

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB)
Dalewood Elementary Accommodation Review Committee Meeting
Education Centre Lower Auditorium
November 23, 2011
Minutes (Working Meeting #9)

ATTENDANCE:

Committee Members

Chair –Krys Croxall

Voting Members – Suzanne Brown, Maria Carbone, Nadia Coakley, Anita McGowan, Kim Newcombe, Michael Reid, Kristen West

Non-Voting Members – Judith Bishop, Silvana Galli Lamarche, Heidi Harper, Joanne Hall, Margaret Jobson, Peter Martindale, Michelle Rodney-Bartalos

Regrets

Voting Members – Emily Reid, Pamela Irving

Non-Voting Member - Brian McHattie, Debra Lewis, Denise Minardi, Colleen Morgan

Resource Staff

Ellen Warling, Ron Gowland

Recording Secretary

Claire VanderBeek

1.0 Call to Order – Superintendent Krys Croxall

Superintendent Krys Croxall welcomed everyone back to the ninth working group meeting of the Dalewood ARC. This evening the focus will be on finalizing the ARC report which the Committee has been revising and editing since our last meeting. Ms. Croxall expressed thanks to everyone who contributed to revising the Committee's Report.

There is one more Working Group Meeting scheduled for next week (Tuesday, November 29th) and the final report is due to the Director of Education by Friday, December 2, 2011.

There were no members of the public present to observe this working group meeting.

2.0 Agenda

http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/arcelementary/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/Dalewood-ARC-agenda-Nov23_2011-Working-Group-Meeting-9.pdf

2.1 Additions/Deletions – Add: Review of the October 19 Public meeting # 4 minutes

2.2 Approval of the Agenda -The agenda was approved by consensus.

3.0 Minutes of the Public Meeting #4 (October 19, 2011)

3.1 Errors and Omissions – Michael had requested that his comments be captured and he confirmed that the draft minutes did so. Two small typos were noted for correction.

3.2. Approval of the Minutes – The minutes were approved by consensus.

3.3 Business Arising from the Minutes – None were noted.

4.0 Minutes of the Working Group Meeting #8 (November 10, 2011)

4.1 Errors and Omissions –

Change 7.0, Clause 1.0 to read: The Executive Summary is to be retitled Introduction and an Executive Summary to be created.

4.2. Approval of the Minutes – The minutes were approved by consensus.

4.3 Business Arising from the Minutes – Ms. Warling advised that she and Mr. Del Bianco had met with the HWSTS in order to provide Transportation costs. She explained the complicating variables in reaching a determination and that most probably between 2 and 3 buses would be required under the Board recommendation. Contract cost per bus \$40,000/year. She confirmed that FI busing costs are an added cost but noted that when the Dundana bus is no longer needed, the FI cost would revert to the pool. She noted this issue is not part of the ARC's mandate.

5.0 Review of Final ARC Report –

The draft report was projected on the screen for group editing. Mr. Del Bianco and Ms. Warling offered to provide final consistent formatting within the report. As Ms. Warling had to leave for a 7pm meeting, her input was provided as follows:

Page 13 – typo - change to (\$2,164,591)

Page 16 – re changing GRA On the Ground Capacity(OTG) – this number was calculated by removing rooms in the basement and the two rooms required to add new washrooms to the second floor. The report also talks about making the FDK rooms through a renovation. To do that we would have to take out 3 classes loaded at 23 and put in two FDK rooms loaded at 26 students, it would result in and OTG of 377. If you take out those 3 rooms and load all K spaces at 26, the capacity becomes 401.

In the ensuing discussion, it was apparent that there had been difficulties in editing the draft report – and unfortunately edits had been lost – possibly through the Restore function. This meant that the draft report is missing a number of the inputted changes.

Areas of discussion:

Table 2, page 16 - Whether these changes would require portables on site would depend on the pace at which the work is done. If done slowly (i.e. phased in when numbers warrant), none.

Ms. Warling reviewed how classes are loaded in Kindergarten, Primary and Junior by using enrolment projections to determine the number of classes per grade before explaining the difference between capacity and class loading and why they do not match.

