

The  
Flasherton  
Advance

## Letter to the Editor

### AN OPEN LETTER TO GREY HIGHLANDS COUNCIL

Congratulations to all on your recent appointment to Council.

I appreciate your desire to serve the people of Grey Highlands with a vision for longterm health and prosperity, and I understand that the Talisman Lands are a big issue facing you in the next while.

I hope that you will take strong leadership and engage in thoughtful public consultation, as we are a community rich in talented professionals and forward-thinking individuals.

I am writing to express my deep concern for the scale of development being considered for the Talisman Lands.

This concern is not stemming from a desire to keep people out of the Beaver Valley; on the contrary, my husband Justin and I have built a large part of our business on seasonal tourism and the influx of people into the area.

We have seen incredible growth in the past 10 years. This is not an area that needs "revitalization"; this is an area that needs its growth to be wisely managed.

I often see phrases such as "Gateway to the Beaver Valley" and pictures of Old Baldy used to promote Grey Highlands as a whole.

I know that tourism matters to Council, as it is extremely important for our economic vitality. I speak to many people who come through the Valley and I know the reasons that they come: the Valley is a gem for nature tourism and a mecca for those drawn to the beauty of the Niagara Escarpment.

They come for the same reasons that have us designated as a UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve. What tourists will not come for is a landscape marred by residential development that is the same as all the other developments we are

becoming very familiar with. In fact, this scale of development actually puts our Biosphere designation in jeopardy.

Why put an estimated 500 new homes a full 10-minute drive from the nearest urban centre, and do such damage to the Valley's tourism? This is the antithesis of what modern urban planners propose for healthy development. It doesn't make any sense from an infrastructure and services viewpoint.

Already we have traffic problems in the village, and the potential of a tripling of the number of vehicles, including construction traffic that may last for years, is at a scale that is almost incomprehensible.

As you are most likely well aware, this development is being proposed simply because there is a loophole; the Niagara Escarpment Plan would never have designated the Talisman Lands as Recreation had the ski resort not already been in place.

To take that designation and use it to justify residential development at this scale feels very wrong.

You are not indebted to these developers to allow them to develop on lands that they purchased; your responsibility is to Grey Highlands residents to protect some of our last remaining natural landscapes.

I know these are arguments that you have heard in the past. It makes so much sense to me to keep residential developments out of the Niagara Escarpment and put them closer to urban centres that I am simply in shock that we have progressed this far with the developers.

When the applications for this construction come to the Council table, please do not permit this scale of development as we will never be able to go back.

- Stacie Howe, \*  
Kimberley.

Wed  
12/21/22

\* The  
Kimberley  
General Store  
\* Justin's Oven

Thanks  
Jesal  
+  
Gad