

KEEP THE BEAVER VALLEY GREEN
Positions of the Protecting Talisman Lands Association, August 2022

Our **overall goal is to promote the natural environment of the Niagara Escarpment, particularly in and around the Talisman site.** This will protect significant environmentally sensitive lands within a UNESCO-designated biosphere, preserve agricultural lands, protect the Beaver River watershed, allow for low-impact recreational opportunities for the public, and support local businesses.

We believe that land which is **currently undeveloped should remain undeveloped.** This includes:

- Lands around the Beaver River, including the riverbanks and all of the former Talisman golf course. Preserve these lands as publicly accessible, natural green space and as a flood protection zone
- Lands at the top of the Escarpment slope, immediately north of Sideroad 7A. Preserve these lands for rural agricultural use and to protect the quality and supply of water which would be adversely affected by development on sensitive karst geology
- The former ski hill and the brow of the Escarpment. Maintain public access to outstanding views of the Beaver Valley and Georgian Bay

Any development that is proposed should:

- Be located at existing building sites of the former Talisman resort
- Be at similar footprints and densities as the former Talisman resort
- Be built to the highest environmental standards, such as LEED platinum
- Respect to the highest degree the surrounding natural environment and natural heritage features
- Not require expansion of the current sewage treatment system
- Not affect current water quality or long-term sustainability of water supply
- Not require taxpayers to fund enhancements to infrastructure, such as water, sewage and roads or any of the required studies, that may be associated with new development
- Spare taxpayers from any increases in utility or tax rates related to infrastructure required by new development
- Preserve Sideroad 7A as an unpaved, seasonal light-traffic road
- Require a new, comprehensive floodplain study to replace the outdated study (1997) still being used by Grey Sauble Conservation Authority
- Allow for public access at the brow of the Escarpment to enjoy the outstanding views of the Beaver Valley and Georgian Bay. Provide for continued and sustained passage for the Bruce Trail at the brow of the Escarpment

We believe that our municipal and provincial government bodies, being the Municipality of Grey Highlands, the County of Grey, the Niagara Escarpment Commission and the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority, should:

- Lead and meaningfully engage citizens in the planning process and not abdicate this crucial role to the developer
- Create a site plan for the Talisman lands that provides a comprehensive, logical, environment-first planning approach to the entire site, including lands owned by separate owners

- Treat all stakeholders with respect and provide the same information and staff resources to community members that are provided to land developers and regulatory authorities
- Proactively inform interested community members and residents beyond the minimum requirements of the Planning Act and the Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act
- Be timely, transparent and consistent in communications

Background

There are currently two owners of the former Talisman resort and adjacent lands. The buildings, the former ski slope and the brow of the Escarpment are owned by Brian Ellis. He has stated that he wants to revitalize the resort to provide hotel accommodations, a restaurant, a conference centre and a spa. The second owner, Westway Capital, recently renamed as Beaver Valley Development Group (BVDG), owns the former golf course near the Beaver River and the agricultural lands immediately adjacent to the brow of the Escarpment and north of Sideroad 7A. They have stated that they plan to develop these two parcels but have not yet provided any details.