

Date for vote on zoning awaited in McKownville

GUILDERLAND—A date for a referendum on a controversial McKownville zoning dispute may be set early next week, town officials have indicated.

The referendum on the long-simmering controversy was set by the town board April 9, but no date was established.

Supervisor Carl Walters said at the time only that the vote by McKownville residents would not conflict with a vote on the Guilderland School District budget, now

tentatively set for June 11.

The referendum is the latest move in a two-year conflict in the area involving professional practices in residential zones.

The problem is that several physicians operate practices in residential zones along Western Avenue in violation of the town's zoning ordinance. One of the stipulations of the zoning code is that the doctors must live in the same building in which they practice.

The referendum for Mc-

Kownville residents would be on a local law, proposed last year by the town board but never adopted.

That law would have allowed the physicians to continue to operate their practices, providing they obtain special use permits from the town zoning board, which could require the practitioners to improve parking facilities.

At the town board meeting, Walters admitted the referendum approach to the problem was a "cop-out" by the town board, but added that after some two years of study the board had been able to identify the problem but could find no equitable solution.

Numerous residents, including the McKownville Improvement Association, have objected to the physicians' presence, due largely to the number of cars parking on residential streets.

The four medical practices, however, serve numerous McKownville patients as well as others from the general Guilderland area.

Voting on the proposal would be restricted to residents of the McKownville Fire District.

And whatever the outcome, Walters has said the town board "will not be bound" by the decision of the voters.

The board would, however, use the referendum in an advisory capacity, according to the supervisor.

The zoning amendment could be restricted to R-10 zones (residential with a minimum lot size of 10,000 square feet) according to officials.

The only other R-10 zones in town are Fort Hunter and Three Hills Terrace.