
From: Obsidian Ridge <info@obsidianridge.ca>
Sent: September 29, 2023 10:03 AM
To: Meagan Walsh
Subject: Fwd: Letter for appeal hearing

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Devin [REDACTED]
Date: Tue, Sep 26, 2023 at 8:17 PM
Subject: Letter for appeal hearing
To: Obsidian Ridge <Info@obsidianridge.ca>

Devin Lorrain

[REDACTED]

Sept 26, 2023

Sub contractor for Obsidian ridge

7 yrs working with Obsidian ridge

I am writing this letter to bring to your attention the positive things Obsidian ridge has portrayed and will continue to promote.

My experience with employees and contractors that the business has hired is exceptionally good. Professionalism is key to successfully accomplishing what we have so far. Also communication, employee morale and management of tasks is many aspects of the business model which is key to long term growth in employees. They have a strong relationship with key staff members to ensure long term employment. Obsidian ridge has also employed local residents for certain key positions.

Obsidian ridge has applied for new permits to further expand on the property. In my opinion this will create many new opportunities for employment locally or abroad as well. This expansion will create traffic in the tourism sector. Which in turn will benefit other business in the local area. Obsidian ridge has the local community in mind

also. From keeping noise levels at a certain level during late hours as well as gate keepers to minimize late night traffic.

The business property is built in way that it blends into existing natural landscapes of the surrounding countryside. It has created new features and conserved natural features for wildlife habitat to thrive around a public area. The property is one of a kind when it comes to natural beauty.

Please consider the amount of time, effort and care that was taken into creating the grounds of Obsidian ridge. This dedication to detail will continue to be the goal of future endeavours that Obsidian ridge will strive to achieve.

I am happy to be apart of this growing company with ideas to expand in the future. The owner of Obsidian ridge has shown his employees, the public and the county respect and generosity to help achieve this operable business.

--

Layson LaFayette

Owner
Obsidian Ridge

t. [780.803.7679](tel:780.803.7679)

[Website](#) | [Email](#) | [Location](#)

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From: Dean Wheeler [REDACTED]
Sent: September 29, 2023 10:11 AM
To: Meagan Walsh
Subject: Re: This letter is concerning the current and potentially louder future noise concerns for this area of Beaver County, The original idea of moving in this area was for the peace and quiet and the wonderful nature incorporated in it

On Fri., Sep. 29, 2023, 9:32 a.m. Dean Wheeler, [REDACTED] wrote:

Now we are hearing Drums beating at bedtime , we are hearing fireworks at bedtime we are hearing people, at bedtime . The animals I used to watch and truly appreciate are gone , the old neighbor I had is gone , with more planning on a exit from the county.

I think it would be in the best interest of the County office and Public Intrest to curb the future development of this planned project by Kelly Lafayette, Plan # 020020 -23 -D0050. for if permitted to continue will devalue the surrounding properties and acreages.

Now if this project is approved by you then the first thing to be rectified should be the access road to obsidians driveway, the extra load put on 504 had deterrated the road to the point of almost impassable at times of wet weather, the area will need full water supply to combat potential fire situations, (highly likely with fireworks) ,that will in the end cost more than the country will benefit,

I could go on and on but you should be able to catch a drift from this letter that I'm, / we ,(neighbors) are not on side or for this development, Nip it in the bud now please before I put my land for sale too.,

Thank you
M.Dean Wheeler.

From: Wendy N [REDACTED]
Sent: September 28, 2023 8:37 PM
To: Meagan Walsh
Subject: Development Application 020020-23-D0050 (Obsidian Ridge)
Attachments: Obsidian Ridge Ltd.pdf

Meagan,

Attached is our written submission to the board regarding Development Application 020020-23-D0050.

Our contact information has been included below rather than on the attachment in order to avoid having to redact it in the document that will be posted on the website. If it needs to be included in the document, please let us know.

Paul Nawrocki
Wendy Novakowski



Dear Meagan,

This email is in regards to Development Application 020020-23-D0050, concerning Obsidian Ridge Ltd.

We live approximately 1 mile from the property in question and have watched the development of this property in recent years. We object to further development at this property for the following reasons:

Road access

Township Road 504 that runs past this property was not designed to handle the volume nor the weight of the traffic that now enters and leaves the property.

In addition, this increased traffic will require increased expenditures on road repairs in this area, something that is unlikely to happen with ever increasing pressure on the county budget due to rising costs and decreasing revenue.

