LOCAL NEWS

Event center worries Clemson residents

Traffic, noise main concerns of those opposing plan for a pavilion

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CLEMSON — Traffic and noise were the predominant issues raised Tuesday night by residents who live near a proposed event center in Clemson.

Stephen Sefick owns 32 acres off Pendleton Road and wants the city to rezone 19 of those acres from single-family residential to a neighborhood commercial classification.

Sefick said he wants to build a pavilion that would be rented or leased for private events. He also said an eating and drinking establishment could be included on the site.

Last month, the city's planning commission recommended that the City Council reject the rezoning request, based on a recommendation from the city's planning staff.

In its report, the staff said rezoning the 19 acres wouldn't be compatible with the site's flood-way designation. The property is bounded to the south by the Eighteen Mile Creek.

Most of the 10 people who spoke publicly at the hearing echoed the fears expressed by Mark Ward. The Forest Hill subdivision resident said the proposal for the property would put more traffic on an already busy Pendleton Road.

Norman Ellis voiced similar concerns about the increase in traffic, especially at the Pendleton Road-Issaqueena Trail intersection, which is expected to see more traffic once Lowe's opens this month.

Clemson Councilman Jim Oswald said that issue would need to be addressed regardless of whether Sefick's property is eventually developed.

"We will need a traffic light there," Oswald said.

Robert Seal, who lives in the Heatherwood subdivision, said the development "could be an exciting and interesting public space."

In its recommendation to the full council, the planning staff suggested Sefick resubmit his proposal as a planned development, "which would allow a creative approach that best utilizes the qualities of the property."

Sefick said he's just in the beginning stages of the approval process and that he is open to changing the plan.

During the regular council meeting held following the hearing, the council agreed to vote at its next meeting in two weeks on a law that would ban texting while driving.