

East Hamilton City 1 Accommodation Review Committee
Working Group Meeting # 1
Thursday, October 03, 2013
6:00 p.m.

Hillcrest Elementary School
40 Eastwood Street, Hamilton, ON

Minutes

ATTENDANCE

Committee Members

Chair - Peter Joshua

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

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

Regrets

Voting Members - Nil

Non-Voting Members - Sandra Constable

Resource Staff

Rob Faulkner, Bob Fex, Ellen Warling

Recording Secretary

Kathy Forde

Public - 5 public attendees were present

1. Welcome and Introductions

Peter Joshua welcomed everyone to the meeting. A roundtable of introductions followed. Committee members will participate as a collective group to share insights and to develop a recommendation that will be presented to the Board and Trustees. Meeting norms were highlighted. It will be important to respect opinions and conduct discussions in a positive environment.

2. Part 1: What is an Accommodation Review

Peter Joshua provided an overview. East Hamilton City 1 is one of four ARCs currently underway within HWDSB. The Accommodation Review allows voice to be heard on the important work underway. All members should become familiar with material in their binders to gain a greater understanding of the guidelines and data provided. When reflecting on various factors, priorities and local circumstances, value to the student will be essential. The process, membership structure and Terms of Reference were reviewed. An intense commitment is required. Public voice is essential.

In June 2013, a preliminary school accommodation review report was approved by the Board. From June to September 2013 background material was prepared and committees were formed. From October 2013 to January 2014, the community review phase will take place to develop options and recommendations. The goal is to have the final report reviewed by the Board and presented to the Standing Committee in February 2014. By May 2014, a final decision by Trustees is expected.

Voting procedures were outlined. The process for general decisions will be by consensus, by a show of hands, by voting members only. Sensitive decisions will be determined by ballot. Quorum is defined as 50 percent plus one of voting members. Votes are passed when quorum is met. A tie vote is considered defeated. Membership numbers need to be set by the first public meeting.

Committee members are expected to participate at all meetings. However, it is understood that the odd meeting may be missed. A membership listing will be provided once finalized. The public is welcome to observe at all Working Group meetings.

At the Public Consultation meetings, information will be shared and input gathered in small focus groups. All information will be posted at www.hwdsb.on.ca to keep the committee and community informed.

Tables at the meeting were arranged in groups. Possible configurations were discussed. To accommodate member preferences, tables will be rearranged in a horseshoe format at the next working group meeting.

DECISION: By a show of hands voting members agreed that setup for the next Working Group Meeting will be in a horseshoe configuration
ACTION: Horseshoe setup at next meeting October 17

Bob Fex spoke about where we are in the process and provided insight to the Ministry guidelines that will lead us through the work ahead. Timelines are fairly tight considering four ARCs are currently underway. Commitment is demanding.

The schedule and timeline were reviewed. All meetings will take place from 6:00-9:00 p.m. Two dates to the draft calendar were revised. The Public Meeting on January 23, 2014 will change to January 28, 2014. The Working Group Meeting on January 29, 2014 will change to January 30, 2014. Meeting locations will

rotate as determined through the Principals. Members will be permitted to tour host schools to become acquainted with the facilities.

DECISION: By a show of hands the meeting schedule was accepted
ACTION: Meeting schedule and calendar to be updated and distributed

Binder contents were reviewed. It will be important for members to familiarize themselves with the material provided. Guidelines, policy and the Terms of Reference were outlined.

Reference Criteria (facility utilization, accommodation, programs, teaching and learning environments, transportation, partnership opportunities, equity) was outlined. As key criteria, it will be important to consider these points as options are considered and developed.

School Information Profiles were reviewed. Data has been gathered from various resources and consolidated into 14 sections. The intent is to look at all schools with similar information. Data is designed to capture key points of interest. Additional school information in binders was referenced, which includes a school report, boundary map, enrolment by grade, grade organization, site plan, walking distance map, student distribution map, EQAO data. Data was collected in June and over the summer.

