

Committee hopes art gallery proposal will bring culture into the community

By SABINE GIBBINS

Staff Writer

A group of local artists have a vision to bring culture into the communities of Stittsville and the former township of Goulbourn.

A steering committee, formed in late December and composed of local artists from Stittsville and Ottawa, has proposed that an art gallery be established in the Goulbourn Recreation Complex (GRC).

The facility, which is currently under expansion, is the primary and desired location for an art gallery, according to the GRC Gallery X Steering Committee.

The committee is looking at acquiring approximately 1,000 square feet of space.

The proposed art gallery would strengthen the relationship between the rural communities of Ottawa, and at the same time, exposing the artistic talents in the west-end, says Sue Perley-Robertson, co-chairman of the GRC steering committee and member of the Kanata Art Club.

"GRC staff showed us around and it just seemed like it was natural for us," says Terry Sametz, chairman of the steering committee.

Gallery X is being modeled after the highly successful, volunteer-run Kanata Civic Art Gallery, located at the Mlacak Centre off Campeau Drive, as well as the Foyer Gallery in the Nepean Sportsplex.

"They are good models for us to use," says Sametz.

There is lots around the committee to guide them in their project, and surely, they will come up with their own ideas, he adds.

Judy Miller, president of the Kanata Civic Art Gallery, says the space provides a venue for artists who come to the 16-year-old facility to display their works of art.

Gallery X would thrive on a juried basis, just like the Civic Gallery, successful applicants will become participating artist members of the Kanata gallery and will be able to exhibit their work on a regular basis in the gallery.

Over the many years, about 38 artists have come and gone.

An art gallery such as Kanata's allows the public to come in and view artwork at their leisure, as well as attend some of the great events put on by the art gallery.

For example, the thriving annual Young At Art exhibition held in May at the Civic or the Gift of Art Show and Sale held in December - a great event to head to for Christmas gift ideas.

It's important, says Sametz, the gallery offers the public a variety of mediums to choose or look at - such as oil, watercolour,



A group of local artists are working together towards establishing an art gallery in Stittsville. Members of the GRC Gallery X Steering Committee and local artists pose at the Kanata Civic Art Gallery. From left

to right: Sue Perley-Robertson, Bev Ashford, Gerald Smith, Judy Miller, Terry Sametz (behind Miller) and John Madden. The ideal place for the gallery would be in the Goulbourn Recreation Complex.

embroidery, and even pencil, and introduce a sense of culture in their lives in a multicultural society.

This is what attracts the public to keep coming back.

John Madden, past chairman of the steering committee, says the project is something the artists want for the community of Stittsville.

"We said we needed to get a proposal together, a good solid one" to get the city of Ottawa behind such an idea, Madden says, who is also owner of Art Mad in Stittsville.

"There is a real need for an art gallery in Stittsville," says Madden.

"It's a good idea and we gave it serious thought."

The group met with ward 6 Stittsville-Kanata West councillor Shad Qadri, and made a presentation to the Stittsville Village Association, who both welcomed the idea.

"We felt quite confident with the support the councillor had given us," says Perley-Robertson.

Now they are just waiting back to hear what city staff have to say on the

More importantly, the village of Stittsville and former township of Goulbourn are expanding rapidly, creating the need for a permanent art gallery in Stittsville.

"It's not just for the artists, it's for the public to walk around and appreciate the arts," she says.

The art gallery would also offer the public a strong educational aspect as well, says Madden, and not just focus on art.

The art gallery would be solely run by artists on a volunteer-basis.

The committee has been talking about this idea since last December - Dec. 24, to be exact.

"All it took was a couple phone calls," says Sametz in getting the committee up

and running.

The groups says a gallery creates goodwill in the community and also links the urban and rural communities together.

Proposal

The GRC, states the Gallery X proposal, should provide space for local artists because currently, the communities of Stittsville and Goulbourn do not have one.

"The proven model of the Foyer and Kanata Civic Art Galleries shows that with just the 60 current artist volunteers, the city fosters not only goodwill for and integration of visual arts to a broad range of citizens with diverse socio-economic backgrounds," states the proposal.

The mandate for Gallery X is to create "an independent, non-profit public art gallery/space, and is committed to the presentation and interpretation of art for the benefit of the Ottawa Region".

The gallery will showcase original works of art created by a juried group of

both emerging and established artists.

The members of the steering committee are committed to working in partnership with the Nepean Visual Arts Centre (NVAC) and the GRC parks and recreation staff to develop recreational visual

arts programs for all ages and levels.

Such an example of this collaboration is the artist-run Foyer Gallery with the city-operated NVAC.

The committee is also looking at establishing recreational arts programs where visitors will be able

to take art lessons with artists from the gallery.

This will generate a greater awareness of city programs and also encourage participation.

The committee is thinking of running themed shows monthly, as well as special events, artists demonstrations, and vernissages.

The gallery would also like to promote the Young at Art program, an opportunity for young artists between the ages of 13 and 19 to reach out and experience a citywide juried art exhibition.

Young at Art 2008 marks the third year of participation by youth artists from east, west and central Ottawa.

Works selected by Young at Art are displayed in Ottawa community galleries, welcoming them to the professional visual arts community in the region.

They believe it is important for the youth to become more involved in a community project such as this.

The GRC Gallery X steering committee includes Terry Sametz, John Madden, Gerald Smith, Beverly Ashford, Louise Barker and Sue Perley-Robertson.

207526_0222

Gearing Up for Spring?...
Think...

McNeely's
Outdoor Power Equipment Ltd,

A cut above The Rest

469 Donald B. Munro Dr.,
Carp, On K0A 1L0
613-839-5777
www.mcneelysoutdoorpowerequipment.ca

Husqvarna
Great experience
Professionally Proven outdoor power equipment

Buy the Village Green

A Fundraiser for Carp's Village Green

This event is sponsored by the West Carleton Heritage Park Association

Join us for
"An Irish Day In Carp"
Sunday, March 9
2-9pm
Carp Agricultural Hall

Enjoy a meal of Irish Stew with all the Irish trimmings

Featuring the music of Gail Gavan, Mike, Bernie and Bill Ryan, Bernie Carroll, The Howard Hayes Band, The Lorne Daley Band, Robin Averill, Gerald Kirby, & Dan Mayo
MC's - Art Jamieson, Charlie Kitts and Jake Davies.

For Ticket Information: Stan Carruthers 613-797-3478