

Zoning change urged so physicians can stay put

By MARTIN MOYNIHAN

GUILDERLAND — The Chamber of Commerce has recommended the town amend its zoning ordinance to allow a number of physicians now practicing in McKownville in apparent violation of the law to continue.

The town board had scheduled action on the zoning controversy last month, but delayed after a chamber committee asked for a 90-day delay to further study the situation.

A six-man ad hoc chamber committee also has suggested that steps can be taken to ease parking problems around the medical offices, problems which have caused a furor among McKownville residents.

The report found that four medical practices were "clearly in violation" of the zoning law which requires practitioners in residential zones to live in the same buildings where they practice.

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tional parking on their lots. In addition, he said, the physicians have arranged for patient parking in the nearby Stuyvesant Plaza and King's Service Station.

The report said that parking, which it described as the "paramount issue" in the case, was compounded by employes of the state Social Services Department who park on side streets off Western Avenue in an effort to beat traffic at the end of the work day.

The report contended that parking on the side streets should be eliminated by the emplacement of no parking signs and subsequent police action.

The report also spelled out the committee's rationale in making its decision.

The document said the physicians were a "valuable and indispensable asset" and to force them to vacate their present locations, as some town residents have suggested would cause "an unnecessary hardship on many families in the town."

Furthermore, the committee report contended, the entire area along both sides of Western Avenue in the McKownville section of Guilderland has changed because of the current commercial zoning on the south side of the street.

The committee's report, prepared under the chairmanship of chamber president Edward Breitenbach, recommends that physicians, surgeons or dentists be permitted to practice in agricultural or residential zones provided the practice meets certain conditions beyond those normally required for a special use permit.

The recommended conditions are:

—The use shall be limited to one- and two-family dwellings.

—No building shall house more than one office.

—Not more than one branch or specialty of any profession shall be practiced in any one building.

— No building shall be altered in its exterior design so as to destroy or impair its residential character.

The report also says the doctors involved have taken some steps to alleviate the parking problems on residential side streets adjoining Western Avenue and suggests that further steps could be taken by town police.

Breitenbach said the physicians are prepared to submit for approval plans for addi-