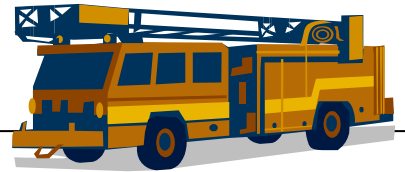


Ajax Fire Hall Goes Green



AJAX - Ajax is taking the environmental LEED with its new fire hall. When the hall is built, there will be a ‘green roof’, underfloor ventilation, a ground source heat pump, underground cisterns to collect rain water and an energy-efficient lighting system.

The cost to incorporate LEED (leadership in energy and environmental design) initiatives in the building will cost about \$800,000, which represents about 10 per cent of the building cost. The 2,625-square-metre (28,263 sq. foot) building will be at the southwest corner of Rossland and Salem roads. Construction is expected to start later this year and take about 12 months to complete.

Dave Meredith, Ajax’s acting director of operations and environmental services, told council’s general government committee recently that using LEED techniques will lower the cost to operate the building by as much as 65 per cent over the fire hall on Monarch Avenue. The savings, he added, are in spite of the new fire hall being almost twice the size of the one on Monarch.

The Monarch hall has an energy bill of about \$57,400 a year, or \$3.69 per square foot. The new station will have a per-square-footage cost of \$1.38, or \$39,000 annually. Mr. Meredith said the \$800,000 cost would be paid back in less than 20 years. The LEED costs will be covered by the money the Town receives from the federal gas tax revenue.

Ward 3 local Councillor Joanne Dies pointed to the “irony” of using revenue from the gas tax for a building to save energy and gas.

“I hope staff will come back with a policy that all our new buildings will be like this,” Wards 3 and 4 Regional Councillor Colleen Jordan added.



A green roof is covered with drought-resistant plants. The benefits include increased energy efficiency, extending the lifespan of the roof by two to three times, and absorbing noise. Three underground cisterns would each collect 40,000 litres of water, which would be used to irrigate the green roof. The ground source heat pump gathers heat and would replace a boiler in the winter. In the summer, it would eliminate the need for a cooling tower.