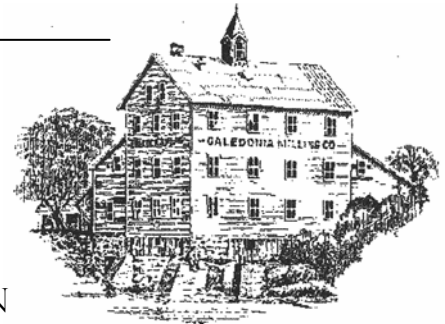


CALEDONIA OLD MILL—COMMUNITY VISIONING PROJECT UPDATE

JULY 2008



WELCOME TO OUR FIRST UPDATE NEWSLETTER

As many of you may already be aware, the Caledonia Old Mill Corporation (COMC) was recently awarded a grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) to produce an adaptive re-use plan for the mill by using a comprehensive

VISIONING
...the intent is to develop a community-based vision for what the mill can be by seeking the direct input of people who live here

community consultation process. Over the years, there have been various ideas that have been discussed for the mill. This funding will now allow the COMC to go one step forward and involve community residents more directly in the initial steps of determining what the most appropriate and sustainable future uses for the mill might be.

By the end of this year, the goal is to have the community arrive at some consensus on an appropriate use for the mill, and to have a

strategic plan to move the project forward in 2009.

Laura Dent, of Dent Planning, was engaged in late May by the COMC, as the project manager to help guide the consultation process over the next six months. She has formal training in architecture and community planning and a passion for heritage and culturally significant buildings and places. A steering committee composed of COMC board members, interested residents and community advisors are directing the project along.

This newsletter is the first of a series of monthly updates that are planned for the duration of this project. This format is intended to provide you with a quick update about work underway and what we've accomplished, as well as notifying you of any plans and initiatives that may be in the works.

FOR MORE INFORMATION?

DENT PLANNING
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PROJECT DETAILS & WORKPLAN DEVELOPMENT

Objectives for this project are broad and are primarily aimed at **expanding knowledge** about critical issues of adapting heritage mills, **increasing awareness** about the importance of the Caledonia Mill and the strengths and challenges in its adaptive re-use, **tapping into ideas** that the community has for the future of the mill, and helping to **ensure a smooth transition** to the next phase of the project.

Specific activities that were approved as part of the grant application to OTF include:

- 1) conducting a study to investigate other examples of heritage mill buildings in other communities so that we can learn from their successes and failures;
- 2) gaining community input through various methods (interviews, focus group conversations, community events) on what adaptive scenarios residents want to see for the mill that would best serve the community; and,

3) to establish a strategic plan and identify funding opportunities to move the project forward in the next year.

It is essential that the community planning that is done during this phase of the project helps to shape what happens next in subsequent phases. Careful documentation is key; including the research and information gathered from people participating in the project, as well as synthesis and findings. Two reports will summarize the work completed. *A Best and Promising Practices Study* that documents the current mill as well as drawing on other examples of adaptive re-use heritage mill projects, and a *Report of Findings* that documents the community consultation process and action plan for the next phase.

We are currently fine tuning the project workplan which you will be able to view at the Caledonia Mill website set-up specifically for this project. Please note that the website is currently under construction.

www.caledoniamill.org

COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS UNDERWAY

This past month, I have had the opportunity to talk informally with well over thirty people in and around Caledonia—people who represent the various groups and interests in the community; from the arts, culture, heritage, business, tourism,

TOGETHER
the community needs something to pull it together...maybe that could be the mill?

social and community services, as well as elected officials and county staff. These ‘table talks’ are an integral part of the consultation process, and they have begun to help uncover the array of opinions that people

have on the mill and how it might best serve the community.

Conversations have lasted anywhere from an hour to two hours and people have been very accommodating and extremely generous with their time. Many have shared with me their own personal visions for the mill, and what they see the major obstacles are in achieving that vision. Some have even recounted memories that are closely tied to the mill and dam. I have also been able to gain a better understanding of the community and its resources and needs.

Although opinions may vary as to its future use, it is clear that the mill is an iconic building in the community, and that people feel a strong connection to its presence.

WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO ALL THE OTHER HISTORIC MILLS?



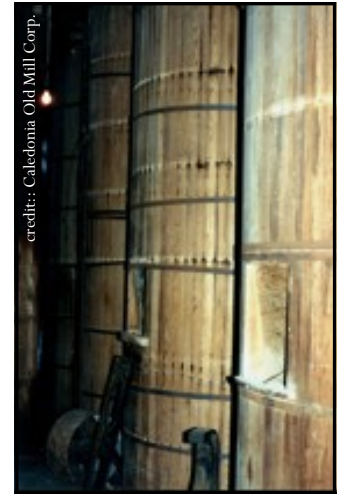
ST. ANDREWS MILL, FERGUS 1850C
(CONDOMINIUM COMPLEX)

In order to determine the best fit for the mill in Caledonia, one of the objectives of this project has been to find out how other mills have been adapted into new uses. Currently a review of ‘best practices’ of mill re-use across Ontario is underway. Findings will be out in

the fall and are promising to be quite revealing. Did you know that there are nearly 40 historic mills just in the Grand River Region alone, and that over one-quarter of them have been adapted into private homes or condominiums?

YOUTH ENGAGED IN INVENTORY OF MILLING EQUIPMENT AND COMPONENTS

The community of Caledonia is fortunate to have had over the years people who have taken a keen interest in the mill and its history. Ian Thompson, a freshman in high school and the president of the Junior Mill Committee, is one such person who not only is a history buff, but who also has accumulated a wealth of knowledge on the inner workings of the mill. He is currently working together with the project consultant on a detail inventory of the mill equipment which includes naming and describing the equipment, noting its condition and location,



EXISTING GRAIN AND FLOUR BINS IN MILL-2ND FL.

along with extensive photo-documentation. This kind of careful inventorying is essential not only to better understand the mill and its significance, but it may also be critical information to have at hand for future restoration and adaptive re-use plans.

DIGITAL DRAWINGS BEING DONE OF THE MILL

While gathering information about the Mill in June, it became apparent that there were no existing drawings that could be used for tendering purposes in subsequent phases of the project.

Thor Dingman, who is currently a member of the Canadian Association of Heritage Professionals, has been engaged for this work because of his expertise in heritage adaptive projects.

This month, he will be accurately measuring the Mill building and structural components and producing a basic set of architectural

measured drawings that can be read in AutoCad—a standard drafting software for desktop computers.



LOOK FOR THE PROJECT WEBSITE TO BE ACTIVE WITHIN THE NEXT WEEK.

UNTIL NEXT MONTH...

