

40 in Bronx Seek Gun Permits For Protection Against Addicts

More than 40 black and Puerto Rican housewives and fathers marched to the 42d Precinct station in the Morrisania section of the Bronx yesterday seeking pistol permits to protect themselves from narcotics addicts.

As they marched along the streets of neat one-family homes and apartment houses, they yelled: "Gun Power, Gun Power," "We want Guns," and "Have Gun, Will Kill!" Several people sitting on stoops called back, "Sock it to them!"

The group, representatives of several Morrisania community organizations, was led by Mrs. Clara Cooper, head of the Morris Avenue Community Association, Inc., at 265 East 162d Street.

They gathered at 163d Street and Morris Avenue, several blocks from a playground where they say narcotics addicts meet every day to buy and take drugs, and marched six blocks to the station house on Third Avenue.

Lack of police protection against addicts prompted the housewives, none of whom had ever fired a gun, to apply for permits.

They said that addicts who didn't live in the area congregated there, stole their purses on the street, took dope in the basements of houses in the area, robbed apartments and mugged residents.

"They don't use strongarms," Mrs. Cooper said. "They use guns and knives."

"If I had a gun when two addicts put a knife to my 14-year-old son's throat and stole his pay check," said Roberto Hannibal, who owns a house at 1059 Teller Avenue, "I would have killed them."

Although the marchers said they wanted guns for protection, they added that they would use them only as a last resort.

"I'm afraid of guns," said

Mrs. Irma Ramirez, a housewife with three children. "But if it's a question of me and my children and a junkie waiting in my hallway, I would use it."

Deputy Inspector Benjamin Hellman, who met with five representatives of the group at the station house, said:

"It's the policy of this department not to give out permits for people who want to protect themselves."

"To get a gun permit takes many months," he added. "The fee is \$20, you have to be fingerprinted and your record has to be checked and your picture taken."

The group was also told that its members would have to pay for pistol instruction at private facilities.

The meeting ended one hour later when the group was promised by Inspector Hellman that his men would be instructed to go into the "narcotic-prone areas"—the schools, lots and backyards. He also gave the group his direct telephone number and told the women they could ask to be escorted home by patrol cars.

Mrs. Cooper, who said she worked as a rent collector and often carried large sums of money, was told she was the only one in the group eligible for a permit.

She said: "We'll wait until Sunday and see if things get better. If not, we'll have another gun-permit walk."