Ms. Warling identified the location of the proposed FDK classes if an interior renovation was done, and that it would result in a gain of 2 FDK spaces but the loss of 3 regular classrooms.

The Board may not be able to offer FI in K due to a lack of qualified staff.

Why are we pulling out these numbers and discussing? Our recommendation is status quo and repairs we want done as space becomes available. Why put in the chart and continue to debate the numbers? Do we need to have this level of data since we don't buy into the projections?

It was determined that since last week, there has only been one change on page 10 in the first section. The suggested process for tonight is to confirm the language in the recommendation, the concepts and the rationale.

Members discussed demographic projections and the need to have statistics that show the trend is not as bleak as projected. Anita is pursuing current data to show enrolment is remaining consistent and not declining, in support of the ARC's recommendation.

Does adding capacity in GRA put us at a greater future risk for closure if there is a population decline?

Michael spoke to the charts that he had prepared relative to utilization and repair/ renewal costs. He felt that reorganizing the structure of the costs into a format of "what we are sure of and not so sure of" attempts to address the issue of best utilization.

Costs for internal and external FDK renovations at GRA were discussed. Mr. Gowland confirmed the design would be tailored to Ministry funding. Concerns were raised about the impact of internal renovations on the school.

The architects and Board staff will best know how to house and accommodate students using the FDK funds – this is not where our expertise is. We should base our recommendations on the value of the schools noting we disagree with numbers. The community is stable, even see student housing converting to family housing.

The use of the term elevator was understood to be either a lift or elevator.

To allay confusion and concern, Trustee Bishop clarified that comments in the press related to the Ethics Review did not apply to the ARC. Further, while not having read the article in the paper re education down to two-year olds, it was her understanding that Dr. Mustard supports neighbourhood schools as drop in places for parents. Ms. Croxall confirmed this concept already applies and pointed to OEYC and Parent and Family Literacy Centres.

Review of Section 3.0, Recommendations on page 14:

Recommendation a) Agree

Recommendation b) Concerns were raised about cost differentials between the Board and ARC recommendation 11, viability of the funding and whether the construction would be internal/external.

Should the ARC proposal cite reasonable expectations and emphasize the known/actual costs between the Board and ARC recommendations?

Trustee Bishop explained that as both Prince Philip and Dalewood were designated Prohibitive to Repair (PTR) they have not, and will continue, to not receive funding for any upgrades. Overall the Board has extremely limited funds for maintenance and she cautioned a future ARC may come up with a different solution. She noted there will be a future ARC in the Ancaster area.

Mr. Gowland clarified i) the difference between capital and school renewal grants (SRG), ii) that Trustee Bishop is referring to capital funding and iii) that in the Financial Summary provided to the ARC, capital (or important needs) were at the top then the legacy costs. Ms. Croxall confirmed there is the potential to “bundle” other work with FDK implementation if the Ministry approves of the cost savings of doing two projects together.

How do we leverage our recommendation? Is the original staff recommendation going to be their recommendation now? Should we be trying to reformat the numbers to discredit an option that we don't even know is going forward?

A suggestion was made to separate known costs and probable costs between the two recommendations as opposed to using uncertain renewal costs and grants that result in such a difference between the two options.

From the ARC perspective, these schools and communities are strong and vibrant and the report should include data that supports the position. However, they were concerned that not only is the data upon which the ARC was started faulty, the schools are now plagued with an ongoing lack of investment and wanted to address these legacy errors continuing into the future.

Demographic projections are not going down and it is the wrong time to move students – probably five years too early to consolidate.

Data discussion: Does the Committee's argument require data?

Since we have articulated the reasons we decided not to go with staff recommendation, we should include the details. The recommendations will be compared, so we should include those numbers.

Trustee Bishop pointed out that without money to maintain all the schools, funds will go to schools the Board is certain will be there in 10 years. She spoke to the need to consolidate schools, especially small or facilities that are not modern standard. She urged the ARC to take advantage of the FDK one-time funding and try to leverage it to obtain other funding for changes at GRA.

