

East Hamilton City 1 Accommodation Review Committee
Working Group Meeting # 8
Thursday, January 30, 2014
6:00 p.m.

Hillcrest Elementary School
40 Eastwood Street, Hamilton, ON

Minutes

ATTENDANCE

Committee Members

Chair - Peter Joshua

Voting Members - Abbie Boyko, Casey Eaton, Susan Fischer, Laurie Hazelton, Sandra Lindsay, Megan MacDonald, Brian McPhee, Barbara Mitchell, Brianna Okerstrom, Brandy Paul, Susan Pretula, Norma Rookwood, Carla Shewell, Jennifer Voth, Chris Weston, Shannon Weston, Tracie Wilson

Non-Voting Members - Lisa Barzetti, Sandra Constable, Joanna Crapsi-Cascioli, John Gris, Dan Ivankovic, Ray Mulholland, Tiz Penny, Todd White

Regrets

Voting Members - Samantha Prosser

Non-Voting Members - Elaine Pilgrim-Susi

Resource Staff

Bob Fex, Peter Sovran

Recording Secretary

Kathy Forde

Public - 1 public attendee was present - Rosedale (1)

1. Call to Order

Peter Joshua welcomed everyone to the meeting. Appreciation was extended for efforts and involvement at the Public Meeting and during the entire process.

2. Agenda

2.1 Additions/Deletions

Nil

2.2 Approval of Agenda

Agenda was approved by consensus by a show of hands.

3. Minutes from Working Group # 7

3.1 Clarification

Nil

3.2 Approval of Minutes

Minutes were approved by consensus by a show of hands.

4. Minutes from Public Meeting # 4

4.1 Clarification

Nil

4.2 Approval of Minutes

Minutes were approved by consensus by a show of hands.

5. Correspondence

Correspondence received for review.

6. Selection of ARC Options

6.1 Discussion

The voting procedure was reviewed. With 17 members present, 9 votes will be needed for a vote in favour. Time was provided for members to further review correspondence and notes from Public Meeting # 4. Any new points for consideration can be shared to help inform thinking. Peter Joshua noted that members need to determine collectively the options that will go forward and need to feel comfortable with the decisions that are made. It is also important to keep in mind the need to work collaboratively. Thoughts on voting were shared in terms of narrowing down the three options. The following comments were provided:

- consistent theme is no guarantee of a new school
- tax payer money spent on renovations at other schools to be considered
- In the options that refer to making schools JK-6, the kids will miss out on sports - in response, a principal noted that JK-6 schools have one or two grade 6 classes and these students participate with JK-8 schools so even with one grade 6 class there could be a junior team - intermediate teams comprise of grade 7 and 8 students
- Numbers for Options 1 and 2, if grade 6 removed from some schools numbers would still be viable with the boundary change and Rosedale still keeps numbers that are viable
- Once in grade 6, students can stay for grades 7 and 8 even if boundaries change but students do have a choice
- When over 100% capacity, there is a cushion of 10% by maximizing space to its fullest and being creative in utilizing space so does not affect the number of classrooms - trustees will look at long-term projections (a 10-year horizon)
- When over capacity, is integrity compromised - no, where rooms like music rooms need dedicated space these areas would not be compromised

- What happens when you take away classrooms needed for FDK - funds have been set aside during the five years of implementation and space is evaluated to ensure FDK rooms are ready - there is a period of transition in some cases
- For schools on the chopping block how many have dedicated FDK - Parkdale and Rosedale
- How will the FDK implementation be affected in any schools that will consolidate or close - would have to follow Ministry mandate
- Can we be guaranteed that kids currently getting special attention will continue to receive these services - the Board is responsible at all times to provide support to special needs students as mandated

Vote - What does it mean when we put forward an option for a new school? In favour of a general discussion - YES (by consensus by a show of hands)

- Discussion continued
- Would like to make Option 1 and 2 a JK-5 instead of JK-6
- Can we tweak an option - depending on how major of a tweak, yes - public will have an another opportunity through delegations
- Option 3 - if we close a school with special needs students, could we not keep that group of special needs kids together - if it is a self-contained special needs class they would not be separated and would stay together - the Staff Option does address that concept
- Should consider streamlining options by voting on preferred two options - seems we do not need two “no new” school options - concern expressed for keeping Rosedale open
- Have already gone through the voting process to identify preferences and percentages have been identified
- Option 3 seems to stand alone
- Need to narrow down options

Committee Option #1 (31.3%)

- **Parkdale closes and students assigned to W.H. Ballard, Hillcrest, and Viscount Montgomery;**
- **Roxborough Park closes and students assigned to Hillcrest and Viscount Montgomery;**
- **Woodward closes and students assigned to Hillcrest;**
- **Rosedale becomes a JK-6 with a boundary change**

Vote - Elimination of Option 1 - YES keep Option 1 (8) votes / NO eliminate Option 1 (9) votes (secret ballot)

- Option 1 will be eliminated

Comments

- With the will of the committee the option could be reconsidered if necessary

Committee Option #2 (22.9%)

