

Little blue cabins acquires design team and possibly land

By **Bill Kilpatrick**

Kevin Taylor is getting ever closer to making his dream a reality. Taylor has been informing North Hastings municipalities, the County of Hastings, non-profit groups, health care providers, and anyone who will listen for that matter, about his desire to create a residential and healthcare facility to help the unhoused get back on their feet, and now it could finally be moving forward in a serious way. For a background to the project please visit Taylor's web page www.littlebluecabins.ca. Progress has been slow thus far, but this past December things picked up in very serious way when they received an offer for land and numerous business owners stepped forward to offer their services as an in-kind donation. Land Ho?? The offer was so serious from the landowner, explained Taylor, They gave us all the documentation. They did a video drone shoot of the whole property the day before they presented us with the offer. They are so into it, said Taylor, who could barely hold back his excitement. He added that the land comes with not only enough room for the Little Blue Cabins, but enough land for future expansion as well and space for social enterprises. However, Taylor explained that he was not yet ready to say where the property is as there are still zoning issues, issues around potentially environmentally protected areas, along with water and septic suitability, and other bylaw issues that require approval by the County of Hastings before they get the green light to begin to build. It's just a matter of jumping through the hoops, said Taylor who does not want to jinx the offer by prematurely saying it's a done-deal without all of the proper environmental and county approvals. When the county says 'Yep, you can build here,' I'll be doing a full-on press release, said Taylor, but we still have to find out if it's a suitable location. The build and design team While Taylor was excited about the offer of the land, he was even more thrilled about finally having a full build and design team assembled and ready to go. It's just amazing how it all falls together, said Taylor referring to the fact that the offer of land and the members of the design team all happened within the same week, A couple weeks before Christmas all these people stepped up to the plate, said Taylor who estimates that their in-kind contributions equal close to \$500,000. It totally blew me away, exclaimed Taylor referring to the fact that all the volunteers for the design team offered their services for free. This is a design dream team, said Taylor adding that the only thing missing is a contractor, but he is confident that they will secure one in the near future. According to the press release by Taylor, the design team consists of architectural technologist Pat Marcotte of Havencraft Design, who designs sustainable and energy efficient homes, Fraser Young of Ecostructure Canada whose business designs food, energy and water independent homes and communities, Rodney and Adam Geyer of Bishop Geyer Surveying Inc who between them have over 30 years experience in surveying along with managerial experience in construction operations, Michele (Michael) Gallo of Gallo-Teck who specializes in residential, commercial, and renewable energy, Gallo is a fully licensed electrical contractor and a master electrician, a licensed solar electrician, and an industrial millwright mechanic, and last, but not least, is Laura Van Driel of York River Interiors who specializes in full-service interior design including renovation management, and professional furniture and décor selections and installation. While the roles of the team members are not necessarily carved in stone and will no doubt change as the project progresses, Taylor envisages Marcotte as the lead designer/ architect, Young's role will be landscaping, organic gardening, and he will also be in charge of social enterprises and small business, the two Geyer's have offered to take care of all the county and municipal planning and zoning permits and will no doubt be heavily involved in the design of the buildings, Gallo will handle all the electrical and power issues, and van Driel will handle the interior design. One of the first projects that the team will be putting together is a Google 3D walk through of the entire facility in combination with all of the photo graphic video surveying information. Taylor says that this is an important part of the project so that the neighbours and stakeholders will get to see what the project will look like when completed. Taylor wants a fully sustainable community that is ecofriendly and built for longevity, said Taylor. Given the pace of the project in the last two months, Taylor wants the public to know that he is actively seeking more volunteers for other teams that are being set up and that if anyone is interested in volunteering they can contact Taylor, get signed up for the stakeholder newsletter, and see where their skills could be best utilized as the project continues to unfold. For Taylor who has been hyping the project up for years and now sees that it's coming together in a real way, it's a little surreal for him, but as he sees the community coming together to support the project his only response is, It's just a beautiful situation. Taylor can be reached by email at littlebluecabins@gmail.com or by phone at 613-334-0409.