Safety

The increased traffic in this area as a result of further development will, inevitably, lead to increased accidents, property vandalism, litter, etc. The traffic along both Spilstead Road and Range Road 203 is significant and many vehicles already do not adhere to the posted speed limits. In the five years that we have lived in the area, we have rarely seen vehicles stopped by the police despite us observing numerous traffic violations on a regular basis. Increased traffic late at night as a result of the potential approval of this application will only aggravate these problems.

Noise

Since Obsidian Ridge Ltd. began operation, we have noticed an increase in noise on the weekends when the facility is booked. Additional facilities will increase the size of the groups that can rent the facility and increase the noise problem.

At present, during the day, the Sherwood Park Fish and Game Association's gun range is already noisy enough, especially on weekends. Adding additional noise sources during the evening and weekends will mean that local residents will be disturbed starting at 8 am until after midnight (16-18 hrs per day).

Zoning

The area just east of the proposed development (within a mile) is "Rural Residential" with a significant population already located there. These residents have lived there for a long time and, similar to ourselves, likely chose this area as it was quiet and peaceful. Further expanding the property in question will inevitably result in conflicts with the surrounding neighbours.

As has already happened with the current development proposal, I fully expect that complaints will be made and will continue to be made to council about this development. Approving this additional development will only exacerbate the situation. In addition, if this additional development is approved, little action is likely to be able to be taken or possible to address local resident's concerns either now or in the future.

From: Richard A. Lee [REDACTED]
Sent: September 28, 2023 2:19 PM
To: Meagan Walsh; Richard A. Lee
Subject: Development permit 020020-23-D0050

We have some concerns about this development in the county. Why is the construction proceeding and some completed before any appeals have been addressed ? I looked at the the proposal and see that some buildings have already been completed, why?

I thought that this was zoned residential ? This will greatly impact neighbouring residents. Increased traffic, crime, noise and decreased property values. Permit states that no more than 300 people at a time, can you tell me how this will not affect the ZONED "Residential Neighbours" ?

What good is an appeals process if an applicant is allowed to proceed before appeals are addressed ? Is this setting a precedent for future development in the county ? Can I do the same and expect no recourse ?

We live far enough away that it won't impact us directly, other than the increase in people visiting the area, and the impact that will have on the area. We moved here for the peace and quiet and lack of commercial ventures in the area.

Thank you for your consideration.

Richard and Lori Lee
[REDACTED]

From: Lisa Davies [REDACTED]
Sent: September 29, 2023 10:46 AM
To: Meagan Walsh
Subject: Obsidian Ridge

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a resident who has lived on Spilstead Road at [REDACTED] for 20 years. I have many concerns regarding the proposed development of this property.

Firstly, much of this development seems to have already taken place without proper approval or permits. That is very disturbing to me as I have always believed that permission to build and develop must come first.

Secondly, there doesn't seem to be any controls or restrictions on the use of these buildings. There is no way to determine if these building meet the definition of "bed & breakfast". Who determines that? How do we know they will not become occupied on a full-time basis?

Thirdly, there are also no limits on the number of people, nor anyway to control this. There have been more than 200 people at an equestrian event held there. Are fire codes not enforced in this county?

Fourthly, the amount of additional traffic that this facility has already generated on Spilstead road is noticeable. My concern is there is no public transportation available to the 200+ people who have been celebrating with alcohol and drugs. They are leaving this facility in the dark on country roads.

As a long time resident of Beaver County I am opposed to this facility in its present state, and am certainly opposed to further expansion.

Thanks you

Lisa Davies

September 27, 2023

Obsidian Ridge
[REDACTED]

To Whom It May Concern:

It's my understanding that your recent development permit was appealed. We were shocked at this.

Your company and venue have created numerous jobs and opportunities for local businesses in the community. We appreciate your practice of employing youth workers with seasonal jobs. We know that you've contracted numerous companies including but limited to, food vendors, local artists, entertainers, construction, and landscaping. We thank you for continuing to support small businesses and the Alberta economy.

We believe the changes you are planning to make would be a boost to local tourism in the fall and winter seasons in addition to the summer months. We've had the pleasure of attending a few events at your location. The opportunity to stay for a night, weekend or longer will be grand; with the stunning prairie views, quiet reflecting spots and peaceful surroundings, it's truly a wonderful place to celebrate or relax and recuperate.

We look forward to your continued success and are in full support of this new development in the community.

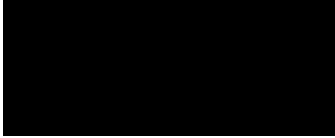
Sincerely,

Barbara Cassidy

Barbara Cassidy
[REDACTED]

Sept 27, 2023

Daniel Herrewynen



Dear Municipal Council:

Thank you for serving our county and thoughtfully weighing the needs of our citizens with the growth of our industries for many years. Now, there is before you an appeal to prevent the growth of Obsidian Ridge by a few residents; you have the task of balancing the concerns of these citizens with the needs for growth and quality of life for our community. I believe it is important to start this process with gratitude for those serving our community. So, thank you for your careful consideration.

