

Ground broken for community hub in Southfields

By Bill Rea

Enthusiasm was evident Monday as the ground was officially broken for the new community centre and hub to service the Southfields Village area.

Mayor Allan Thompson was joined by representatives of all levels of government for the ceremony.

"I think it's something that's really important," he commented, adding the Town has been trying to speed up the process on this project. "We're finally here."

The new facility has been made possible through contributions from partners in the community; partners who will be using space in the centre. They include Caledon Public Library, Caledon OPP, Bright Scholars Academy Montessori School, Caledon Parent-Child Centre, Caledon Community Services, Punjabi Health Services, Peel Region, etc.

Thompson said this represents an exciting concept for serving the community, adding this represents one of the first community hubs under the Province's Places to Grow plans, and the hope is it will be a gathering place.

"We hope to be a model of how other communities are to be built," he remarked.

"I'm really super happy to be here this morning," Councillor Johanna Downey declared, acknowledging the presence of Karen Pitre, a special advisor to Premier Kathleen Wynne on community hubs. She also thanked the team of Town staff for their work to make this come about.

"It's one thing to have an idea," she observed. "It's another thing to facilitate it."

Downey said hubs are nothing new to Caledon. She grew up in Bolton, where the Albion-Bolton Community Centre attracted much of the local attention.

"Caledon was doing hubs before hubs were cool," she remarked.

As well, Downey pointed out the various communities in Caledon always come together, and that's the case with Southfields Village, which she said "is the baby of the community."

Downey also commented the new centre will be the anchor of the community.

"It's a super exciting time to be part of Caledon and part of this community," she declared.

"This is an exciting day for Southfields Village and the Town of Caledon," Dufferin-Caledon MP David Tilson declared.

He added the community centre will meet the needs of Southfields residents and those living beyond in Caledon, helping them maintain healthy and active lifestyles. As well, he agreed it will be a meeting place for the community.

Tilson also said he was looking forward to attending the official opening of the facility.

Pitre said it's a credit to the community that it recognizes the value of the partnerships to bring a project like this together.

"It shouldn't be innovative in the future," she observed. "It should be just part of the norm."



Those taking part in Monday's ground breaking included Councillors Jennifer Innis and Johanna Downey; Karen Pitre, special advisor to the Premier on community hubs; Southfields Village resident Steven Amirikah, representing Dufferin-Caledon MPP Sylvia Jones; Dufferin-Caledon MP David Tilson; Mayor Allan Thompson; and Councillor Gord McClure. Photo by Bill Rea