

Hillsborough debates plan for dog day care center

Concerns on traffic and noise are aired

BY WILLIAM BODMER
FOR THE STAR-LEDGER

Hillsborough residents packed the municipal courtroom last night to listen to a revised and controversial application for a dog day care center on Amwell Road in the township.

The meeting was the third time that residents, planners and the facility's founder gave testimony to the board of adjustment about the 1.25-acre site that would care for 30 to 50 dogs per day.

Since the initial application last month, several key issues involving traffic, parking and noise concerns were readdressed along with input from the public and planners.

Mary Ellen Springsteen, who lives on Estate Road in the nearby Manors complex, said she is not opposed to a facility for dogs, but feels it should be in a different location because of the amount of automobile congestion and accidents in the area.

"I'm against it. I think it's going to increase traffic, parking and odors, and I think it will bring down the value of the homes," Springsteen said. "I think it should be farther away from a residential area."

The board also expressed concern that cars visiting the site would add to the traffic volume from the nearby shopping areas and homes, citing the site's proximity to the adjacent Amwell Mall shopping center and Manors of Hillsborough housing complex as particularly important areas that would be affected.

Board member Jo-Ann Delasko said that the area was already tightly packed and was concerned about more traffic clogging Amwell Road.

"It's amazing to me there's still
[See **DOGS**, Page 32]

DOGS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 31

a house there, a single-family dwelling. I think prohibiting a left turn may be one of the answers," she said.

John Chadwick, a licensed New Jersey planner, said that the pro-

posed area was ideal for the center and provided a "good transition" between the adjacent homes and commercial areas. He said the township buffer requirement was 15 feet from a residential zone, and the center would provide more than 20 times that much at 320 feet.

In terms of other uses available for the commercially zoned prop-

erty, he said, the site is better suited for a dog day care center than other businesses, such as a restaurant or retail space, because of the configuration of the land.

"Other uses would have far greater impact in terms of building and blacktop," Chadwick said, also noting that the need for a dog day care facility may be difficult to assess because so few currently exist.