

Alton Legion seeking a LAV for display

By Bill Rea

The federal government has about 250 LAVs (Light Armoured Vehicles) to give away to qualifying communities, and the Alton branch of the Royal Canadian Legion is hoping to be one of the recipients.

"I've been working on that for a month or so," commented Legion member Steve Hayward.

The application went in last week (Friday was the deadline for applications). Caledon council added its voice to the effort last Tuesday by passing a motion in support of the effort.

Councillor Doug Beffort said he had heard about this only a week before, but thought it was worthy of support. He pointed out Alton now has the only Legion branch in Caledon, adding other Legion halls have similar monument on their properties.

He added this piece of equipment was actually used during Canada's involvement in Afghanistan.

Beffort also said no other action on the part of the Town will be required, since the Legion will take care of it.

"They will look after the rest of it," he remarked.

Although these vehicles will be free, Hayward said the Legion will be responsible for transporting it to the site and mounting it. He wasn't sure, but thought that might cost between \$5,000 and \$20,000.

"They don't want anybody driving around Town in it," he observed.

Hayward said the vehicle was a troop carrier.

"My nephew used to drive one in Afghanistan," he said, adding another nephew serviced them.

The eight-wheel vehicles are armoured, and Hayward said they had a machine gun mounted on them. He also said the artillery will be coming off before the Legion gets it, and he thought the motor might come out as well.

The plan is to place the monument on the front lawn of the Legion hall on Queen Street, West, in Alton, facing the road, not far from the Cenotaph.

He also said since this is the only Legion hall left in Town, he thought it was important local young people can see it and learn about its significance.

The decision on the application will be made by a selection committee, made up mostly of Afghanistan veterans, headed by Major General David Fraser, commander in Afghanistan South in 2006. Hayward said he understood selections are to be made within 90 days.

Hayward was also optimistic about the Legion's chances of getting one of these vehicles.

"I think there's a pretty good chance," he remarked.