

# Battered wives face court battle

APR 10 1977 PM

By Tim Mead  
Staff Writer



Sandy Ramos

Hackensack officials last night told an angry crowd supporting a shelter for homeless women that they would seek an injunction today to shut down the shelter.

The city ordered the shelter, overcrowded and in violation of local zoning laws, to shut its doors last Saturday. When officials inspected the Cedar Avenue residence, yesterday, they found nine women and eight children still living there.

City officials said that besides seeking the injunction in state Superior Court they would issue summonses to Sandy Ramos, owner of the Save Our Sisters (SOS) shelter, for her refusal to close the building.

"I'm sure nobody will be dragged into the street," Mayor Kazmier Wysocki told the crowd of 100 people packed into City Council chambers. "We'll try to do everything possible to help place women in shelters so Ms. Ramos's house is no longer in violation of the law."

Other council members weren't as  
See CITY, Page B-19

sympathetic, however.

"If these husbands (those who beat their wives) are driven to drink by their wives..." said Councilman George B. Holman, unable to complete his sentence because of the uproar over his remarks.

'He's through'

"I can't believe he said that! He's through," said Ms. Ramos, a 35-year-old mother of three, who is divorced and is a part-time waitress. Holman is not seeking reelection next month.

Wysocki, who is seeking another term in office, directed local Welfare Director George Yidi to find temporary shelters for Hackensack women now staying with Ms. Ramos. Yidi is also to arrange temporary placement of other women at the shelter with their respective local welfare departments.

The mayor said that Hackensack just couldn't afford to provide a regional shelter for battered wives. "It would be an improper use of city funds. We feel it's the county's responsibility."

But the county Board of Freeholders views the dispute as one between Hackensack and the shelter, although it agrees there is a need for such a facility.

"Wife-beating is a problem that isn't exposed as it should be," admits Deputy Freeholder Director Doris Mahalick. "But putting women and children in an overcrowded home isn't the answer."

## County looking

Mrs. Mahalick says the county is searching for a location to house a crisis center which would house battered wives and other problem-ridden such as alcoholics, on a temporary basis.

Ms. Ramos's troubles began last week when officials, responding to complaints from city residents, cited the shelter for overcrowding and violation of the city's zoning ordinance. They ordered it closed within five days.

Officials yesterday, however, returned to the shelter and found that Ms. Ramos had not closed it. They requested City Atty. Seymour Chase to seek an injunction to force the shelter to cease operation.

Property Maintenance Inspector Larry Manning said they found 17 people living in the shelter yesterday, far exceeding the city's occupancy requirements. The law says that there must be 100 square feet of space for the first occupant and 70 square feet of space each for other occupants.

Manning also said that the shelter still was operating as a business, a use forbidden in a residential zone.

## Not a business

Rosemarie Bellos Truland, an attorney representing Ms. Ramos and SOS, disagrees that the shelter is a business, but she refused to say into what zone the shelter falls.