

RC track given more time for races

Written by MARK JAEGER
Wednesday, 26 May 2010 17:11

Agreement says louder cars will be restricted to earlier in the evening

CRC Hobbies gained a few more concessions from Town of Fredonia officials last week for the operation of its outdoor track for radio-controlled cars.

A conditional-use hearing was held before the Town Board on the request by Gary and Ellie Uselding for more leeway on the use of the clay track created behind their business, Fredonia Automotive, at W3982 Hwy. H.

The Useldings built the track for RC car racing in memory of their son Chad, who died in a traffic accident in 2006. A longtime enthusiast of model racing, his dream was to operate a track and promote radio-controlled racing in the area.

Development has been a gradual process, with construction of the semi-banked, oval track, followed by the installation of temporary lighting.

High-tech clay was used on the track surface to minimize dust. Plantings and fences are being installed to further screen the site from neighbors.

Although an outdoor public-address system has been used, the family said final steps are being taken to switch to FM transmitters and headsets to give instructions and updates to drivers.

With those measures in mind, the family asked that practice hours be allowed from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. on Mondays through Thursdays.

In addition, they asked that competitive racing be allowed on Fridays and Saturdays during those same hours, in addition to one Saturday a month from 10 a.m. to midnight and on Sundays from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

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The Useldings' on Kyle said extended hours would only be used a couple time during the race season, but the family wants to avoid repeated appearances before the Town Board.

"We met with most of the neighbors and told them what we want to do. We don't want to be a nuisance and we are trying to keep everyone as happy as we can," Uselding said.

To minimize dust, he said most competitive racing is done after sunset, when it is easier to keep the track surface damp.

However, Uselding said the night hours are not intended to prolong the amount of time hobbyists hang out at the track.

"Most of these guys have spent thousands of dollars to be here. It is pretty serious for them. They don't come here to drink beer and sluff off," he said.

The track's conditional-use permit prohibits the sale or consumption of alcoholic beverages on the premises.

Uselding said the late-night racing would probably come into play only twice a year. The track is scheduled to host 10 races this year.

The biggest racing event at the facility is the annual Chad "Chezwik" Uselding Memorial Race, which will be held this year on Friday and Saturday, July 9 and 10.

Hundreds of drivers from as far away as North Carolina and Tennessee, compete in 10 categories of remote-controlled vehicles.

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"I really had no idea where we were going when we started the track. Who knew it would become the premier RC track in the Midwest," Uselding said.

A stipulation in the conditional-use permit says that louder vehicles will be raced earlier in the evening.

The wording in the updated permit described the noise made by the loudest racers, the nitro cars, as a "buzzing bee sound."

That description drew scoffs from one resident.

"It is an annoying, deafening sound," the neighbor said.

The Town Board unanimously approved the revised permit, but not without some cautionary comment.

"The conditional-use permit has changed significantly since the beginning," said Supr. Chris Janik.

"I don't want the neighbors to feel pressured into putting up with this. The difference between 10 p.m. and midnight is a pretty big change. The changes have been coming a little bit at a time, but at some point it is not going to be OK."