

PRESS RELEASE:

WHAT'S YOUR VISION FOR THE MILL?

CALEDONIA OLD MILL OPEN HOUSE ON TUESDAY, OCTOBER 21st

On Tuesday, October 21st from 10:00 a.m. through to 8:00 p.m., the Caledonia Old Mill Corporation is hosting an Open House at the McKinnon Park Secondary School LIBRARY.

It's a chance for everyone to learn more about the history of the mill, and why it is so unique and important to the area. The public will have an opportunity to indicate their vision for the mill by putting 'dots' next to a list of priorities and adaptive reuse choices of what they would like to see the mill become in the future. A graphic facilitator will also be available throughout the day to sketch out ideas on paper that people have for the mill.

The Open House is designed to be highly visual and interactive asking people for their opinions and ideas! "It's a planning process designed for public input right from the beginning, designed to reconcile differing community stakeholders," explains Laura Dent (of Dent Planning), the project manager hired to guide the planning process along. Dr. Dent will be present throughout the day to answer questions and listen to what people have to say. All this information will be pulled together into a final report that will suggest an adaptive reuse for the mill, and map out a plan how to make the community's vision a reality.

This event is part of a comprehensive community consultation process that is being funded through the Ontario Trillium Foundation, and has been underway since June.

From the Board's point of view, "it's an opportunity for everyone in the community to share what the Old Mill means to them, while offering their thoughts on adaptive reuse alternatives," says Ralph Bray, Chair. "All viewpoints are welcome and it's important to the process that genuine differences are represented," added Bessy Pouloupoulos, long-time Member of the Board.

"Haldimand County is pleased to play a supportive role in the Caledonia Old Mill Visioning exercise," expresses Don Boyle, Chief Administrative Officer for Haldimand County. Boyle goes on further to stress that, "the Caledonia Old Mill is a significant landmark in Haldimand County. Its historical value in the County needs to not only be preserved, *but promoted*, in order to enhance all the social and economic benefits that the Mill offers residents and visitors."

Rounding out the event will be a display of recent photographs of the mill especially commissioned for this event, as well as sketches done by grade 10 art students of McKinnon Park Secondary School. Hospitality will be provided, and the Board has a specially designed notepad for everyone who attends.

Craig Grice, Haldimand County Councillor, urges everyone to take a few minutes out of their day to help "shape the community's future by preserving some of its past history." "Creating a vision for the Historic Mill takes all of our ideas and dreams," he says. Councillor Grice warns that, "we don't want another landmark attraction—as we have in our beloved bridge—fall into the river. It's important not to let a chosen few make these kinds of decisions for us."

For more information contact: Laura Dent, project manager at (519) 505-2867 or laura.dent@sympatico.ca. Visit the project website which is continually being updated with new information: www.caledoniamill.org.