I am writing in support of the proposed Obsidian Ridge Development Request. If permitted, Obsidian Ridge's new development will bring in more wealth to the county; moreover, the recognition that Obsidian has already brought to the county is substantial. It has put Beaver County "on the map" as a destination for local Albertans to enjoy our great outdoors and a place for communities to gather in nature.

There has been a concern about a greater than moderate increase in traffic which I would like to address. Obsidian Ridge has been important in my life, and I plan to be a future resident of Beaver County in 2024 with my future wife. As a potential customer of Obsidian Ridge, I have reviewed the wedding venue contract, and I know that I am not allowed to invite more than 200 people. The traffic will not affect residents down the Township Road as nearly all traffic will come from the north, main paved road. The amount of vehicles that flow to and from Obsidian Ridge on an average day is much less than 100 vehicles. This is due to the hard work and initiative shown by the staff of Obsidian. The venue works with shuttle bus companies to provide transportation in a way that mitigates large influxes of traffic to the area. Additionally, no vehicles are permitted to park on the township road; all traffic is required to park within designated parking zones within the venue.

The owner of Obsidian is mindful of the noise level at night and monitors the sound with decibel level meters on site. Digital decibels meters are visible to all musicians and dj's who use the site. The owner visits the venue to check sound levels and the event status regularly. There is a gun range next to the venue. I have heard shots going off during



wedding ceremonies. This level of noise is deemed acceptable by surrounding neighbours, so I have an understanding that this is what is to be expected in an agricultural district. My expectation as a wedding venue patron has to be in line with community activities.

I **sincerely thank you** for your service to our county.

Sincerely,

Daniel Herrewynen

Meagan Walsh

From: Obsidian Ridge <info@obsidianridge.ca>
Sent: September 26, 2023 10:45 AM
To: Meagan Walsh
Subject: Fwd: viewpoint of Obsidian Ridge.
Attachments: image001.jpg

----- Forwarded message -----

From: <don@encoretrucking.ca>
Date: Tue, Sep 26, 2023 at 10:11 AM
Subject: viewpoint of Obsidian Ridge.
To: Obsidian Ridge <info@obsidianridge.ca>

Greetings. After a tour of Obsidian Ridge a month ago, it was obvious there had been enormous strides in developing the area. I had seen the amphitheatre when it was barely completed. It was raining, the roads were a muddy adventure, ye the site was fine; our grassy parking area, not perfect but alright. There was music playing and it was a fun night in a setting that gave it a unique feel.

Today that feeling is amplified by the Greek Delphi feel of the stone and grassed theatre. This is exactly the unique event setting that a county, mere meters from a large vibrant city needs to have, to attract people, business.

This stone build, pulled from the heart of ancient Greek culture, is a brilliant creation of a local man. A creation that we need to support. Obsidian is a terrific idea that can only get better. It is the kind of business that uses the natural beauty of the county as a showcase for a truly unique venue.

We need to help this organization by listening to any dissenting voices and looking for ways to resolve their issues.

My son and Layson LaFayette are close, and myself a minor player, a tourist if you will; only lately acquainted with the site, and Layson.

But I see a creative spirit that has accomplished much, and heeds watching. We have a dreamer in the house and he is looking at the stars.

Regards,

Don Lucas, Director



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don@encoretrucking.ca

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Layson LaFayette

Owner

Obsidian Ridge

t. [780.803.7679](tel:780.803.7679)

[Website](#) | [Email](#) | [Location](#)

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From: Obsidian Ridge <info@obsidianridge.ca>
Sent: September 26, 2023 10:44 AM
To: Meagan Walsh
Subject: Fwd: Letter of Support - Beaver County Council
Attachments: Obsidian Ridge - Letter of Support.pdf

see attached

----- Forwarded message -----

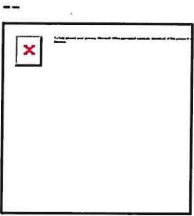
From: Jashan Sandhu <jashan@evolvecpas.ca>
Date: Sat, Sep 23, 2023 at 9:30 AM
Subject: Letter of Support - Beaver County Council
To: <info@obsidianridge.ca>

Hi Layson,

Hope you're doing well.

Please see attached for my Letter of Support as requested. All the best in your efforts!

