

January 5, 2021

Haldimand County
53 Thorburn St. S.
Cayuga, ON
N0A 1E0

Attention: Ashley Taylor, Planner - Planning & Development

RE: Zoning Amendment: PLZ-HA 2020-186, 4149 River Road

Dear Ashley Taylor,

Further to our phone conversation on January 4, 2021, we are writing to express our concerns on the proposed Zoning Amendment PLZ-HA-2020-186 at 4149 River Road. We are the owners of 4155 River Road and believe this proposed amendment will have a negative impact on not only our daily lives, but on our property value.

We have lived in our home for 12 years, and have raised our two daughters here. When we purchased our home we were very careful to look at the surrounding properties and understand the existing zoning regulations as the move represented a considerable investment, which will one day form part of our retirement strategy. We have made further investments to our property and home in an effort to increase the value of our home, and maintain a certain quality of life.

We were approached by the Applicant about two and a half years ago as she wanted to use the existing paddock area on her property as a “socialization center” for dogs between the hours of 10:00am and 1:00pm Monday to Friday. Our understanding of that conversation was that this endeavor was to be a communal involvement/participation exercise and not a for profit business. At that time both Susan and I were working out of the home Monday to Friday, and our youngest daughter was out of province at university. Since there appeared to be little disruption to our daily lives we informed the Applicant that we didn’t have any concerns.

Since this time there have been other offerings provided by the Applicant on her property which extend beyond the 10:00-1:00 Monday to Friday timeframe originally discussed. These offerings, as detailed on her website, include; weekend puppy classes, group training, and dog trainer apprenticeship courses.

Our family loves animals, and we believe we maintain good relations with the Applicant. We have not complained despite experiencing some inconveniences, and have even offered our own driveway for parking on one occasion. Unfortunately times have changed, and we’re concerned that this amendment will allow for additional hours of operation. Susan has been home since the end of March partially due to COVID and partially due to taking care of her sick father, who lived with us from March through October. During this time it was difficult to get her father outdoors as the noise from the paddock made him uncomfortable. Susan would try to work outdoors while he slept, but she was unable to take our own dogs on our property as they became a distraction to what was going on next door. It got to the point where Susan and her father would remain inside because going outdoors was too difficult. Our daughter has been home finishing her fourth and final year of university, and needs to wear earplugs to concentrate on her work due to the noise from next door. Again, no complaints, however we have been forced to alter our behavior to accommodate. And we don’t see this situation changing anytime soon.

Stricter lockdowns and more companies moving to a work from home platform mean that we will likely be spending more time at home with no insight as to when our normal routine will return, if ever.

That is the cause for our concern now, as if this amendment goes through we will be forced to accept whatever goes on next door 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. While we understand the Applicant is proposing hours of business, we are aware that once the amendment is granted it cannot be reversed and that all benefits of the amended zoning will be available to her and her business. This means that while with all good intentions, the Applicant or future owners can extend their offerings to provide other commercial services on the property and that we will be powerless to challenge. Again, our intent is not to complain, but to protect our investment, and our quality of life. Would we have moved here 12 years ago if we knew there was a licensed dog kennel 20 meters from our home? Probably not. Is our concern about the potential devaluation of our home real? Absolutely.

As part of our retirement planning Susan and I have recently had our home evaluated and discussed the anticipated growth in value with our financial advisor. Our expectation is that our "asset" will continue to grow at a moderate pace setting us up for retirement within 5-10 years. This plan does not take into account the possibility of a licensed business, dog kennel or otherwise butting up to our property line, or within 20 meters of our home. There is no way we can adequately calculate how this amendment will affect our property value, nor do we feel that it should. As stated earlier, we have taken the proper steps to increase the value of our home, and we need to protect that value.

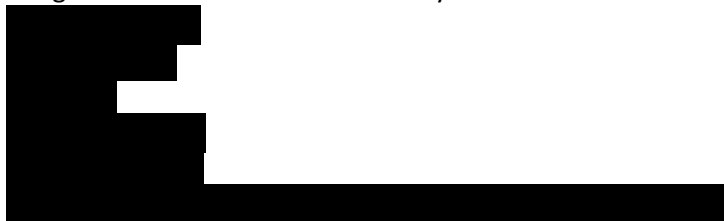
We believe the existing By-law was written to ensure that home owner's rights and investments are protected. This proposed amendment will affect our rights, the value of our home, and our quality of life. The decision to grant this amendment will have greater repercussions in the event that the Applicant chooses to sell the property, as the next owner would not be obligated to follow her intentions.

Although small, this is a residential community for all intents and purposes. The homeowners here didn't choose to live next to an operating dog kennel, nor should we be subject to decreased property values based on the wishes of one resident.

Please feel free to contact us if you require any further information. We are very interested in understanding the next steps, and any proposed Public Meeting. We therefore request that you keep us updated throughout this process.

Sincerely,

Greg and Susan Crawford and Family

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature and any handwritten notes or dates that might have been present.