



KEY NOTES

January 2011

Property search update

The search for development land is on again. As GreenSong President Laurie Mace explained, "The process is no different for a cohousing community than for an individual family buying a traditional new home or condo: you have to look at a number of properties before finding the right one for you.

"We have learned a lot from the process, and we are energized and more knowledgeable to continue the search anew. This is a big commitment for all of us, and we want to make sure we get it right."

The GreenSong community, once built, will function as a condominium. That means each family will have clear title to its own dwelling unit and share financial responsibility for all GreenSong common property and services through owning shares in the condominium corporation.

Under Ontario's New Home Warranties Plan Act, the Ontario New Home Warranty Program (ONHWP) provides protection for condominium buyers of newly constructed residential units. There are two ways in which the ONHWP provides protection:

1. It guarantees the buyer that any deposit or down payment made by the purchaser of a new condominium unit, up to a maximum of \$20,000, will be returned if the developer is unable to complete the transaction.

2. It warrants construction of the units from the date of occupancy, and the common elements from the date of registration, for one year against most defects; the mechanical and electrical systems, the building envelope, and water penetration for two years; and against major structural defects for seven years.

In addition, there is a warranty for substitutions of key elements in the unit made by the developer without the consent of the purchaser.

For more information, visit www.tarion.com.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

Margaret Mead

What's in a name? Part 1

It will come as no surprise to learn that the name of our community, GreenSong, was chosen after great consideration to represent our values and interest. What does it mean to the current community members?

GREEN reflects our interest in environmentally sensitive design. In the coming years the cost and availability of energy resources for transportation and for indoor heating and cooling will be critical issues.

That is why we are working in partnership with architect and planner Charles Simon.

Since establishing a private practice in 1970, Charles Simon has pioneered and stressed several core themes:

- green (ecological) architecture and planning
- livable environments that are responsive to people's needs and engage their participation
- healthy buildings and communities
- affordable housing
- contextual design – buildings that provide a good fit with their natural or built surroundings
- creation of a future heritage – timeless design that honours the past while looking to the future.

"These themes match the values of the GreenSong community," said GreenSong board member Michael Giles. "We have already started working with Charles on some conceptual ideas for site plans and unit designs that reflect these values and are still affordable."

The next issue of *Key Notes* will focus on the meaning of SONG to the community.

"I surmise
From the shadow of the
clothes-pole,
It is the depth of winter."

Shiki

GreenSong consultant puts words into action

GreenSong consultant Charles Simon, who is an architect and planner, is one of the founders of an exciting innovative project called *Eden Mills Going Carbon Neutral*. The small Ontario community of Eden Mills is aiming to become the first carbon-neutral village in North America.

Eden Mills is a village nestled in the Eramosa River valley, housing around 350 people. As the community's website says, it is very close to the university city of Guelph and a little over an hour's drive to downtown Toronto "with the wind behind your back and the highway traffic calm." Learn more at

www.goingcarbonneutral.ca.

The project received special commendation at the annual international symposium of the Canadian Institute of Planners that took place in Montreal in early October 2010. The project was praised for demonstrating how volunteers and practical thinking, and doing rather than talking, can lead the way with grassroots action.

In 2009, Charles Simon received the Ontario Agricultural College Volunteer Recognition Award. The award is made annually by the Ontario Agricultural College "in recognition of the dedication and hard work of volunteers whose contributions have enhanced their communities."

Charles has a long history of community involvement. At the beginning of his career, as architect for a local civic society in England, he prepared pro bono proposals for a downtown revitalization scheme. In Toronto he drew up proposals for an early and successful neighbourhood traffic-calming project.

His pioneering work in energy-efficient building, environmentally sensitive site planning, and resource planning has been widely recognized. His enthusiasm in these areas has led him to present talks and workshops to numerous community, youth, and college or university groups.



*A cluster cohousing design
by Charles Simon,
Architect and Planner*

The citation in the award states that "Charles Simon is an untiring advocate for liveable communities, sustainable building design, and imaginative ways of sharing our common community resources."

**"Each day arises to be
graced by your conscious
attention to detail.**

**"Each day sets so that you
may glean what you have
brought to your place in the
sun."**

Kenneth G. Mills

Contributors

This newsletter is possible thanks to the work of the following GreenSong members and friends: Michael Giles, Laurie Mace, Peggi Mace, Charles Simon, and Angela Wingfield.

GreenSong Inc.

Officers

President - Laurie Mace
Treasurer - Michael Abbott
Secretary - Peggi Mace

Editor

Angela Wingfield

Email address

info@greensong.ca

Website

www.greensong.ca