

Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League

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Noise from Mountain View Speedway Harmful to Boone Quality of Life

Today the Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League released a report on sound pollution and called on the Town of Boone to protect residents from excessive levels of noise from stock car races at the newly opened auto speedway on Roby Green Road. The report, “Noisy Neighbors—Sound Pollution in the High Country”, reveals the hazards to mental and physical well-being of residents in neighborhoods near the track.

Harvard Ayers, an Appalachian State University professor and a spokesperson for the Watauga Citizens for Local Control, said that area residents have been dealing with deterioration in their quality of life since the race track began operating last spring. Dr. Ayers said, “Data gathering completed by local residents in 2015 indicated a serious problem. This report presents a case for immediate action by local officials to reduce or eliminate the loud, disruptive noise which has affected its residents and caused Watauga Citizens for Local Control to take action.” Ayers said that residents have voiced their concerns to Town of Boone officials through petitions, letters, phone calls, and appearances at municipal meetings.

Lou Zeller, Executive Director of the Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League, presented the group’s report. He said, “Like acid rain, ozone and other contaminants, noise is a pollutant, and excessive noise leads to health problems including high blood

pressure and even heart disease. Being unable to sleep or carry on a normal conversation in your home robs a family of the sanctuary which is their home.”

The group played recordings of the actual speedway sounds taken at a group member’s home. Shelley Parsons, a member of Watauga Citizens for Local Control, said “The roar of the racetrack, measured at 90 to 100 decibels is the equivalent of having a jack hammer operating beside you.” She said she and her neighbors are unable to carry on a normal life when the track is operating. She said that in addition to Saturday races, the track also ran weekday practice sessions, even on school nights. Parsons added, “We are not ‘anti-race track.’ Families simply want peace in their homes again.”

The group has hired an attorney to present their case to the Boone Board of Adjustments on January 28. Residents of the communities of Hidden Hills, Locust Hills, Seven Oaks and East Ridge Neighborhoods have banded together and are asking for donations to Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League to help cover legal bills.

Watauga Citizens for Local Control is a chapter of the Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League, a regional organization with chapters and projects in seven states. The League was founded in the High Country in 1984 to stop a nuclear waste dump.

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