

Indoor Market will be test run for future use of Armoury

By Brock Weir

For the past several seasons, the Aurora Farmers' Market has used the Aurora Cultural Centre as the base of its Indoor Farmers Market ? that will remain the case this year, but a one-off event on December 6 could make 2015 a very different story.

On Saturday, December 6, the Aurora Farmers' Market will take over the historic Aurora Armoury building on Mosley Street at Larmont in a trial run to explore the building's viability as a future permanent home of an Indoor Market. It will not only be a trial run for the Market, but also for the Town of Aurora as they look at future options for the building, which they formally acquired from the Government of Canada this fall.

?We just want to see how it will go for the setup and everything,? says Anna Kroeplin, Chair of the Aurora Farmers' Market. ?It is very, very rustic, but it will probably suit our needs. The number one [priority] for us is to always ensure it is a safe environment. We want to make sure it is safe for our vendors and the public as well. We want to make sure it is warm and the air is breathable and clean. Of course, we want it to be warm and inviting as well. These armouries have not been inhabited in many years, so we would like to be able to work with the Town and look forward to the future.?

Although use as a possible Indoor Market was one that was bandied about in the Council table before they agreed to purchase the building from the Federal Government this summer, there has been no commitment from either side that that is indeed what this building can be used for. Ms. Kroeplin says many logistics need to be worked out before they can think that far again, including fee structure, but she sees the possibility of an indoor market as a huge bonus both for her group and the Town as a whole.

?Our volunteer committee is doing their research and due diligence and we will be visiting all these other indoor markets [such as those in Barrie and Guelph] and seeing what makes it work. We will be talking with organizers and seeing how we can bring that to our community.?

For Neil Garbe, CAO of the Town of Aurora, the December 6 Market will be a trial run as well to see what needs to be done from the Municipal end to make sure it is viable as possible. One question mark at this moment, he says, is the adequacy of onsite bathroom facilities. They are fully equipped, but the number of stalls might not be enough and portable facilities might need to be brought in ahead of December 6.

Interior walls, which don't quite reach the ceiling, divide up the main floor space and whether or not there would be increased viability in removing these and creating an expansive indoor space will be a question up to the next Council, he adds.

?This is a good test run to see if it meets the Farmers' Market needs and how the functioning works,? says Mr. Garbe. ?It will give us a good idea how the building moves and operates in an assembly use such as the Aurora Farmers' Market.?

Adds Ms. Kroeplin: ?Just being in the Heritage District Location really brings the charm and brings the customers. They know the quality we bring to the community for years now and I think we would like to keep that standard up.?