

Necessity For Center Questioned

By **DON MELVIN**

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Officials of three Burlington agencies offering programs for young people questioned Wednesday the need for — and the location of — a Youth Center proposed for the basement of Memorial Auditorium.

But Jane Driscoll, director of the Mayor's Youth Office, said the center will differ vastly from existing programs, and defended the decision to locate the center downtown. A number of social service professionals strongly support the idea, she said.

On Monday, the Board of Aldermen approved a proposal by Mayor Bernard Sanders for the use of federal Community Development Block Grant funds that included more than \$47,000 for the center — \$10,165 to run it and \$37,000 to build it. An advisory committee had not recommended any funding for the project.

"It certainly is a duplication of programs that the YMCA now has in the proposal stage, and it would be nice to have a little bit of coordination there," said Stevenson H. Waltien, vice president of the YMCA, which is one block from the proposed youth center. "I think the Mayor's Youth Office knows, or should know, that the YMCA has a very active youth program."

Others expressed concern about the location, saying that downtown has an abundance of youth programs, while the New North End and the South End do not.

"I do believe it's a duplication," said Maggie Green, executive director of the Sara Holbrook Community Center, "I do believe that kids should be served in their own neighborhood, that Ward 4 (the New North End) is the largest bedroom neighborhood in the city. The South End has no services for kids. The whole national trend is toward neighborhood centers and family centers. If you

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