

Wed  
5/8/24

# Alliance group wants

The  
Flesherton  
Advance

## the Escarpment Plan changed

(by M.T. Fernandes, Local Journalism Initiative)

Escarpment Corridor Alliance last week released its own planning report on Beaver Valley lands.

At the same time, the group brought its concerns forward through a CBC News story and on Ontario Morning on May 1.

The group also produced its own press conference, saying it would be talking to the MNR about an amendment to the Niagara Escarpment Plan.

ECA Executive Director Jarvis Strong said in an email response to the Advance, "We've had a massive response so far with many people writing to Grey Highlands Council."

### CHANGE DESIGNATION

The group's goal is to "once and for all" take away legacy permissions for development allowed by the NEP Recreation designation.

ECA President Bruce Harbinson said during the press conference that those permissions "really now have morphed into what we believe are loopholes for inappropriate development along the Niagara Escarpment."

He also referred to another example in the recently-revived Castle Glen development, proposed 50 years ago in the former Township of Collingwood.

Lawyer for ECA, David Donnelly, said that the vision created by planner Public Architecture "puts those on the Niagara Escarpment Commission in a good position to say this is the wrong place for a new urban settlement."

The former Protecting Talisman Lands Association now is part of the ECA, which covers the whole Niagara Escarpment.

### DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The planning proposal from Beaver Valley Development Group suggests the lower Talisman lands site may contain about 370 units - townhouses and mixed development.

Other blocks were set out for natural heritage to be retained by the developer and for possible transfer to the Conservation Authority. These make up about 75 percent of the property.

The local municipality held Lower and Upper Talisman, due to arrears of former owners, and then sold them to Westway Capital. Since then, the project has moved forward under the name Beaver Valley Development Group.

Paul Mondell, of Skyline Blue



Bruce Harbinson  
President, ECA

Mountain Development, originally spoke to Grey Highlands council about the company's plans, along with others. He has offered comments publicly on behalf of BVDB since.

The company's plan refers to its desire for a sustainable project with public access to natural areas.

### CONCERN FOR ENVIRONMENT

Joel Loughead, who is a Grey Highlands councillor, was interviewed for a CBC story and spoke during the recorded press conference.

He has lived in Kimberley for about 10 years, and he said that the proposed development near the village was part of the reason he ran for council.

He called the 370 units "completely inappropriate use of this green space", and at odds with Grey Highlands strategic

plan pillars of respect for the environment.

The Escarpment Corridor Alliance has maintained that upgrade costs for servicing will burden taxpayers into the future. The group has raised concerns about the potential for environmental damage related to upgrades.

The position of ECA opposes any development outside of the original Talisman Lodge. That property has been separately owned by a numbered company associated with Brian Ellis and Phil Calvano.

### PLANS FOR FUTURE

The latest edition of the ECA e-newsletter provided a link to the Public City vision document.

It launched an appeal for \$50,000 to oppose what's proposed now for Lower Talisman. The campaign also encouraged people to email Grey Highlands councillors.

In the future, the group is planning to release another paper with a vision for a "broad ecological corridor right across the Niagara Escarpment in Southern Georgian Bay."

The Escarpment Corridor Alliance is holding an event for the public in Markdale on Saturday, May 11.

1:00 P.M.

Regards  
Pearl