



## Presentation for CALES is a success

By Sue Bruni Express News Staff



Central Adirondacks Arts and Sciences Advocacy (CAASA) and Central Adirondack Laboratory for Environmental Studies (CALES) held a public meeting at the Old Forge Library on Aug. 26, to discuss possible options for creating a new laboratory and science education center in or near Old Forge.

Companies working with CAASA/CALES are *ELAN Planning, Design, Landscape Architecture PLLC (site planning/design, landscape architecture)*, Phinney Design Group (Architectural planning, Green Building Consultants), and Camoin Associates (Economic and Community Development).

“We’ve been trying to get this facility off the ground for over four or five years now,” said CAASA/CALES President, Dan Josephson. “And that doesn’t even include the time that Mirnie Kashiwa has been trying to get this idea going, way back when she first came up with the Snowflake Project to combine the arts and sciences in one location. This is really exciting for all of us.”

The goal is to create a CALES center to provide housing, laboratory facilities, classroom resources, environmental research facilities, and environmental education in the central Adirondacks.

*ELAN Planning representative, Jere Tatich, presented two options to the crowd of almost two dozen people. In the first option site planning and floor plans were displayed if the group were to obtain the old Art Center building and renovate it to accommodate the new facility. In the second option building designs and needs were discussed should they decide to plan a new construction in or near the Old Forge area. The facility will include 30 short term lodging units, 10 long term lodging units (lodging for researchers who would utilize the facility for their own projects), office space, classrooms, public meeting rooms and educational exhibits.*

*“A lot of research has gone into this project,” said Tatich. “A facility like this can potentially be bigger than just a regional asset. Old Forge is at the core of acid rain research, and has been for over 60 years. Scientists and universities have been traveling to the area for many years, and transporting their gear with them, trying to do their research with mobile, temporary means. Having the laboratories here, for every avenue of research - including mercury disposition, acid rain, invasive species and other critical environmental issues - can potentially increase eco-tourism for this area substantially.”*

*Tatich went on to exemplify the advantages the new facility would provide for the community.*

*“This area is ideal for this type of facility,” said Tatich. “If we can get this started, universities, independent research centers, even government agencies may begin utilizing it for all of their own research projects. And the area really needs the education that this facility can provide, not just for this particular area but for environmental studies that affect everyone.”*

When the idea first was considered, it was important to combine the education for both the arts and sciences. It was discussed that renovating the old Arts Center building would probably accomplish that goal more than constructing a new building. However, both options were discussed in depth, and attendees reviewed overall were pleased with the projections. The three companies ELAN, Phinney, and Camoin will continue to research the options available and try to construct a plan that will be advantageous to CAASA, CALES and to the community.

“This presentation was part of a feasibility study for the CALES project,” said Josephson. “When the feasibility study is completed, most likely in November, we will have final recommendations for the site and cost estimates. Once that information is in hand, we [CAASA] will be able to begin the process of fund raising from private donors and grants.” Josephson went on to say, “Overall, I’m really happy with the turnout and the response from everyone. People asked some very pertinent questions, made excellent comments, and everyone seemed very pleased with the plans so far.”