



March 28, 2023

Cobb County Planning Commission
100 Cherokee Street
Marietta, GA 30090

Re: Z-9 Aguas Vivas Centro Familiar De Adoracion Inc.

Dear Mr. Chairman and Commissioners:

I am writing on behalf of the Board of the Mableton Improvement to ask that you recommend denial of this application for a church within a residential area on South Gordon Road. This proposal is simply too intense for this parcel.

The property was rezoned to R-20 in 2014 as a Buddhist meditation center, consisting of a small building and 15 parking spaces. This new application is for an 18,000 square foot church with a 600-person sanctuary, a 150-space parking lot and the potential for an expanded building. It is entirely different from the current zoning and not appropriate for a parcel that is literally in the backyard of multiple adjacent single-family homes and that shares a property line with a county park property. The multiple variances required are another indication that this is not the right plan for this property.

The stream running across the property presents a challenge not addressed by the applicant's plan. In fact, their site plan does not include the stream or the required buffers and places the building on top of the stream itself. This parcel drains to the north into the county pond and property designated as a park. This creates serious concerns for sediment and contaminated water (oil, gasoline, coolant) coming off a large parking lot, and could limit the use of this public property in the future. The age of the pond is unclear, and there is concern about the earthen dam and overflow that runs through the adjacent neighborhoods in culverts likely undersized for today's development patterns.

Additionally, the proposal lacks other critical information needed for you to make an informed decision. We have reached out to the applicant, but our emails and phone calls have not been returned. Missing information includes:

- Estimated size and location of the detention pond
- Location of the dumpster and enclosure

- Location of a sign at the roadway, and any indication as to whether it will have electronic messages
- Building architecture, including information about building height
- Fencing and landscaping plans
- Lighting information

The staff analysis indicates that the church plans to operate 30-40 hours a week. Adjacent homeowners should not be subjected to the noise, light pollution, and traffic associated with such an intense use. Traffic will be intense, as church services result in attendees arriving and leaving in short spans of time. Given the narrow frontage, it is difficult to understand how a meaningful decel lane can be constructed on this property.

When this property was rezoned to the R-20 category in 2014, that decision was a downzoning from the prior category of RA-5. That zoning, still in place for this property, includes 50-foot buffers and a commitment to preserve 8.5 acres of forest. There is history here – a clear indication that this property is not suited for intense commercial-style development, such as this proposed church. Approval of this application would be a reversal of previous decisions about this property.

As always, thank you for the opportunity to be a part of the public comment process. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 770 948-5394.

Sincerely,



Robin Meyer
Zoning Committee Chair

Cc: Cobb County Board of Commissioners
John Pederson, Cobb County Zoning Division Manager
Robin Stone, Deputy County Clerk
Johenny Mendez
MIC Board of Directors and Zoning Committee