



ROYAL
BUILDING
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Georgian Bay Cancer Support Centre

PROJECT DETAILS

CLIENT

Sandy Cornell, Founder

LOCATION

Penetanguishene, Ontario

ARCHITECT & DESIGNER

Royal Homes

PROJECT DATE

October 2020

PROJECT DURATION

6 months
October 7, 2020–March 30 2021

PROJECT SCOPE

- 4,300 square-foot
- Single floor comprised of six prefab modules

BUILDING DESIGN

Right side features:

- Sound-proofing
- Admin offices
- Therapy rooms

Left side features:

- A big activity room
- Kitchen and dining area

Overview

The Georgian Bay Cancer Support Centre opened its doors to 185-plus members in October 2020. The new centre, designed and built in partnership with Royal Homes, means a lot to the North Simcoe community and serves as one of the first stand-alone cancer support centers in Ontario.

“ Making it easier for those suddenly touched by cancer to walk through those glass doors, crossing the threshold to great life changes, is crucial. For the Penetanguishene area and its members, the cancer support centre seems heaven-sent. ”

Sandy Cornell, Founder

Vision

As their old location in a hospital wing faced demolition, they needed a new place to call home. It was only in the fall of 2018 that a decision was made to proceed with a capital campaign, which raised \$1.6M for the new building. The centre had a tight deadline to meet. It had to be out of the hospital location in 2020. For members, the centre's raison d'être, means even more. “It means everything,” said Sandy Cornell, founder and member of the centre who first had the dream while sitting at her kitchen table thirteen years ago. “It means hope. It means a place where people can go, whether you're a cancer patient, a caregiver or family member. A place where you can get some psycho-social support and build your courage during your cancer experience, whatever it is,” Sandy said.



“ Working with Royal Homes was just a gift. I’m so glad we chose them. They were so good. They went above and beyond to help us and to make this experience a good one. ”

Sandy Cornell, Founder

Project Journey

When the centre opened, the introductory experience was overwhelming. “There were lots of tears of joy,” said Suzanne Marchand, the centre’s executive director and a cancer survivor herself. “It was so wonderful to have them walk in and feel like their breath was taken away.”

Fear and apprehension will be eased too. For shaken individuals living with a recent cancer diagnosis, walking into the cancer centre can be a difficult first step of acceptance. So this is more than the one-floor sum of six prefab modules crane-set on a cold North Simcoe morning last December. It’s a sanctuary for friends and family and fun – hosting much more laughter than tears.

BUILDING DESIGN

The lot for the project was generously gifted by the Town of Penetanguishene. The location was a nice street perfectly located close to downtown and the hospital. Once test holes had been dug, engineers determined that helical piles with grade beam would be the best way to build this foundation to support this size of building. This was a bit of a setback, but our clients knew this was the best approach to build in these soil conditions.

One of the challenges building in the winter months presented was the exposure to the elements. Royal Homes pre-builds all our homes indoors to protect against this very thing. Our only option for this build was to build the roof on the foundation sheet. We then had to remove and set the roof sections to the side when the six modules were delivered and set in place. The roof sections were then placed on top of the modules. It all fit together perfectly!

When the building was completed it looked like it was always there. It blended in very well with the surrounding neighbourhood with its beautiful exterior siding colours and timber accent trims. The parking lot also featured picturesque landscaping.

INTERIOR DESIGN

As you enter the building, the quiet side to your right features sound-proofing, administrative offices and therapy rooms. The loud-and-social side to your left features a big activity room, for programs like gentle yoga. A kitchen and dining area serves up Cornell’s favourite “Soup for the Soul” program. The new centre truly is “a home for hope”, along with offering warmth, kindness, understanding, acceptance and support for all members. “Our beautiful new building by Royal Homes has provided our membership with an uplifting, bright environment in which to feel positive and inspired,” said Sandra Baldwin, a centre director and chair of the organization’s Facility Management Committee. “Our members’ needs were the focal point while designing every inch of the space.

As you approach the front doors for the first time, the building’s two sides reach out as if to wrap a pair of caring arms around you - “like a big hug,” Cornell said. It’s a comforting and inviting design achieved with much input from Royal’s design team. “I never dreamed in a million years we would have such a beautiful home,” said Cornell, now 13 years cancer-free.

CLIENT EXPERIENCE

“The quality of the home is beyond my expectations,” Cornell said. “For me, it’s like a little miracle that we have this here.”



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