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Article published Feb 1, 2008
Motocross doesn't belong at Expoland

On Dec. 6, a meeting held before the Augusta County Board of Zoning Appeals to hear a proposal for an off-road motor bike track on the Expoland property attracted a crowd and generated heated arguments from both sides.

The proposal is contrary to everything we have been told about the original purposes of Expoland. Was it not created to showcase local agricultural and business ventures? Instead, a decision to allow this motocross track would be like the local residents' most unbearable evenings of the year: the Monster Truck Pulls.

Currently, the neighbors must endure only a couple of evenings a year of bellowing engines and roaring crowds. The motorbikes would fill our quiet world with an incessant racket for about 200 days every year.

The "noise demonstration" held on the morning of the meeting did not represent even a fraction of the uproar that an actual event of this kind produces. The promoters of the track have been liberal in their assurances that they will take measures to reduce the noise, but what guarantees do the neighbors have that it will remain within an acceptable level?

Within a half-mile of the proposed site are churches, homeowners, the Augusta Medical Center and the county's most recent treasure: a much-needed Hospice House for the terminally ill. Many of the patients' patios open toward Expoland.

A week before the meeting to discuss this proposal, the board of supervisors asked us what type of growth we wish to see in the area. Has the board seriously considered the impact that such a track would have, not only on the existing area homes, but on homes that will never be built because no one would choose to live near so much dirt and noise?

We ask that the Board of Zoning Appeals take a careful look at the proposed development, including all of the lives that would be adversely affected by it. If the promoters of this track wish to build a place for kids to enjoy this sport, let them find a site where residents and patrons of so many facilities are not forced to suffer for the sake of their fun.
