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## Zoning board votes against home for troubled teens

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Jeff Deerr does not want a group home for troubled teens in his neighborhood.

"I am definitely opposed to the idea," he said. "I go to work and I come home after working an eight-hour day and I have a peaceful neighborhood. I don't believe that doing something like this is right."

Deerr was among more than 25 residents from the Vinton Heights subdivision who sat in an Area Board of Zoning Appeals meeting Wednesday night for nearly four hours to speak out against proposed home.

The group home, proposed by Seeds of Hope Community Ministries, was slated to operate out of a residence at 2012 Valdez Drive in Lafayette if approved.

But the Board of Zoning Appeals voted 6-1 against the proposal, which led to a sea of cheers from residents in attendance.

According to Alfred Buckley of the Seeds of Hope, the six-bedroom home would serve as a transitional group home. It would house up to eight children and two foster parents and operate 24 hours a day.

Buckley said the children would come from the Cary Home for Children and would likely be between the ages of 14 and 18.

The home is currently owned by Cedric and Allison Dilling.

"We worked with local agencies and asked what this community needed," said Buckley. "They needed something to transition children out of an institutional setting and into a home-based setting to better prepare them."

However, people living in the neighborhood said lack of trust and poor communication had most residents firmly against the idea.

"Nobody knew anything about it and people did not have time to prepare for this," said Lafayette City Council member Bob Downing, D-District 6. "My point is that it is all about trust, it's like a marriage. Without trust, it's not going to work."

Deerr brought a petition to the meeting that contained 65 signatures from people against the request.

"Only two people living in the whole neighborhood didn't sign it, and that's only because they said they wanted more information," Deerr said.

Lisa Calvert lives across the street from the proposed home.

"Let's strip away all the packaging, the religious ties and the troubled teens and let's call it what it is," she said. "It's a business."