

## CHAT INITIATIVE

### Background

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2014, Innisfil Council passes a By-law to establish the Cookstown Heritage Conservation District (CHCD) and the Cookstown Community Improvement Plan (CCIP). This followed a study and plan by the MMM group that included a workshop, open house and public meeting for participation by residents of Cookstown.

An appeal to the Ontario Municipal Board was made by two residents and an OMB hearing was held on August 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, 2014.

On May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2015, the OMB report was issued and appeal was dismissed.

Because of the delay caused by the appeal and the length of time before the OMB report came out, not much has happened as a result of the CHCD and CCIP. Changes in staff at Innisfil Town Hall and new programs and priorities that have stretched resources, have also contributed to the inaction.

### The CHAT INITIATIVE

The CHAT INITIATIVE is to hold a full day seminar with several guest speaker and Innisfil staff personnel. This will give the CHCD and CCIP the boost they need in order for them reach their potential to improve the quality of life for the residents and business owners of Cookstown. The list of speakers will include experts that have been involved in making Heritage Districts successful in other towns in Ontario. They will be able to guide us in the right direction and help avoid mistakes. Their information and ideas will help to make Cookstown the Heritage village in Innisfil that people will want to live, do business in, and to visit. The staff personnel will explain the mechanics of the CHCD and CCIP and explain how to benefit from them.

The ongoing design assistance component will ensure the ideas and suggestions generated at the seminar will turn into actions and improvements will be made in the village.

The seminar will be held in the South Simcoe Theater, one of the heritage buildings in Cookstown. It has ample room, a good sound system, and a kitchen and lobby that can be used for lunch. Kathy Simpson; a director of the SST is very supportive of the Initiative.

