



February 15 2023

Dear Board Members of the Beaver Valley Development Group,

We are writing on behalf of a coalition of community groups and businesses who share a concern for protecting the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Biosphere, the Niagara Escarpment, the natural environment of the Beaver Valley and specifically the Talisman site.

We are thankful for the opportunity to learn more of Beaver Valley Development Group's (BVDG) plans at the public meeting on December 8th, appreciate your willingness to engage with the community to this point and were disappointed that further consultation with the community was cancelled. We also appreciate that we are at an early stage of the development application process and that the plans presented in early December were preliminary.

We know you heard significant opposition from the community at that meeting and we would like to take this opportunity to articulate our main concerns in writing. We are hopeful that incorporation of community concerns early in this process will lead to substantive changes that the community may be able to support.

While we acknowledge the existing Escarpment Recreation designation in the Niagara Escarpment Plan (NEP) permits residential development associated with the recreational use, development must also respect and protect the unique features of the Escarpment.

In our opinion, the proposed development of a 500-600 unit subdivision on the upper and lower portions of the former Talisman site is not consistent with the NEP objective to "provide for the maintenance of the Niagara Escarpment and land in its vicinity substantially as a continuous natural environment, and to ensure only such development occurs as is compatible with that natural environment."

Our concerns include:

1. **Significant negative impacts on the ecology and environment of the area**, including on wildlife corridors, sensitive natural habitats, biodiversity, and area hydrology and scenery: The highly sensitive hydrological and geological features of the site would make this development problematic. The lower lands are subject to regular flooding.
2. **Risk to municipal water supply and groundwater** - In the upper lands there is probable karst geology and a source water protection zone required to protect highly vulnerable aquifers that feed our municipal water supply. There is a clear risk of groundwater contamination with development on the upper site at the densities proposed.
3. **The intensification of development outside of any settlement area** as defined by local Official Plans. Updated Grey County projections for resident growth in all of Grey Highlands are for 620 units by 2046 and call for this to be focused in primary and secondary settlement areas. The Talisman property is not in a settlement area so this development proposal proposes far too many units in the wrong location and does not represent good planning.
4. **The lack of access to services**, as the proposed development would approach the size of Markdale in terms of units, yet has none of its services, such as schools, health care facilities, groceries or other retail. Residents would have to drive elsewhere for services, increasing traffic and contributing to an increased carbon footprint for Grey County. The increase in population beyond planning projections would lead to more demand on local public services, such as health care and education which are already strained and do not have the capacity for this level of growth in this timeframe.

On a related note, while BVDG has assured the community that it will pay for all infrastructure upgrades required as a result of its development, such as for upgrades to the water and sewage systems, paving and bridge upgrades along Road 7A and others, details of how BVDG would guarantee this remain scarce. In addition, there would be ongoing costs which would impact future municipal operating and capital budgets.

Finally, the BVDG proposed plan to this point only incorporates half of the entire Talisman site, the portion it owns on the upper and lower lands, while the middle portion including the escarpment brow, slope, and old lodge buildings are owned by a different company. A lack of a comprehensive plan for the entire Talisman site could lead to incompatible and uncoordinated developments, and undermine infrastructure planning. Any studies carried out for the BVDG proposal, such as for hydrology, natural heritage, traffic and hydrogeologic issues, should anticipate the potential development of the middle parcel, and should be comprehensive of the entire site.

In conclusion, the community and our coalition have serious and legitimate concerns about the scope, scale, location and nature of your proposed development, as detailed above. The fact that there is considerable opposition is not surprising given these concerns. We hope that this letter provides you with a summary of the central issues as you consider your future options.

We would be very happy to work with you on an alternative plan that addresses the concerns identified in this letter. We also would respectfully request the opportunity to review and provide comments on any studies related to the development proposal you are preparing.

Sincerely,



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Protecting Talisman Lands Association  
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With the support of:

Bruce Harbinson, President, *Escarpment Corridor Alliance*  
*Kimberley Safety Group*  
*Kimberley Community Association*  
*Grey Highlands Climate Action Group*  
Amy and Patrick Kitchen, *Side Road Farm*  
Gary Ikona, *Artemesia Cheese*  
Sean Adler, *Flying Chestnut Kitchen*  
Mandy Russell, *Garage 13*  
Lynn Thordarson and Catherine Gaudet, *Kimberley Valley Farms*  
Chris Reid and Caity Holmes, *Savvy Co*  
Holger Majorahn and Jennifer Stenberg, *Arts on Ten*  
David Ammonite, *Chicory Common*  
Julia Boutenko, *Danby House*  
Shawn Ankenmann, *Highland Grounds*  
Hilary Breadner, *Hilary Breadner Graphics*  
Benoit Dube, *Hope Haven Therapeutic Riding Centre*

Brandon Bannon and Andrea Cormack, *Marilynne Food Co. Ltd*  
Kimberley and Jamie Lewis, *Markdale Florist*  
Jeremy Rhodes and Tara Bailey, *Elephant Thoughts*  
Lesley and Michael Telfser  
Johannes Schreider, *Saugeen Country Dairy*  
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Sarah Tacoma, *Bloem Botanicals*  
Melissa O'Grady and Mike Flewelling, *Viahaus Management*  
Kristie and Brendan Woods, *Woods Wildscaping*  
David Nelms, *The Jasper Stuart House*  
Martha Rogers, *The Valley Preservery*  
Kathleen Heithorn-Althoff, *Blossom Country*  
Read Hilton and Gail Crawford, *Chestnut Park Real Estate Limited Brokerage*  
Rachel Kwan, *Euclid Design*  
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Julie Schweiser, *Georgian Bay Mind and Body*  
Pauline Craig, *Lacewing Plants*  
Frank and Pam Stemmler, *Stemmler Honey*  
Eli McFaddyen, *Funky Ferments*  
Megan Silk, *Gingerbug Brew*  
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Monique Bokya-Mboyo, *On the Map Distribution*  
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Richard and Gale O'Brien, *Uncle Richard's Maple Syrup*  
Laurie Cochrane, *Laurie Cochrane Design*  
Lauren Hambleton, *Red Hen Artisanale*  
Dave Marshak, *Dave Marshak Studio*  
Frances Loughhead, *Frances Beatty Photography*  
Melanie Rosen, *Kimbuktu Guest House and Retreat*  
Mary Ferguson, *Eko Nomos*  
Shirley Daly and Richard Frisbee, *Tansy Farm*  
Helena Johnson, *Appletop Farm*  
Michael Schmidt, *Symphony in the Barn*  
Beverley Smith, *Holy Crow Beads*  
Justin Howe, *Justin's Oven*  
Ben Caesar, *Fiddlehead Nursery*  
Stacie Howe, *Kimberley General Store*  
Jeff Barrett and Ali Bush, *Blue Mountain Wild School*