Best regards,
Jashan



Jashan Sandhu, CPA | Partner

a: #600 - 5241 Calgary Trail NW
Edmonton, AB | T6H 5G8
e: jashan@evolvecpas.ca
w: evolvecpas.ca
m: (780) 235-2587

The information contained in this communication is confidential and intended only for the use of those to whom it is addressed. If you have received this communication in error, please notify me by telephone and delete or destroy any copies of it. Thank you in advance.

--
Layson LaFayette

Owner
Obsidian Ridge

t. [780.803.7679](tel:780.803.7679)

[Website](#) | [Email](#) | [Location](#)

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September 23, 2023

Subject: Letter of Support for Obsidian Ridge - A Valuable Community Asset

Dear Beaver County Council,

I hope this letter finds you in good health. I am writing to express my strong support for Obsidian Ridge, an exquisitely landscaped outdoor wedding and event venue located in Beaver County, Alberta. It has come to my attention that Obsidian Ridge's development permit is currently facing a legal challenge by appeal, and I feel compelled to offer my endorsement for this remarkable establishment and their development plans.

As a Chartered Public Accountant and a Partner at Evolve Chartered Professional Accountants, I have had the privilege of working closely with Obsidian Ridge, particularly with its owner and operator, Mr. Layson LaFayette. Over the years, we have had the opportunity to gain a deep understanding of Obsidian Ridge's financial operations, and we can vouch for its unwavering commitment to lawful and ethical business practices.

Mr. LaFayette's is a trustworthy, considerate, and highly principled individual who has consistently demonstrated his dedication to not only maintaining the highest standards in his business but also contributing positively to his community. His actions speak volumes about his commitment to responsible entrepreneurship and fostering a vibrant local economy.

Obsidian Ridge has become an integral part of our community, offering a picturesque setting for weddings, events, and gatherings that celebrate life's most cherished moments. It is a place where countless memories have been created, and its significance to the community cannot be overstated. Moreover, Obsidian Ridge has also been a responsible and environmentally conscious steward of its land, preserving the natural beauty of the region.

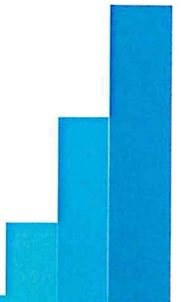
I firmly believe that Obsidian Ridge's continued operation and success are not only in the best interest of the Beaver County community but also align with the values of fairness, prosperity, and responsible land use. It is my sincere hope that, as you consider the appeal regarding their development permit, you will consider the substantial positive impact Obsidian Ridge has had on the community.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I trust that you will make a decision that serves the best interests of the community and recognizes the value that Obsidian Ridge brings to Beaver County.

Sincerely,



Jashan Sandhu, CPA
Partner, Evolve Chartered Professional Accountants
jashan@evolvecpas.ca



From: Ed Waddell [REDACTED]
Sent: September 29, 2023 11:52 AM
To: Meagan Walsh
Subject: RE:Development Application 020020-23-D0050

Good morning.

We are Ed Waddell, Lauren Usick & Family of [REDACTED]. Direct neighbor's to the south of Obsidian Ridge.

We are planning to move prior to the end of 2023 so we were debating responding to the request for a written submission regarding Obsidian Ridge's activities, but we would like to make a few statements upon request from folks in the area.

We would like to be clear that to-date, Mr. Lafayette has been very respectful to our family; providing notice of major events, providing notice of fireworks, keeping noise to the minimum (can only speak for our experiences), and has been very up front in terms of what activities he has been planning and extend of those activities. We truly haven't had a bad experience thus far, and haven't felt the need to complain or raise an issue.

However, if the situation was different in that we weren't planning to move, we would have concerns about what risks lay ahead due to the current volume of activity and potential activity going forward. Our concerns are not of Mr. Lafayette's respect of our well being and quality of life, but in the risks involved being adjacent to such a volume of activity and the nature of the activities. Our primary concerns are as follows:

The summer of 2023 saw an average of 3-4 weddings hosted per weekend at the Obsidian Ridge venue. Not knowing the number of attendees we can only assume ~400 unique guests per weekend across the road. These are 400 guests that could, under the influence of alcohol, make 1 bad decision that has the potential to change our lives forever... because it only takes one event. Be it a DUI, vandalism, or harassment. As i said, these would not be directly related to the behavior of the owner, but what is not in 100% control of the venue. Being in a populated, primarily residential/ag area, those risks exist in the base case however, when 1000s of attendees are currently using the facility it feels as though we are waiting for something to go wrong.

