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Rezoning OK'd for Dawsonville motorsports park

By [MICHELLE E. SHAW](#)
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The third time was the charm for supporters of a proposed motorsports park in Dawsonville.

After tabling the issue twice, the Dawsonville City Council on Monday night unanimously approved the rezoning of more than 152 acres of land off Duck Thurmond Road for the Atlanta Motorsports Park.

Opponents, dressed in red, outnumbered the blue-clad development supporters by more than two to one, but the council was not swayed.

"The council took three months on it," said Joe Lane Cox, mayor of Dawsonville. "We studied it and we gave both sides equal time."

The project's developer, Jeremy Porter of Cumming, said the development will be a "country club for car enthusiasts." The motor park is expected to consist of 3.14 miles of track broken up over three courses and many amenities that traditional country clubs have, including tennis courts, a swimming pool and walking trails.

Opponents voiced concerns about noise and [traffic](#), but the 22 stipulations attached to the zoning approval address most of those issues, said Dana B. Miles, the city attorney.

The development must have, among other things, buffers to reduce sound and sound monitoring equipment that is to be used during operating hours. The stipulations also call for an updated noise study before a business license or certificate of occupancy is issued.

Porter hopes to break ground in 60 to 90 days. Those opposed to the project hope to delay any construction for months, if not years to come.

"This is far from over," said West Hamryka, who has a horse farm across the street from the proposed development. He said he's consulted an attorney about suing the city of Dawsonville "for this improper zoning."

Miles, the city attorney, said the city has done nothing wrong in rezoning the property, and he will vigorously defend the city if a suit is filed.

Mayor Cox said he thinks the development will be good for the city, and not as much of a nuisance as many of those opposed to the park think.

Hamryka is not so sure, and says this is the beginning of the end for Dawsonville and its land-use plan.

“They worked on this plan for two years or so, and by doing this they are just throwing it out,” he said, adding that the plan called for the land to be zoned residential. While the vote was “expected,” he said, he’s not going to take it sitting down.

“We do expect this to go on for a long time,” he said.