

Full Story Details

Walkersville Board Votes Down Muslim Recreation Center

Reported by: [Megan Healey](#)
Thursday, Feb 7, 2008 @11:29pm EST



WALKERSVILLE, MD - A Maryland Muslim community will not be able to build a large recreation and convention center in Walkersville.

The town's Board of Appeals voted against allowing the Ahmadiyyah Muslim Community a special exception to build on agriculturally-zoned land.

The board voted unanimously, 3-0, to deny AMC a special exception to build a place of worship on what's known as Nicodemus Farm, citing mainly traffic and infrastructure burdens associated with a yearly convention that would bring up to 10,000 worshippers to the site.

"My fuss with once a year is, it is overwhelming for a small town," says resident Ron Layman.

"It's what's going to bring in way too much small town. If you've been to Walkersville, you know that for a two-lane road, coming in or out, any way you go, and that is the main concern is the traffic," says resident Julie Ferguson.

The attorney for the landowner trying to sell says there's more behind the issue than just traffic, and believes the community did not want a Muslim group building in their town.

"When the AMC arrived in town, the reaction against them was bitter and hostile, including reactions from town officials posted on the internet and newspapers, it was quite clear. In recent weeks they've attempted to change their tune, but it's a case of too little, too late," says Roman Storz, attorney for landowner David Moxley.

But some residents say if it wasn't for that yearly convention, the board may have voted differently.

"The 20 (AMC) families that reside in Frederick, we'd love for them to have a mosque, to be able to celebrate what they need to celebrate, however we cannot take such an infrastructure of what they're proposing," says Ferguson.

Both the Ahmadiyyah president and their attorney tell **NBC25** they are now considering several different routes to take with the project, but say they won't make a decision until they've read over the Board of Appeals' formal written opinion.