Additionally, we are a small cow calf operation and although we are adequately insured, we feel like we are walking on egg-shells, constantly nervous about a cow getting out, a farm dog walking across the road (which is normal thing in an agricultural setting) and instead of just a neighbourly call saying "hey Ed, your cow is out" we are always worried about if what should be just a non-issue turns into a nightmare with 100s of potential non-accustomed folks come in contact with a farm animal.

These are a couple of concerns that we would have to face if we were staying, and as I said before they do not reflect the character of the owners, but merely the risks of the situation.

Thank you for considering our comments,
Ed Waddell, Lauren Usick & Kids (Owen & Sophie)

From: Marnie Robb [REDACTED]
Sent: September 29, 2023 10:25 AM
To: Meagan Walsh
Cc: Delayna Koch
Subject: Beaver County Development Permit 020020-230D0050

Land use

I object to the proposed development submitted by Obsideon Ridge for the following reasons:

Zoning and precedence. The property is located in an agricultural zoning area that is not over-all designated as commercial use. Therefore, considerations should be overall cautious, ensuring minimal impact to the neighbours and other county residents. I understand and support discretionary use of smaller ventures, such as riding stables, the Junction and Neighbarks. In those cases, the businesses reflect minimal impact to neighbours and other residents with daytime hours and the limited number of people onsite at any one time. The proposed project submitted by Obsideon Ridge Ltd. is of a different magnitude and *WILL further affect* neighbours, by virtue of the allowable limit of 200 vehicles, and 300 people plus staff that will be there on a 24-hour basis. In my opinion, commercial ventures of this size that have the potential for large impact on surrounding properties and should be rooted in overall commercially zoned sites.

Although building on current approved use, this is not a clear agricultural venture, so in my mind, should not be a viable discretionary use of agricultural land. The buildings, people, and traffic volume presumably actually take away agricultural purposes and also likely be disruptive to current wildlife.

I presume that the county would want to operate on a sense of fairness. If approved, what precedence does this set for others to change their zoning? It opens the way for developers to move in most anywhere. How do you say yes to one and no to others, particularly when usage does not clearly align with zoning and is not considerate of neighbours? What then stops the current developers, other larger scale developments popping up in agricultural, residential or non-commercial use areas? As a county resident, it is actually quite a frightening thought that carefully thought-out zoning, could easily be compromised.

Impact. This will, presumably, impact neighbours, infrastructure and wildlife. Reasonably speaking, 200 vehicles passing in front of a property *will* be disruptive to the neighbours, *raising dust, creating noise, and affecting road infrastructure.* Who bears the cost for increased road maintenance? I doubt that any one individual's taxes would cover the cost. Even day noise such as traffic volume and music played by visitors will impact neighbours. How will the developer ensure that the noise bylaw is followed at night? Practically, put 300 people together and human

nature would dictate that at least some of them will not be quiet and abide by a noise curfew. What is the security enforcement for people not following the bylaw? And what is the recourse for county residents if it is not followed? Likely there can be no substantial recourse as the buildings will be in place, which make diligence in the planning/approval phase even more important.

County residents purchase property in good faith, and spend years, time and money to create their home and lifestyle. I truly hope that the interests of neighbours and other residents are valued and considered in the approval process.

Regards,

Marnie Robb
Beaver County resident

MEMBER OF BEAVER COUNTY MUNICIPALITY

Sept 27, 2023

Deborah Vernon



Dear Municipal Council:

Thank you for serving our county and balancing the needs of our community with the growth of our businesses. There is before you an appeal to prevent the growth of Obsidian Ridge by a few people, now there is an act of balancing the concerns of these citizens with the needs for growth and quality of life for our community. I believe it is important to start this process with gratitude for those serving our community. So, thank you for your careful consideration.

I have attended Obsidian Ridge venue on two occasions for family and friends gatherings. I have also toured the entire venue including five geodesic domes, outdoor washroom facilities and reception tent. I am impressed with the care taken to place these structures in the back of the property away within the trees to provide tree cover and a natural sound buffer for guests and also for surrounding neighbours. The entire venue is structured to be quiet and private for guests. The fire pit is dug down into a sunken area to keep the sound within the pit and to provide privacy and warmth to guests. The constructed hills and trees around the venue provide sound dampening. I noted that there is a specific place to park at the venue to keep cars away from the township road. The venue is clean and tidy with no debris. The guests are provided with able waste receptacles including recycling barrels for plastics. The best part about Obsidian is to rediscover parts of my own province that I had not visited before but now appreciate thanks to innovative places like Obsidian Ridge.

I am grateful for the opportunity to visit Obsidian Ridge and hope to visit here many more times in the future. I **sincerely thank you** for your service to the Beaver county and your careful attention in this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Deborah Vernon'.

Deborah Vernon

