

## News

Home > Local News

Text Size + | Text Size -

### It's official: Walkersville formally denies Muslim group

Originally published June 06, 2008

By Sarah Fortney  
News-Post Staff

WALKERSVILLE — The Board of Zoning Appeals has formalized a decision they made in February to reject a proposal by the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community.

Thursday night, board members agreed unanimously on a 21-page document, detailing their reasons for denying the religious group's plans to build on 224 acres of agriculturally zone land.

In August, the Ahmadiyya group announced its intention to buy David Moxley's farm at 8939 Woodsboro Pike to build a recreational center for 20 local families.

The site would also be home to the annual Jalsa Salana festival, which would attract between 5,000 and 10,000 people.

Earlier this year, the board cited their concerns for dealing with potential problems created by the annual three-day event in June.

Board members cited more than a dozen factors they used to make their decision, including the availability of firefighting equipment, traffic and the orderly growth of the town, as reasons for denying the request.

After an 11-day hearing and hours of deliberations and testimony, board members decided Feb. 7 to deny their proposal.

Among those at Walkersville Town Hall for Thursday night's meeting were Ahmadiyya representatives, Moxley, his attorney, Roman P. Storzer, and members of the Becket Fund.

The Becket Fund is an organization that advocates for religious groups at odds with the government.

Storzer reacted the same as he did when the decision was first made in February.

Speaking on behalf of Moxley, the owner of the agriculturally zoned land, he may take the case elsewhere, which could mean civil rights action taken in federal court.

The option includes enforcement of the religious freedom protections in the federal and Maryland constitutions and the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act.

Another option would be to make an appeal to Frederick County Circuit Court, he said.

Storzer believes the underlying issue is hostility toward Muslims. He said it is a "sad, sad situation," when Ahmadiyya members are not allowed to worship freely in America; many moved from their native countries to escape the same persecution for their beliefs.

Storzer hopes to take action in the next 30 days, as required to appeal to the written decision.

Dr. Syed Ahmad, Ahmadiyya's spokesperson, did not wish to comment on the written decision.



### storytools

- [Print this Story](#)
- [Email this Story](#)
- [Post/View Comments \(25\)](#)
- [Purchase Photos](#)

### topheadlines

- [Police blotter](#)
- [FCSO deputies shot man 10 times](#)
- [Mount Airy residents upset about aggressive tree trimming](#)
- [Local builder helps victims of storm](#)
- [Inmate center needs newer computers](#)

### topjobs

[View all »](#)

- [GETGO - NOW HIRING!](#)
- [THERAPISTS - \\$2,000 SIGN-ON BONUS](#)
- [ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES](#)
- [DRIVERS](#)
- [NURSING- UNIT MANAGER](#)

### Advertisements



[Post your comments »](#)