3. Part 2: Why HWDSB are conducting Accommodation Reviews

Bob Fex provided an overview. Declining enrolment is common throughout the province and has led to underutilized schools. Many HWDSB schools are small and aging. Over 5,000 excess elementary pupil places exist which creates a surplus of approximately 20-25 elementary schools (at a school size of 250-300). Maintaining empty space is costly and provincial funding is limited in the current economic environment. The funding formula is largely based on enrolment so declining enrolment generates financial and operational pressures for school boards. Elementary reviews are scheduled to continue over the next five years.

The Long Term Facilities Master Plan (LTMFP) was reviewed. Many factors (capacity, grade organization, site size, facility conditions, utilization rates, transportation, accessibility) are considered in providing quality teaching and learning environment. The LTFMP lists optimal schools grade configurations are JK-8 schools and school sizes at 500-600 students.

4. Pupil Accommodation Review Terms of Reference

Address in Item 2.

5. Part 3: Why an Accommodation Review for East Hamilton City 1

Ellen Warling advised that East Hamilton was one of three ARCs identified and approved in 2010. West Flamborough was added to ensure reviews were geographically diverse across HWDSB. Guiding principles of the Long Term Facilities Master Plan (LTFMP) suggest a preferred elementary model with a grade

organization of JK-8, possibilities of smaller schools consolidating and a larger school. As part of the LTFMP, 15 ARCs in total have been identified for review over the next five years.

6. Current Situation and Staff Option

Ellen Warling reviewed enrolment numbers and utilization. Student numbers between schools varies greatly. Average current (October 2012) schools' utilization is at 67 percent. Funding is based on enrolment not on square footage so it is a challenge in terms of maintaining school facilities. By 2022, with declining enrolment, even less funding will be available to spread out over many schools. As well, cost estimates for maintaining schools increase significantly with older buildings. The Facility Condition Index (FCI) Calculations are based on the life cycles of various items (i.e. furnaces, flooring, roofing, etc). The funding gap is significant based on enrolment numbers.

We are at the beginning of the process. The staff option is only a starting point as required by Ministry guidelines. At the end of the process, the Trustees will have a Staff option and an ARC option for consideration. Parent involvement and staff voice at the school level is needed. Input will be essential to understand, enhance and validate the option that is developed. The staff option recommends consolidation of Roxborough Park, Hillcrest and Woodward into Hillcrest in 2014; consolidation of Rosedale and Viscount Montgomery into Viscount Montgomery in 2014; and, consolidation of Parkdale and W.H. Ballard into W.H. Ballard in 2014. Consolidation will eliminate the capacity gap and create more ideal JK-8 schools. Minimal construction and renovation costs are expected. The greatest challenge will be the number of full day kindergarten spaces. Approximate cost for a kindergarten class renovation is \$250,000 and for anew FDK addition is \$450,000. Again, the recommendation is only an option and can change to incorporated information gathered during the consultation process as the process evolves.

7. Questions & Answers

Factors / Data

There was further clarification on enrolments – how enrolments are determined, utilization, and declining enrolments, by resource staff. The committee discussed the condition of schools versus new schools as well as potential modifications (e.g. air conditioning) and long-term use of closed schools.

School Closure

Discussion/clarification of the 2014 closure date, the plausibility, and the effect on staff at schools that would close followed. Resource staff did not have the specifics on the process for staff when schools close, identified that collective agreements will dictate such a process. Clarity was provided on the ARC's ability to change the implementation date on the staff option. The committee is tasked with providing their option/s which includes specifics on dates of implementation.

Staff Option

The committee sought clarification around the staff option. Resource staff explained the staff option was public information and reiterated that that the option was meant as a starting point for the committee process despite being mandated by the Ministry of Education to provide an option. The committee took the opportunity to voice the possibility of recommending new schools as opposed to renovations.

Comments

- As stated, we are here to review facts and realize some schools have to close even though everyone wants their school to stay open.
- The staff option is from senior staff. Trustees will make the final decision but have not provided input to the staff recommendation. Trustee input will not be provided within the Working Group forum.

8. Next Steps

- Review binder contents.
- Review SIPs (approval will be required at the second Public meeting).
- Attend Public Meeting #1 scheduled October 10, 2013. Role of committee members during the Public Meeting is to listen to public feedback on the staff option in order to help develop solutions for the planning area as the process moves forward.

9. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.