

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF GEORGIA
ATLANTA DIVISION

NEW GENERATION CHRISTIAN
CHURCH,

Plaintiff,

v.

ROCKDALE COUNTY, GEORGIA,

Defendant.

CIVIL ACTION NO.

1:12-cv-02138-JEC

ORDER & OPINION

New Generation Christian Church ("plaintiff") filed suit against Rockdale County, Georgia ("defendant") for violations of the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 2000cc - 2000cc-5; the Fourteenth Amendment; and the First Amendment. (See Compl. [1] at ¶¶ 62-140.) Plaintiff alleges that defendant's zoning code has illegally and unconstitutionally compromised its free religious exercise by, in various ways, preventing plaintiff from renting real estate for conducting religious services.

The Court has recently issued a ruling on plaintiff's motion to amend the pleadings [38] and defendant's motion to amend the pleadings [41]. In doing so, the Court has also reviewed the parties' respective motions and briefs for summary judgment. Those motions remain pending.

Having reviewed these motions, the Court believes that the parties might be able to resolve their differences without the need for further litigation. Accordingly, the Court directs the parties to undergo mediation of their remaining disputes. The parties may retain a private mediator or the Court will refer the mediation to a magistrate judge to conduct. The parties shall advise the Court by **April 18, 2014**, which option they prefer.

Thereafter, the Court will allow a 60-day period for mediation. The pending motions for summary judgment ([32, 34]) will be **DENIED WITHOUT PREJUDICE**. Should the mediation prove unsuccessful, these motions will be reopened and ruled upon, based on the present briefing.

SO ORDERED, this 31st day of March, 2014.

/s/ Julie E. Carnes
JULIE E. CARNES
CHIEF UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE