

Babylon OKs Seeking NY Rights Office

By Aric Press

North Lindenhurst—The Babylon Town Board voted yesterday to instruct Supervisor Joseph A. Stabile to ask that the State Division of Human Rights open an office in Suffolk to handle housing discrimination complaints.

The 3-1 vote, with Stabile absent on vacation in Europe, came a day after the Suffolk Board of Supervisors voted unanimously Monday to make a similar request to the state. County Executive Dennison has said that he will veto the county board measure, but the supervisors are expected to override the veto at their meeting July 29. Dennison feels that instead, town boards should adopt individual open-housing ordinances. Only Brookhaven and Islip have done that.

Saal Laaser, executive director of the State Division of Human Rights, said Monday his department hopes to set up a Suffolk office.

The board action was taken after a short recess that had followed the regular meeting. The resolution was introduced by Conservative Councilman Frank A. Schaeffer who said, "The supervisor is in accord with this." However, Democratic Councilwoman Sondra Bachety, who voted against the measure, said, "If Mr. Stabile told Mr. Schaeffer anything, they were deliberately keeping the agreement from me."

Mrs. Bachety favors the adoption of an open-housing ordinance and said that it had been her understanding "that the board would draft a proposal together." Schaeffer said that he felt that the cost to the taxpayer of local town offices would be too damn much to bear." He said later that he estimated it could cost between \$10,000 and \$50,000 to administer a local housing ordinance and added, "I doubt any local ordinance would be as strong as present state laws."

Mrs. Bachety also said that she had delayed pressing for action on a town open-housing ordinance because Town Attorney Walter Steindler had written State Attorney General Louis J. Lefkowitz Monday asking him to clarify a January opinion that such laws, with penalties including jail terms and fines, are legal. Steindler had written the State Department of Audit and Control in June and the department replied that towns were overreaching their powers in providing such penalties. However, when Islip Town questioned this, the audit and control department said that interpretation of the law was Lefkowitz' province.

Steindler said yesterday that he had written the audit and control department because he felt that Lefkowitz' January opinion was being given broader interpretation than was intended."



Walter Steindler Requests Advice

Handwritten: Thursday July 18, 1968