



Guilderland florist to withdraw zone request, end his business

By EDWARD CAREY

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GUILDERLAND — A McKownville resident who raised the ire of some neighbors by opening a florist business in his Western Avenue home says he will withdraw his request that the town's Zoning Board of Appeals give the shop "home occupation" status.

The board meets at 7:30 p.m. today in Town Hall to continue a public hearing on the request by John H. Benson of 1255 Western Ave. for an interpretation of the regulations of the town's zoning law permitting home occupations.

Benson said Tuesday he has not been able to purchase another florist business in the town and, so, will simply close his Sunflower Phlorist shop, which he still is operating out of his home.

Benson said he began operating the shop out of his home late last year while recovering from surgery, only to be hit with a violation notice by the town weeks later. Benson's home is located in an R-10 residential zone, which does not permit business uses.

Benson then asked for permission to run the business as a home occupation. Members of the McKownville Improve-

ment Association, a neighborhood group which opposes further commercialization of Western Avenue, came out against his request.

The Zoning Board of Appeals in February ordered Benson to remove overt signs of commercialism at his house and adjourned the hearing until tonight. Benson said at the time he was seeking to purchase another florist business in the town to take the place of the shop in his home.

Now, with his inability to come up with another location, a bitter Benson said he will simply close up shop.

"I feel badly about it. Having the part-time business represented a fulfillment in my life — it was a crucial time in my life while I was recovering. And they stomped on me. I'm ill. I can't stand all this battling," Benson said.

Benson said some people in the improvement association claimed he would "ruin Western Avenue. Now I won't be able to ruin Western Avenue, I guess."

Also at tonight's meeting, the Zoning Board of Appeals will consider:

- A request for a special use permit by developer Armand Quadrini, who proposes to construct "Tollgate Vil-

lage," a mixed-use center at Routes 20 and 155. Quadrini needs from the board a parking variance and set-in variances before he may begin construction of the center, which will contain a 91-room motel, 32 penthouse suites, 24 shops and a six-story office tower.

- A request by Westville Apartments, located off Farnsworth, Johnston and Church roads, for a special use permit to allow the construction of three 24-unit apartment buildings. The project previously was approved by the board in 1979, but that permit has now expired.

- A request by Western Turnpike Rescue Squad for a special use permit to allow the construction of a 1,380-squarefoot building to house emergency equipment at Carman Road and Whispering Pines Way. The rescue squad is planning to move from its current headquarters on Western Avenue.

- A request by Albert Diacetis for a special use permit to allow the construction of an addition to an existing residence at 19 Ronald Place. He needs setback variances because the house is located on an irregularly shaped lot.