

Youbou go-karts off track permanently

PERMISSION DENIED: CVRD rejects karts amid directors' claims of vote-trading, backroom politics and lies

AARON BICHARD
staff reporter

The Capital City Kart Club's lobbying attempts ran out of gas Wednesday as the Cowichan Valley Regional District denied its request for a temporary-use permit for the second, and final, time.

Chair Mary Marcotte brought the motion to deny the application from the last board meeting back due to a petition signed by nine directors — four electoral area directors and five municipal directors — requesting a second kick at the can.

Only the nine electoral directors were eligible to vote on the permit issuance but some municipal directors felt the integrity of the board had been called into question amidst accusations of underhanded politicking.

"My real concern is about the allegations of vote trading," Duncan Mayor Mike Coleman

said, adding the board needs to make a decision and move ahead.

Cobble Hill Director John Middleton was thought by proponents of the permit to be the swing vote that would alter the board's previous decision but, due to what he described as an effort to help find a solution that ended with him being accused of vote trading, he couldn't support the club.

"I am going to support this motion because I won't be bludgeoned into a decision by lies," he said.

Marcotte, too, spoke of being threatened into making a decision but stuck with her original vote to deny the application.

"I've been told that if I were to run for chair again I will not be elected," Marcotte said. "My palms have not been greased. I am not against go-karts. I simply want go-karts to be on land properly zoned for their use."

The case built by directors

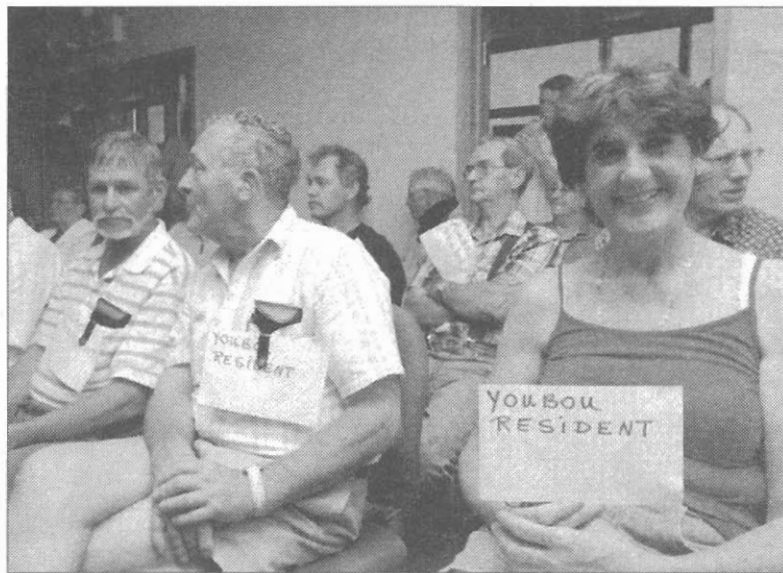
Rene Beaudin, Joe Allan, Mike Tansley and Rick Spencer as to why the club should be granted an extension until the end of the year on the Youbou industrial property focused on providing activities for youth.

The opposition came from residents who couldn't stand the noise of the miniature racecars barreling around the track.

"Youth development is what I'm interested in and, as far as I know, youth development is a noisy process," Shawnigan Lake Director Spencer said. "None of us like noise but we all like to see our kids excel."

Youbou Director Brooke Hodson, supported by a gallery full of citizens wearing "Youbou resident" signs on their shirts, questioned why the original decision to deny the application was being revisited.

"For what substantive reason has this been brought back?" he asked. "If it's an issue of integri-



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Linda Bjur was one of the many Youbou residents who showed up to hear the final verdict on the revival of the Capital City Kart Club's application.

ty, why did we have to reconsider?

"The people of Youbou are tired of getting attacked verbally and attacked abusively."

The vote came down to a 5-4 decision to deny the temporary-use permit and staff said the issue is now over, as reconsider-

ing can only be done once.

The 30-plus club supporters who awaited the decision in the halls were unimpressed with the decision.

The club is currently looking for a new permanent home but is unlikely to race for the remainder of the season.