The Sunshine House in Potton

The Sunshine House Mansonville is a non-profit organization that is responsible for creating a permanent residence for four intellectually/physically disabled adult community members from Potton, assuring them a stable living environment, respect and quality of life.

The project has been overseen by a board of directors made up of the following members: Nancy Poirier (who replaced Micheline Cardinal), Almut Ellinghaus, Colin Field, Lucette Field, Kenneth Jersey, Stanley Lake, Wanda Leonard and Ellen Riker.

This project reflects a movement all over Quebec, in which families are creating proactive solutions for the future of their children with physical and intellectual challenges. At Sunshine House the residents are assured a stable, supervised living environment in which they will be able to remain for as long as the environment suits their needs. They will thus be able to remain in the community.

The SHQ (Société d’habitation du Québec), a government agency that supports public and social housing projects, has given Sunshine House its fundamental support. The project has received grants from the township of Potton, Le Support, the Centre Local de Développement of the MRC Memphrémagog as well as the Caisse Desjardins du Lac Memphrémagog.

“The response from the community has been overwhelming: Complete strangers have sent us cheques and notes wishing us the well,” said Stanley Lake, President of the Sunshine House Board of Directors and parent of one of the future occupants of the Sunshine House. “The objective is to have the house completed this summer and the progress on the construction site thus far is amazing.”

The first four residents are the adult children and/or sibling of the families who have been working on this project for over seven years. The project will provide a long-term residence into the future and will be able to help new clients from the municipality and surrounding communities as space becomes available.

“This project reflects the desire of families in our community actively working to provide the best living environment and quality of life for their children,” explained Lake.

It is important to note that all the tenants of the Sunshine House are eligible to benefit from a rental supplement program that enables them to pay rent that corresponds to 25 per cent of their revenue. This additional financial assistance of some $86,000 over five years will be 90 percent assumed by the SHQ and 10 percent by the municipality.

Stanley Lake noted the contribution and determination of all of the parents who have devoted their efforts to this project. He also thanked the community and the numerous individuals, businesses and groups who helped in a variety of ways. This is truly a community project and one that all of Potton should be proud of.

Sunshine House is now actively looking for a live-in caregiver starting in September. With a decent salary and a separate two bedroom apartment upstairs, the caregiver is expected to live with the clients, help and direct them in their personal and household activities.