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McKownville residents reject zone change by 4-1 margin

MCKOWNVILLE — By almost a four to one margin residents of McKownville voted down referendum that would have enabled the Guilderland Town Board to alter the existing zoning law and allow offices of physicians, dentists and surgeons in one and two-family residences in areas zoned R-10 residential.

The referendum vote registered 377 "No" and 97 "Yes" ballots on the question and marked the latest chapter in a continuing two-year controversy focused on professionals practicing along Western Avenue and adjacent residential areas.

Residents of the area have cited alleged violations of the current zoning law by a number of professionals operating offices in the area and resultant parking and traffic problems.

The town board suggested the referendum within the McKownville Fire District to provide direction for the board to follow on the issue.

If passed, the amendment would have allowed offices in

the area under special permits requested from the town zoning board.

The wording of the referendum proposition closely follows that of a proposed town law drafted by the town's attorney last summer as a possible compromise measure. The

board has not taken action on the measure since then and still has the official authority to pass the law despite the apparent public opposition reflected in the advisory referendum, since vote was defined more as informational and not legally binding.