

Bob Linck & Leanne Klyza Linck
1513 Texas Hill Road
Hinesburg VT 05461

December 11, 2022

Development Review Board
c/o Mitchel Cypes
Development Review Coordinator
Town of Hinesburg

Re: Conditional use review, commercial cordwood operation at 126 Beaver Pond Road

We object to the Lavalettes' proposed cordwood operation, for the following reasons:

A small stream runs just north of and then along the northeastern boundary of the Lavalettes' lot. The stream flows through a culvert, under Texas Hill Road, and onto our property, along the edge of our driveway and into Texas Brook. While they were running the cordwood operation without a permit, material from the operation – including rubber matting, evergreen branches, chunks of wood, and other debris flowed off their site, into the stream, through the culvert and into the wetland part of our property. It clogged up the stream enough that I needed to wade in and pull the debris out to prevent flooding of our driveway. We have concerns that material from the operation will, either inadvertently or through intentional action, continue to end up in the stream.

The onsite operation and the large number of trucks on Beaver Pond Road and Texas Hill Road will have an adverse impact on streams and wetlands. Increased "wear and tear" will require additional road maintenance and more road material will find its way into the small tributary, and therefore into Texas Brook. In our 21+ years on Texas Hill Road, we have witnessed the gradual filling of the wetland with road material, and the cordwood operation has already exacerbated the situation. An industrial operation of that sort could also generate oil and gas waste and, on a small lot in a small headwaters watershed, that has the potential to affect water quality, aquatic habitat, and the many species that depend on Texas Brook watershed.

Disturbing noise travels throughout the neighborhood, from the operation itself and the trucks. The low drone of the equipment, the beeping sounds from trucks backing up, and the "cannon shot" of firewood chunks landing in the empty bed of a truck clearly affect immediate neighbors the most. (One could hardly site the operation any closer to someone else's home - that of Mike and Doreen Patterson. It is much, much closer to the Pattersons' than to the Lavalettes' own home.) However, since we live in a small valley with steep sides, sounds reverberate. Just look at a map showing the number of parcels and houses in the upper Texas Brook watershed; most of the residents in those homes were bombarded by the noise from the Lavalettes' unpermitted operation, and will be adversely affected by their proposed operation as well.

If the DRB approves this conditional use application, we seriously doubt the Lavalettes will pay much attention to the conditions you impose. I say this for several reasons:

- The Town had to take legal action to cease the Lavalettes' unpermitted operation. It took a frustratingly long time, and Town officials were subjected to utter lack of cooperation and unpleasant behavior.
- The family has exhibited total disregard for and act aggressively toward their neighbors, as evidenced by their unwillingness to live up to their obligations to support the maintenance of Beaver Pond Road, and by their behavior towards others. We have personal experience to offer. Due presumably to our objections to their unpermitted operation, the Lavalettes have repeatedly attempted to intimidate us in two ways. First, they rev their car and truck engines as they pass while I am out for a run or walking our dog. I don't scare easily, but it can be unnerving. They also have intentionally – and very regularly – driven onto our driveway and then up along the edge of Texas Hill Road, above our driveway, gunning and “spinning out” with the intent of counteracting the small diversion ditch I shovel to direct rainwater and snowmelt from the road onto our property before it washes out my driveway. It is disconcerting and frustrating to have to monitor and fix the drainage regularly. Bizarre as it may sound, they have also – on my driveway and that of others in the neighborhood – intentionally messed with the good work of the person we hire to plow our driveway in the winter, distributing snow and chunks of ice onto the driveway.

Please do not approve this application.

Sincerely,

Bob Linck & Leanne Klyza Linck