- **Parkdale closes and students assigned to W.H. Ballard and Hillcrest, and Viscount Montgomery;**
- **Roxborough Park closes and students assigned to Hillcrest and Viscount Montgomery;**
- **Woodward becomes a JK-6 with a boundary change**
- **Rosedale becomes a JK-6 with a boundary change**

Comments

- Have listened to public and done research - public has said Option 2 best benefits public concern
- There is no guarantee of a new school
- Portables addressed
- No busing and safe walking routes is in Option 2 but not in Option 3
- Public also wants smaller schools (Option 2 is more along with smaller schools / Option 3 considered super school)
- Overall, Option 2 seems to better respond to public input from parents at Woodward
- Majority of public input at the public meetings was from Rosedale so it is an indication that Rosedale should be heard
- Other schools may be at a disadvantage if they do not have the advocacy or cannot attend but it should not be interpreted as not being concerned
- Some parents share input through committee members rather than the public meetings
- It is not just Rosedale and Woodward - other schools also have deep concerns
- Ultimate accountability is through the trustees
- If we do not ask for a new school we will never get one
- If we ask for a new school we need to know what we are willing to sacrifice
- In the past, ARC recommendations have been blended
- If we do not put forward both Option 3 and Option 2 trustees may go with the Staff Option or could possibly blend parts
- If two options are put forward, they should be ranked so trustees are aware of preferences - if no preference is identified trustees will look at the options equally
- Todd White advised any number of options can be put forward and can be ranked or not
- Reason between JK-5 versus JK-6 was to facilitate capacity

Vote: Consider tweaking Option 2 and change wording to show Woodward and Rosedale being JK -5 - YES (by consensus by show of hands)

Comments

- Busing is a concern especially if on a busy street
- The opportunity to play on a playground after school and to connect with the community is a loss to students who take the bus
- Some students who take the bus are thriving and doing just fine

- In the past, with busing and with neighbourhood kids going to three different schools, the community experience was still great - there was community feeling at the school too
- We have to look at empty spaces - Option 3 addresses this
- Mandate is to cut spaces but kids are not a number - our lifestyles today make us want to have smaller schools
- We need to consider the greater needs of all students
- Research says the K-5 or K-6 school is where students of this age benefit the most
- Research of all types is available depending on what a person is reading
- If the JK-5 or JK-6 model was the best, the Board would have already been going in this direction
- One particular model does not override other models - there are benefits to all models
- We need to respond to our students' needs as much as possible
- We are here to work together and make a collective decision
- Option 2 is not near capacity
- Terms of Reference and Long Term Facilities Master Plan are guides

Vote - Identify if Option 2 or Option 3 is your top priority to get a feel - Option 2 (8) votes / Option 3 (9) votes (secret ballot)

Comments

- No expectation to rank - can put both forward equally
- Visually, which would appear first - can perhaps note in wording "in no particular order"
- How would you consider options equal on a 9:8 vote
- Calculated as a percentage, each would appear very similar
- One option did not stand out so do we really need to rank
- Not worth ranking at this point - have two viable options

Vote: Listing both Option 3 and Option 2 with no reference to ranking - YES in favour (16) votes / NO not in favour (1) votes (secret ballot)

Comments

- Nil

Committee Option #3 (45.8%)

- **Parkdale closes and students assigned to W.H. Ballard and Hillcrest**
 - **A couple of streets are assigned to a New school on Viscount Montgomery site;**
- **Rosedale closes and students assigned to New school on Viscount Montgomery site (550 capacity)**
- **Roxborough Park closes and students assigned to Hillcrest and New school on Viscount Montgomery site;**
- **Woodward closes and students assigned to Hillcrest**

Comments

- See comments above

6.2 Refine Options/s

Vote: Suggest that boundaries east of Kenilworth be considered and included in the report to look at balancing enrolment - YES (13) in favour / NO (4) not in favour (by a show of hands)

- Will include wording in the report

The Committee would also like to see wording in the report for the formation of a transition committee for students of schools identified for accommodation changes.

7. Draft Accommodation Review Committee Report - Review and Discussion

Volunteers will be needed to scrutinize and edit the report. Over the course of next week the report will be finalized to ensure content accurately reflects committee discussions and preferences. The complete report that goes to the Director will include all binder content and appendices. Volunteers include Sandra Lindsay (Parkdale); Shannon Weston (Rosedale); Tracie Wilson (Roxborough Park); Susan Pretula (Viscount Montgomery); Brian McPhee (WH Ballard); Brandy Paul (Woodward).

8. Minutes from Working Group Meeting # 8

8.1 Clarification

Nil

8.2 Approval of Minutes

Minutes approved by consensus by a show of hands.

9. Next Steps

In closing, Peter Joshua extended thanks to all members for working in difficult situations and for a job well done. Members also expressed appreciation to the Board team and principals for outstanding leadership and efforts over the past few months.

10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Handouts

Agenda

Presentation

Draft Minutes - Working Group Meeting # 7

Draft Minutes - Public Meeting # 4

Facilitator Feedback - Public Meeting # 4

Correspondence