Our job is to say we value our 3 schools, they are viable and we want to keep them. We will need a recommendation asking trustees to put money into these schools. Once the ARC recommendation is tabled, it will become a political battle.

As it was argued that data would support the recommendation, it was suggested that the Board staff be asked to provide numbers to our recommendation to ensure the figures are accurate.

As FDK funding is mandated, ARC members agreed that recommendation b) page 14 can be deleted.

Members then agreed that the decommissioning of the two GRA basement rooms would take place – when it can be done.

As the ARC is supporting capital investment in all three schools and advocating they be taken off the PTR / black list, Suzanne to rewrite her paragraph.

Need to get data with respect to retention numbers.

Members agreed to delete Improved Primary Play structure chart page 15 – agreed

Members agreed to delete references to internal FDK classes in purple on pages 15 and 17.

OTG capacity was discussed and how the implementation of FDK would impact numbers. **The numbers will be updated within the report based on the year FDK is being implemented and then adjusted going forward. A verbal comment should be made when the report is presented that the Board/Ministry will determine location.**

It was agreed to incorporate the following changes:

- Add: Michael's financial information chart.
- Changes to the chart on Page 15:
~~Larger staff/work room OR book room~~
~~Improved primary play structure~~
~~Allowance to remove 2 rooms from the basement~~
~~2 additional K spaces within the building~~ GRA will receive FDK classrooms through Ministry process. Whether they are internal or external will be up to the Board & Ministry to decide.
Accessible washroom 6– Mr. Gowland explained that an accessible washroom would be for use by any student or member of the public. This room is usually larger than a normal single use washroom and includes change tables, supplies storage, etc.
- **Add recommendation d) [as current d) becomes c) with deletion of b)] That the Board work to ensure efficiencies in the construction of a recreation centre on the Dalewood site, where possible.**

Following up on a conversation about the use of the words decommission or reclassify and the how the basement rooms impact on Ministry calculations and funding, Ms. Croxall clarified it was the committee's understanding and intent that the basement rooms would be decommissioned when the space is no longer needed (i.e., when the school has adequate space to move students up to classrooms on floors 1 to 3). The basement rooms would then no longer be available for additional instructional purposes. Confirmed.

It was agreed that Anita will to work with Ms. Warling and staff to obtain the enrolment/model numbers. Michael will provide his financial template vis-a-vis capital/legacy costs for Board staff to provide accurate costs. Suzanne and Michael to edit the report for the meeting next week.

The Chair cautioned that with only one meeting left, a quorum was needed and the report must be acceptable to the members save for minor wordsmithing next week. Anita McGowan offered her regrets for November 29th.

It was originally proposed to include the difference in FCI in financials information between 2003 and 2010; however, after a brief discussion it was not included.

Concern was expressed that these schools were placed on the Prohibitive to Repair list based on incorrect FCI data and that once on the PTR list, the lack of funding becomes self-perpetuating.

Add a NEW 4.1 Other Alternative – include an analysis of Board’s option and why the ARC decided against it. Not just that we want it to stay open, but why. Use data. Quote some letters. Impact of triple track school – inequities among programs.

At 9 p.m., members agreed to continue to 9:20 p.m., by consensus.

Members indicated their agreement with the proposed NEW 4.1 above

Members indicated their agreement that a paragraph based on Antonio’s presentation will be included.

Members indicated their agreement that suggested wording prepared by Michael will be used for the Conclusion and the editorial group would reword Executive Summary.

6.0 Correspondence – There was no correspondence for the Committee this evening.

7.0 Other Business –

Members agreed that Michael Reid and Anita McGowan would be their representatives in presenting the Report to the Board of Trustees, along with the Chair.

8.0 Minutes of the Working Group Meeting #9 (November 23, 2011) – As another meeting is needed on November 29th, there are no minutes to finalize tonight.

8.1 Errors and Omissions –

8.2 Approval of the Minutes -

9.0 Adjournment – 9:10 p.m.