



A project of the Eden Mills Millpond Conservation Association Inc.

## Media Release

### Eden Mills Announces “Going Carbon Neutral” Partnerships At Official Launch

November 9, 2007, Eden Mills, Ontario...

#### **Eden Mills is going carbon neutral, starting today.**

This Ontario village of 150 households held a formal launch last night in a Community Hall overflowing with keen and curious residents and supporters. The audience responded enthusiastically, impressed by the number of plans already underway after only three months of preparation. Representatives from several significant partnering organizations (see attached list) were present at the Launch.

Eden Mills is determined to be the **first village in North America to tackle global warming by aiming to emit no more carbon dioxide than it absorbs.** Based on the audience response, Eden Mills residents, buoyed by strong and knowledgeable leadership, are ready to meet the challenge.

Resident and organizer Charles Simon, one of Canada’s pioneer green architects, introduced the concept, saying: **“We can’t wait any longer for ‘someone else’ to act.** We know that carbon neutrality cannot be attained in the short term, but we also know we have to begin the process now.”

Eden Mills was inspired by the example of England’s Ashton Hayes, a village which made international headlines last year when it announced its intention to go carbon neutral. Ashton Hayes sent a video greeting to the Canadian Launch, announcing their village’s **collective 20% reduction in carbon emissions** in the first year.

During the evening, there were detailed presentations about a variety of means of “going carbon neutral.” Speakers emphasized **two equally essential elements in what will be a comprehensive approach:--**

- Reducing carbon emissions by using less carbon-producing energy, and using more alternate sources of power.
- Increasing carbon sequestration (the natural process of vegetation absorbing carbon dioxide) by planting more trees.

Residents were then **called to action:**

In order to measure progress village residents were asked to participate in a survey to determine

its current “**carbon footprint**”. The first step involves measuring the energy use of individual homes including transportation. These individual footprints will be combined to calculate the baseline footprint for the whole village against which annual evaluations can be made.

People were encouraged to understand how easy it is to start to make a significant difference, using just **Ten Easy Steps to Reducing CO2**. They included changing to energy-efficient light bulbs, and turning down the thermostat in winter. As organizer Libby Little explained, “Natural Resources Canada projects **that if every Canadian household replaced just one bulb we’d save 400,000 tonnes of CO2.**”

Addressing the gathering, Mayor Chris White reported that the **Township Council of Guelph Eramosa** had passed a unanimous motion supporting the grass roots project in principle. He is already sharing information about the project with other Ontario municipalities. The Council has also provided “Going Carbon Neutral” signs at the Village entrances. Councillor Doug Breen informed the crowd that he is in active discussions about developing bike trails between Rockwood and Eden Mills to provide safe passage for children attending school in the nearby town, and reducing the need for car transportation.

The Eden Mills Going Carbon Neutral project will incorporate research into the newest technologies and processes as a major component of its activities.

Highlights of the Launch included video greetings from CBC Host and former Eden Miller **Shelagh Rogers**, the documentary film **The Children of Eden Mills Talk About Climate Change** produced by Glenn and Libby Little, and the **Carbon Neutral Anthem**, a catchy original song full of good advice on saving energy by resident Linda Hendry, performed by the Kids’ Carbon-free Chorus.

A host of local businesses and individuals are generous and enthusiastic sponsors of the project.

The website ([www.goingcarbonneutral.ca](http://www.goingcarbonneutral.ca)) will be the focus of information, links and updates.

For information please contact:

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**Les Zawadzki and Linda Hendry Philip Gosling Wendy Smith and Steve Simpson**



**Nina and Jack Darmon**

**Mari Mordell**

**Hwy. 24 Veterinary Clinic**





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## Partners and Projects as of November 9, 2007

- The **University of Guelph, Departments of Environmental Science and Environmental Biology** is providing a team of students to determine, through household surveys over the next few months, the carbon footprint of the Village. At the same time, Dr. Andrew Gordon, Professor of Forest Ecology and Agroforestry, who gave a succinct review of the role of trees in the carbon neutral equation at the Launch, is providing expert advice on the development of biofuels, and carbon sequestration.
- **Enermodal Engineering** of Kitchener-Waterloo will undertake a detailed audit of the Community Hall, making recommendations designed to make the Hall itself carbon neutral, and creating a visible and educational model for green upgrading.
- The **Wellington-Waterloo Community Futures Development Corporation** has approved a \$100,000 loan for a substantial 10K solar power installation of 50 panels. The loan will be repaid through a combination of fund raising and the revenue earned through the generation of power and selling that power back to the grid.
- The **County of Wellington Green Legacy Program** has offered hundreds of trees, free of charge, for the program. Planting begins this weekend.
- **Rockwood Centennial Elementary School** has established its own Club Green. Sixty students have already joined. The School has held a "Garbage Alarm", tallying one day of garbage at the school at 155 pounds. Classes now compete for the Golden Garbage Pail, awarded to the class with the highest percentage of waste reduction.
- **Project Porchlight** exchanged one energy efficient lightbulb for an incandescent bulb for everyone attending the Launch.
- **EnWise Power Solutions** is offering complimentary home energy assessments to Eden Mills residents.
- The **Elora Centre for Environmental Excellence** is providing information on current government grants and programs which mesh with the project.