

News Release

CHRISTOPHER SIMMONDS DESIGNS OTTAWA'S MOST ENVIRONMENTALLY- FRIENDLY PUBLIC BUILDING

MANOTICK, November 5, 2007 — Christopher Simmonds Architect, a small Ottawa firm specializing in designing structures in harmony with their surroundings, lead a team of design and construction professionals in the building of the Rideau Valley Conservation Centre going up at the corner of Prince of Wales Drive and Rideau Valley Drive in Manotick. The building will soon become the new headquarters for the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority (RVCA) as well as the Visitor Centre for the City of Ottawa's Beryl Gaffney Park in which it is situated.

The Rideau Valley Conservation Centre will be certified by the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) system at a Silver Level standard. LEED is considered to be the worldwide standard in measuring building environmental sustainability.

The new facility is constructed around a central atrium with office space, meeting rooms and a small conference facility on the sides. The building is exceptional in the way it manages water, one of the prime concerns of the RVCA. The building will shed rainwater into a watercourse and on-site pond. Gray water and rainwater will also be collected, treated and reused in the buildings toilets which will flow to a highly efficient, demonstration septic system adjacent to the building. Ultimately, all stormwater and sewage will be managed on site.

The structure has been oriented on the site to maximize passive solar heating and natural lighting. Three quarters of the construction waste has been diverted from landfill or reused. More than 15% of the materials used in construction are themselves made of recycled material and an additional 20% were extracted or manufactured locally. Low-emitting glues, solvents and carpets are used throughout to increase staff comfort and protect their health. And the building is designed to consume considerably less energy than a similar-sized building using current industry standards.

"Building to LEED standards costs more money at first, but the payback comes very quickly in energy savings alone. Our member municipalities felt it was important that the Conservation Authority show leadership in environmental matters starting with the construction of our new office space", commented RVCA Chair Alan Arbuckle.

The extra initial costs associated with the LEED designation was partly funded through fundraising efforts. A group of community-minded conservation colleagues donated over \$250,000 to help RVCA build this amazing public asset in southern Ottawa. Chris Simmonds made a generous gift of professional time and services to help bring this efficient and beautiful structure to our area.

Other core members of Christopher Simmonds design and construction team included Cleland Jardine, D.B.Gray Engineering, Leslie Jones & Associates, Morrison Hershfield, and M.P.Lundy.

The Rideau Valley Conservation Centre is scheduled to open for conservation business on Tuesday, December 11.

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