

From Judy Grant, former Mayor of Chelsea
February 1, 2009

Meredith Centre Long Needed

As a former Mayor, I am very happy that Chelsea will finally have the community centre it needs. For years all we've had is the old Saint Stephen's school, which was the best we could do. Everyone I've talked this over with wants to see a new community centre in Chelsea. The fact that we're getting federal and provincial money -- which others did not get even though we were competing against much larger municipalities -- means we're getting the best bang for the our local investment that we could possibly get.

To show my own personal commitment to this project, I have taken the position of Honorary Chair of the Centre Meredith Centre fundraising campaign, and I want to ask all of you to become part of this important community initiative.

The Centre, to be located off Old Chelsea Road on property generously donated to the Fondation Chelsea Foundation by the Meredith family, will consist of a community centre, a double gymnasium and an arena in a landscaped and eco-friendly environment. This trio of facilities will be an activity centre for Chelsea residents of all ages and interests. It will accommodate meetings and special events, cultural activities and sports. Situated adjacent to the soccer facilities, sports fields, schools and the library, in my view, the Centre will become the "hub" and central gathering place for the community, which Chelsea has long been missing.

From the standpoint of an individual taxpayer, it's hard to imagine that having a \$10 million facility like this within a few minutes drive won't increase the attractiveness of properties in Chelsea. Services generally increase property values, and I expect that to be the case here. This project will bring long-term financial advantage to every property owner in Chelsea.

We will not get this opportunity again. We do not want to miss this moment.

Which brings me to the fundraising campaign or the Centre Meredith Centre Build Campaign, as it is officially called -- an important component of financing the project. We have committed, as a fundraising team, to raise \$600,000 for the project. That doesn't seem to me like a difficult target. I remember when Low wanted a hockey arena because they were so far away. They did it with fundraising, engaging volunteers and a mortgage which they have since paid off. This little municipality of only 900 people raised over a million dollars to build that arena. Surely we can do better than that!

Every dollar we raise over our \$600,000 goal is a dollar that the municipality does not need to borrow. All donations receive charitable receipts, which can give a return on your income taxes worth up to fifty cents on each dollar contributed.

I am therefore asking you to share my enthusiasm for this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for Chelsea. Meet with our campaign volunteers when they call you, and give their request for support your very serious consideration. In addition to providing an attractive donor recognition package, this Build Campaign offers you a chance to help put the heart into Chelsea for yourself, your family and future generations.

Sincerely,

Judy Grant

Judy
Grant

Honorary Chair
Centre Meredith Centre Build Campaign