy-Shields said the hearing officer does make a recommendation on the sites to Ms.

Howe.

According to the state Padavan Law, which governs the siting of group homes for the mentally retarded, the state can only reject a site if the development of the house will substantially change the character of the neighborhood.

Ms. Kennedy-Shields said that at these hearings, "all community concerns are taken into consideration and addressed by OMRDD and the agency, and weighed in terms of their validity and the impact they would have on the people who would be living there."

All of these hearings are open to the public.