

**CITY OF SUWANEE
SPECIAL USE PERMIT ANALYSIS**

CASE NUMBER: SUP-2010-001
REQUEST: AUTOMOTIVE SALES
ZONING: C-2 (GENERAL COMMERCIAL DISTRICT)
LOCATION: 3550 LAWRENCEVILLE SUWANEE ROAD
TAX ID NUMBER: 7-194-017
ACREAGE: 3.43 ACRES
PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT: INDOOR AUTOMOTIVE SALES WITHIN AN EXISTING COMMERCIAL SUITE

APPLICANT: THOMAS E. MATTHEWS
5851 CHOCTAW LANE
BRASELTON, GA 30517

OWNER: DIAMOND STAR PROPERTIES, INC.
P.O. BOX 350
BUFORD, GA 30515

CONTACT: THOMAS MATTHEWS
CONTACT PHONE: 404-354-6204

RECOMMENDATION: APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS

PROJECT DATA:

The applicant requests a Special Use Permit on an approximate 3.43 acre tract to allow for indoor automotive sales. The site is located on Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road at the intersection of Lawrenceville Suwanee Road and Smithtown Road. Access is proposed via an existing signalized driveway to the shopping center. The subject property is a C-2 zoned tract. The applicant does not propose any exterior renovations to the site and will not store any vehicles outdoors.

The Special Use Permit process was created by the City Council in 2001 to better handle certain land uses. The SUP process allows the Council to review certain proposals in the context of their use and take into consideration the surrounding area and other relevant factors. A Special Use Permit does not change the underlying zoning of property, but grants the property an additional specified use. In this case the specified use would allow for indoor automotive sales.

DEVELOPMENT COMMENTS:

The applicant does not intend to make any exterior changes to the existing shopping center and will not be required to submit plans for development review. Any interior changes will be reviewed through the standard building permit process. However, the applicant should be

prepared to comply with all fire safety and ADA access requirements prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy.

ANALYSIS:

The subject property is an approximately 3.43 acre site located along Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road across from the intersection of Lawrenceville Suwanee Road and Smithtown Road. The site is currently developed and includes four, one-story commercial buildings and associated off-street parking. Existing buildings range in size from 12,879 square feet to 12,940 square feet. Remaining portions of the Merchants Landing shopping center along with other adjacent properties have been developed as commercial, industrial and office land uses. This site would be appropriate for the proposed use.

The subject property is located along the highly commercialized Lawrenceville Suwanee Road corridor. To the east of the subject property, across Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road, is a daycare facility and fast food restaurant, zoned C-2A. To the south of the subject property is an M-1 zoned distribution/warehouse facility. To the west of the subject property is an undeveloped parcel zoned M-1. To the north of the subject property is the Suwanee Plaza shopping center, which contains various commercial/retail uses and is zoned C-2.

Automotive sales facilities are listed as a special use within the C-2 zoning district. The City's zoning ordinance does not differentiate between indoor and outdoor automotive sales. The applicant intends to lease a 2,400 SF suite (see attached site plan) within an existing 12,940 SF one-story metal commercial building located in the Merchants Landing shopping center. According to the applicant, future plans include an expansion into an adjoining suite resulting in a 3,200 SF vehicle showroom and office. The applicant also states that the business will include high end vehicle sales by appointment only with approximately 10 to 12 vehicles stored on-site at one time.

The City's Future Land Use Plan recommends mixed-use center for this site. The applicant will be utilizing existing, vacant shopping center space and will not be constructing any new buildings that would restrict the future redevelopment of the property as a mixed-use center. Furthermore, the site is in an intensive commercial area that is generally well-suited for an indoor automotive establishments. The addition of site specific conditions that ban the outdoor storage of vehicles and on-site service/maintenance/washing should result in a use that does not create negative impacts customarily associated with automotive uses.

In conclusion, the requested Special Use Permit for indoor automotive sales would be appropriate at this location. The subject property is located along the highly commercialized Lawrenceville Suwanee Road corridor and is surrounded by intensive non-residential uses. The applicant does not propose any exterior changes to the property or to conduct any business outdoors. As a result there should be no adverse impacts resulting from the approval of a special use permit for the site. Special attention should be given to ensure that the operation does not create potential harmful impacts resulting from outdoor storage and on-site automobile service/maintenance/washing. The Planning Department recommends **APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS** of the request.

Planning Department's Recommended Conditions
SUP-2010-001

Approval of a Special Use Permit for indoor automotive sales subject to the following conditions:

1. Special uses on the site shall be limited to indoor automotive sales. No other vehicular services or other special uses are allowed under this special use permit. No accessory activities such as car washing, auto repair, maintenance or other similar activities shall be permitted.
2. Indoor automotive sales shall be limited to a maximum area of 3,200 square feet as shown on attachment "C".
3. No outdoor storage is permitted.

Standards Governing Exercise of Zoning Power

Pursuant to Section 2006 of the City of Suwanee Zoning Ordinance, the City finds the following standards are relevant in balancing the interest in promoting the public health, safety, morality, or general welfare against the unrestricted use of property and shall govern the exercise of the zoning power therewith.

- A. Whether the zoning proposal will permit a use that is suitable in view of the use and development of adjacent and nearby property;

The subject area is heavily commercialized. The indoor automotive sales facility would be suitable at this location.

- B. Whether the zoning proposal will adversely affect the existing uses or usability of adjacent or nearby property;

With the recommended conditions, an indoor automotive sales facility would not be expected to negatively impact existing uses or usability of adjacent and nearby uses.

- C. Whether the property to be affected by the zoning proposal has a reasonable economic use as currently zoned;

The subject property has a reasonable economic use as currently zoned without a Special Use Permit.

- D. Whether the zoning proposal will result in a use which will or could cause an excessive or burdensome use of existing streets, transportation facilities, utilities or schools;

Approval of the request likely would not result in an excessive or burdensome use of existing streets, transportation facilities, utilities or schools.

- E. Whether the zoning proposal is in conformity with the policy and intent of the Land Use Plan;

The Future Land Use Plan recommends mixed use center for the site. The proposal does not include any exterior changes or new construction that would restrict the future redevelopment of the site.

- F. Whether there are other existing or changing conditions affecting the use and development of the property which give supporting grounds for either approval or disapproval of the zoning proposal;

There are no extraordinary or changing conditions which give additional support for approval of the request.