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Friends, family and supporters of Tim DaSilva, the Milton man who died two years ago building a BMX track at Halton Place, were at the Niagara Escarpment Commission office in Georgetown Thursday hoping the NEC would stay an order to remove the track. The Commission voted to uphold the order, so the track has to be flattened by August 20.

Photo by Lisa Tallyn

NEC: Track must be removed

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the landowner attempted to get approval for it to growing marijuana in one of his fields and having it remain standing while he tried to get the government to legalize it.

"It was pushing the envelope by creating some form of connection between BMX and growing pot in his field," said Pearson.

She added they plan to rebuild the BMX track to DaSilva's exact specifications if the NEC grants approval for a track at Halton Place.

DaSilva's sister, Jessica Medeiros, did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

Prior to the vote at the NEC meeting, Halton Place owner Timur Leckebusch said he didn't obtain a permit for the track "due to the fact we didn't know we needed one."

Along with the NEPA, Halton Place had recently filed a development permit application to temporarily recognize the site work done to build the track without a permit. Halton Place's intent was to have the NEC stay or set aside the restoration order it had directed NEC staff issue back in May until it was determined if the amendment would be approved.

At the meeting, Commission member Don Alexander of St. Catharines asked if there was any technical reason the track couldn't be taken down and re-installed two years later if the application is approved.

Leckebusch said it would be a waste of resources and, "the emotional and financial loss is obvious." But he said he would comply with the order.

Following the meeting, Leckebusch called the outcome, "the second human tragedy regarding this track."

He believes the outcome was a sort of back-

lash against him.

"What we're doing is tourism-oriented agriculture. I think there are some older members on the Commission who don't want to acknowledge that. Joan Little is one of them."

NEC member Little of Burlington moved the staff recommendation calling for the restoration order to remain intact, and said, "my heart is with the BMX people in a sense."

But she said she feels a responsibility for the neighbours of Halton Place who are "facing escalating commercialization on this particular property."

With Halton Place already holding 40 days of equestrian events during the summer, Little said adding BMX events would result in the neighbours not having any quiet time.

"My heart has to be with people who have bought homes in that area," said Little.

NEC Halton Region member Alan Elgar, who also supported the staff recommendation, said it was "most unfortunate" the Halton Place owners didn't even entertain getting NEC approval before building the track, and that he felt bad for the DaSilva family.

NEC Niagara Region member Michael Collins said with the "tangible show of support of young people and their families" and the fact there has been a NEPA filed he would rather wait to enforce the order until Halton Place has its "day in court."

Two other Halton Place neighbours, Mike Shantz and Ron Morin, spoke at the meeting in support of the NEC's restoration order for the track.

"I hope you guys are proud of yourselves," one of the BMX supporters said as he was leaving the meeting to the Halton Place neighbours.

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