

Planning Commission Hears Two Special Use Permits

March 11, 2014

In the first meeting of 2014, the Planning Commission heard two requests for special use permits, one from a private school asking that church and community uses be added and a second to allow a used auto sales business to operate on property currently occupied by a church. (View the applications at <http://peachtreecornersga.org/CurrentPublicHearingCases.aspx>)

Seigakuin School, located at 5505 Winters Chapel Road, is requesting that the school be allowed to lease the facility during the off hours to a church and/or for community use. The private school teaches Japanese and English; the current enrollment is approximately 100 students ranging in age from 3 to 12.

The building had been used as a church prior to its current use. The school's owner proposed the school be used for enrichment classes such as violin or piano classes which would be open for adults during non-school hours. The space would be leased out by the school.

Several residents who live in an adjacent subdivision expressed concern over the additional traffic on Winters Chapel Road and concern over noise and security.

Community Development Director Diana Wheeler recommended a number of conditions be incorporated to ensure the nearby residents concerns be addressed including signage restrictions. A number of these conditions had been suggested by the applicant to address neighbors' concerns. At the meeting the Planning Commission recommended several changes to those conditions including adding a provision that the school would be responsible for locking the parking lot gates in the evening.

The Planning Commission voted in favor of recommending the school's request 3-1. Commissioner Metts voted against and Commissioner Kaplan, who lives in an adjacent neighborhood, recused himself.

The City Council will vote on the special request permit at the April 15 meeting.

The second request was submitted by property owner Eldon Smith to allow a used auto sales business on property located at 4521 Buford Highway. The original request did not indicate that there would be two businesses operating on the property. However, in a presentation made by Briggs Allen, spokesman for the property owner, a proposal was presented for a church, which is currently occupying the building, to remain with the additional used car sales business to occupy a portion of the property.

Ms. Wheeler's recommendation with conditions was based on information that only the used auto dealer business would operate on the property.

The Commission voted 5-0 to table a recommendation to allow for the Community Development Director to re-evaluate the request based on the new information presented at the meeting.

Judy Putnam