

**West Flamborough - Accommodation Review Committee
Public Consultation Meeting # 1
Wednesday, October 02, 2013
7:30-9:00 p.m.**

**Spencer Valley Elementary School
441 Old Brock Road, Greensville, ON**

Minutes

ATTENDANCE

Committee Members

Chair - Mag Gardner

Voting Members - Sara Ardiel, Karen Baillie, Pamela Beech, John Belanger, Tania Brittain, Jessica Dymont, Colleen Evans, Kristin Glasbergen, Candice Goodale, Cairine Grantham, Brett Humphrey, Anthony Hunter, Rachel Kott, Patti Lee, Shelley McGuire, Stephanie Munro, Heather Ryan, Melissa Slote, Janine Vandenheuval, Sue VanEgdom, David Wardell

Non- Voting Members - Stewart Cameron, Doug Dunford, Kate Fischer, Eddie Grattan, Kim Short, Karen Turkstra

Regrets

Voting Members - Callie Matthews

Non- Voting Members - Nil

Resource Staff

Bob Fex, Ellen Warling, Jackie Penman

Recording Secretary

Kathy Forde

Public - 25 public attendees were present - Beverly Central (6), Greensville (12), Millgrove (6), Spencer Valley (1)

1. Welcome and Introductions

Mag Gardner welcomed everyone to the meeting and provided introductions.

2. Part 1: What is an Accommodation Review

Mag Gardner provided an overview. The Accommodation Review is a process that allows input on the future of a school for decisions that are made based on a broad range of criteria related to the quality of

student learning. Essentially, two accommodation options will be presented to the Board of Trustees: one staff option and one Accommodation Review Committee option. Public input will be essential to enhance, change and adapt to the option that is developed. Consultation is intended to achieve a common understanding of the work ahead. All public comments will be provided to the committee for consideration.

Mandate, membership and meeting norms were highlighted to set the stage for understanding the process. Guidelines have been provided through the Ministry of Education. Meeting dates have been approved and will be posted on the HWDSB website at www.hwdsb.on.ca. Public consultation provides opportunities to share comments and ask questions. The learning environment is essential. Student value will be a priority as factors and criteria are considered.

In June 2013, HWDSB approved a preliminary report to proceed with the West Flamborough accommodation review. Three other reviews were also approved –they include Central Mountain, East Hamilton City 1, and West Glanbrook. The preliminary report outlined the benefits and rationale intended to ensure efficient use of space. The report contains current and long- term enrolments and identifies the need to balance enrolment with capacity to ensure sustainability and provide equity of access to facilities and programs. The report is available on the HWDSB website. From June to September 2013 background material was prepared and committees were formed. Now, from October 2013 to January 2014, the community review phase will take place to develop options and recommend them to the Board of Trustees. From February to May 2014, the final report will be prepared and presented to the Standing Committee, where public delegations will be received for final input. By May 2014, it is expected that a decision will be made by Trustees.

Bob Fex explained the timelines. Public consultation will occur on Wednesday evenings for West Flamborough. Public consultation is intended to gather diverse views. Communication is important.

3. Part 2: Why HWDSB are conducting Accommodation Reviews

Bob Fex indicated that declining enrolment is a common issue throughout the province including HWDSB, which has led to many under-utilized schools. There are approximately 5,000 excess elementary pupil places system(HWDSB) wide. The average size of schools is 250 to 300 students, which equates to a surplus of approximately 20-25 elementary schools. Many schools are small and aging. Provincial funding, which is structured based on enrolment, is a challenge. As a result, we are maintaining and operating the equivalent of 20-25 extra schools of empty space. Status quo is not an option and is reflected in the Board's decision to commence accommodation reviews. The Long Term Facilities Master Plan (LTFMP) was approved in February 2013 and provides the guiding principles for examining our schools.

4. Pupil Accommodation Review Terms of Reference

Bob Fex reviewed the Terms of Reference (ToR) (mandate, membership, operations, meetings, reports, objectives) for common understanding.

5. Part 3: Why an Accommodation Review for West Flamborough

Bob Fex noted that Accommodation Reviews were strategically determined based on a geographical scope across HWDSB. A balance of where planning areas were geographically within the HWDSB jurisdiction was considered to distribute focus and staff resources. The LTFMP Guiding Principles suggests a preferred JK-8 model. The Guiding Principles provide the framework for determining the viability of our schools. The West Flamborough ToR Reference Criteria (facility utilization, accommodation, programs, teaching and learning environments, transportation, partnership opportunities, equity) are the key factors that will be used by committee members in developing an option.

6. Current Situation and Staff Option

Ellen Warling provided an overview. Five schools (Dr. Seaton, Beverley, Greensville, Millgrove, Spencer Valley) are currently under review for West Flamborough. Many of these schools were constructed years ago and are older schools. Enrolment is at approximately 76 percent capacity overall, which means approximately 300 empty seats exist. Since the provincial funding formula is based on enrolment rather than square footage, maintaining empty space in schools becomes inefficient. The process it is about creating better learning environments and improving facilities for our students. It allows us to look at improvements and upgrades for existing facilities. Changes will help to stabilize enrolment and close the funding gap.

The staff recommendation is an option developed by the Board as a starting point. Public input is required to enhance, inform and understand alternate options that will be developed. The recommendation suggests that Beverley Central be consolidated into Dr. Seaton in 2014, and that Greensville be consolidated into Spencer Valley in 2014 with some students shifting to Millgrove. While closure of a couple of buildings is recommended, this direction builds stabilization for all students in the future. A combination of classroom modifications and new construction would be required. Community input will be essential in developing options and solutions for the final recommendation. For clarity, the staff option will be referred to as the administration staff recommendation option.

Public attendees joined Working Group members to discuss concerns. Principals facilitated this interactive session. Comments were captured and will be included as feedback for review by the Working Group.

7. Questions and Answers

Factors / Data

There was further clarification on enrolments – how enrolments are determined, utilization, and declining enrolments, and aging populations by resource staff. The committee discussed programming considerations, financial planning, and the JK-8 model.

School Closure

Discussion/clarification took place regarding transportation and student safety. The committee inquired if the scope of the schools involved could include more schools. Brief discussion of the effects the staff option has on the Waterdown secondary boundary approved last year.

Staff Option

The committee sought clarification around the staff option - how realistic the 2014 closure date of the staff option was. Clarification was provided to the committee on 'who' created the staff option. It was a collective effort between HWDSB department staff including Planning & Accommodation, Capital Projects, and Finance – not included were Trustees. 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. It was stressed to the committee that public input is essential. The committee took the opportunity to voice the possibility of recommending new schools as opposed to renovations.

8. Next Steps

- Next Working Group Meeting # 2 - October 16, 2013 at Millgrove Elementary School
- Next Public Consultation Meeting - November 06, 2013 at Millgrove Elementary School

9. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Handouts

- Agenda
- Presentation
- Administration Staff Accommodation Option