

## **'International Village' gets hostile reception**

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### **Body**

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DeKalb Chamber of Commerce leaders, touting an "**International Village**," **got** a **hostile reception** recently from Doraville residents who say their area has already absorbed its share of immigrants.

"If the area's already diversifying, and this is so good, then why don't they have the '**Village**' somewhere else which isn't as diverse?" homeowner Dena Hubbard asked.

Chamber leaders, in an informational session with about 100 residents, answered that a defacto **International Village** already exists in the Chamblee-Doraville area, in which some census tracts are more than 50 percent foreign-born. The challenge is to enhance and upgrade the area, by adding facilities, parks, and a more pedestrian-friendly atmosphere, they said.

Resident Russell Frankofsky said a major concern was that special **village** zoning may allow merchants to live and work in the same buildings, causing potential for urban blight.

Ray Kemper, the chamber's director of **international** business, replied that the planned **Village** area, between the MARTA north rail line, Buford Highway, and Chamblee Tucker Road, includes few residential areas.

"No one but your (city) councilmen can change zoning," he said.

Frankofsky challenged claims that the **village** will create jobs, saying the area needs major investors, not smaller retailers.

"If it's Sony, Mizuno, or Siemens, that's the kind of investment we want," he said, adding that the area already has enough restaurants.

But Kemper said attracting major **international** investment to DeKalb, by demonstrating a welcoming attitude, is a primary purpose of the **village**.

When a Dunwoody resident said she had welcomed newcomer Japanese and Chinese neighbors, Doraville resident Robert Blossit, Jr. shouted "They don't even want a Publix (supermarket) in Dunwoody."

Chamber President Parker Hardy said he hopes the **village** concept can attract shoppers and visitors from around the nation to the area's unique mixture of Korean, Chinese, Hispanic, Southeast Asian and other businesses. Although officials currently have no funds set aside for completion of major facilities before the 1996 Olympics, they hope to establish the area as an attraction through advertising, signage and other strategies, in time for the event.

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