



**Accommodation Review – West Hamilton City
Working Group Meeting #1
December 14, 2016 - 6:00 pm
Hess St. School, 107 Hess St. N.
Minutes**

Attendance

Committee Members: John Efthimiadis, Khantavy Sayavon, Rob Fiedler, Tracy Upham, Sue Caven, Katherine Graham, Barbara Stares, Matt Allen, Nicole Poyton, Tanya Ritchie, Allison Savage, Shelly Turk, Jo Anne Cheyne, David Heska, Jennifer Walsom, Janine Durajlija, Melissa Crawford, Shelly Turk, Nadine Bernacki

Committee Member Regrets: Eleni Jalbout, Sarah Sirkett

HWDSB Resource Staff: – Superintendent/Chair Sue Dunlop, Mary Finstad, Steve Johnston, Tannis Hamill, Gerry Smith, Richelle Bratuz, Estella Jones, Sean Malcolmson, Dan Ivankovic, Karen Koop, Bob Fex, Ellen Warling

Trustees: Jeff Beattie, Christine Bingham, Larry Pattison, Todd White

Public: Katherine Roy, Brandon Braithwaite, Brittany FitzGreen, Sheri Selway, Shawn Selway

Recording Secretary: Sue Phillips

1. Welcome & Introductions

Sue Dunlop welcomed the group and introduced herself as the facilitator and chair of the working group. She addressed meeting conclusion of 8:00 p.m. Roundtable introductions of working group members took place.

Jeff Beattie, Trustee/Vice-Chair of the Board

Jeff talked about having been through the accommodation review process in his community last year and told the group it is a great opportunity for the community to offer their perspective. That is what trustees are seeking. Ask yourselves what you see before you – is it the best we can do? If you think we can do something different or better please let us know. There are great resources available. We want to hear your perspective - without it we as trustees can't make the best decision. Stay engaged, ask questions and we will provide answers and feedback. At the end we will come up with the best answers.

Todd White, Trustee/Chair of the Board

Jeff has summarised it well. From the Board of Trustee perspective this process is very important to us. We've been staring at these maps looking at how communities are structured. Nine schools are being reviewed. You have free reign over the schools and can look at various models. We want you to look at all the structures – ask yourselves how you want to design yourselves as a community? We want a long-term vision not quick fixes. Look at what works long term. Cross out the schools and look at the communities – schools are placed in communities to support communities. What does it look like? Look at multi-phase scenarios. Where do we want to go? This review is more unique than anything in the past. This one will be the sincerest community input and is a community building exercise. We have a vision that we launched this past September and the City of Hamilton, at the same time, has created a 25-year vision. How do we fit into that vision? If you were to ask me today what is the long-term plan I couldn't answer that and that is troubling. This process will help us develop that plan. There are challenges. Nothing is guaranteed. We don't know what direction it is going to go. We are asking you to help us develop the plan. Thank you for being part of the process. If you have questions for trustees we are available as resources. There are portions that may feel frustrating – ask us. We have three to four months to figure things out.

2. Housekeeping Items

Sue Dunlop reviewed the meeting norms and consensus. Our goal is to promote a positive environment treating all members and guests with respect. If anyone feels the norms are not being met, please let me know.



3. Correspondence

The advisory committee will receive any letters, emails or communication directed towards the committee from the public. At each working group there will be time allotted to read, ask questions and decide on response (if necessary). The Board website has a page dedicated to Accommodation Reviews and there is a dedicated email address.

4. Overview of Binder

Bob Fex provided an overview of the binder.

All the info is together so you can peruse and look at other school info as well. Since we need to prepare for the upcoming public meeting we won't go too deep into the binder information as we want to make sure to cover our agenda.

Sections 1-3 include: Committee Membership, Times & Schedule and Ministry of Education Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline

Section 4 is the Initial Report which includes required work completed prior the accommodation review. In the guidelines we are asked to present an initial option. This is just a starting point to take to the community, to promote discussion. It is not approved as the final option. Sometimes initial options are approved but not always. There are no preferred options at this stage. There is a summary of background data and a summary of accommodation issues. HWDSB's Long Term Facilities Master Plan outlines our future planning for our school facilities and is factored into the Initial Report. This is updated on an annual basis. We considered what the schools need to reach Ministry benchmarks and accessibility standards.

Each year we look at our enrolment projections by looking at our student information system and progression factors and break down the numbers school by school, grade by grade. Residential development is a big driver. The average board wide for every new single home that is built is .24 yield. 65% vs 35% to Catholic board. Every 100 homes potentially generates 24 students for HWDSB. It is different by panel. Projections are adjusted for grade structure. Other data used is population forecasts from the City of Hamilton and live birth data. Every community exhibits different trends that we examine. We want to pay attention to the utilization # - OTG (on the ground capacity) what the school was designed for according to the Ministry. This is enrolment divided by capacity.

Section 5	Appendix A is the HWDSB Pupil Accommodation Review Policy, Directive and Terms of Reference.
Section 6	Appendix B School Information Profiles – includes nine attachments / profiles of each school under review.
Section 7	Appendix C School Feasibility Study – includes analysis of each school with a summary of benchmark items and costs associated. High and urgent needs are identified.
Section 8	Appendix D Alternative Options – a lot of factors are reviewed, such as; large schools, small schools, possible heritage sites
Section 9	Appendix E – Benchmark Items by School
Section 10	Appendix F – Feasibility Report Calculations

Bob Fex reviewed the correspondence received.

Correspondence - Working Group Meeting #1, December 14/2016

Date of Correspondence: November 23, 2016

As a parent of students at Earl Kitchener, I reviewed the documents posted online and several questions came to mind:



- Q. Why is the FI boundary for EK not considered as part of this review process? Changing it would decrease the number of students at the school.
- A. It will be considered.
- Q. If the preferred option goes ahead when would the renovations (new gym etc.) occur at EK?
- A. Trustees will decide on timelines. All renovations will be contingent on school benchmarks and feasibility.
- Q. The new gym and other renovations appear like they will reduce the outside space available for students to play in; how will this be mitigated given that EK already has a very small area for the kids to play at recess/before school etc.?
- A. The initial option does not include any changes to the Earl Kitchener facility. If trustees were to consider additions or renovations to Earl Kitchener, the current site would be taken into consideration.
- Q. Does the Board ever build two story gyms (i.e. a gym over top another gym) to provide additional space for students/classes?
- A. No, we do not build two-story gyms.
- Q. I noticed that the preferred school size is 6 ac, with EK being well beneath that size. Does this review process consider the option of expropriating houses abutting the school property to increase the size of the school yard? At EK the site could be increased significantly by expropriating 2-3 of the houses that abut the parking lot/playground. Funds will be presumably raised for such a venture when Hess School is closed and the property sold.
- A. Any decision to expropriate property is not taken lightly by trustees. The accommodation review committee can consider all options available.

5. Public Meeting – January 11, 2017

Sue Dunlop identified the purpose of the public meeting as well as a review of a suggested format for the meeting. The purpose of the first public meeting is to receive feedback on the initial option. The meeting must include an overview of the Orientation Session, the Initial Report and the SIP.

Format - What we do know is that town hall meetings do not work well. We are suggesting a presentation followed by small discussion groups using guiding questions with facilitators from board staff (who will have training). The facilitators would take notes and report back to larger group. The advisory committee members could be present at table discussions as well.

Trustees encouraged committee members to move about the room to observe/listen to group discussions.

Bob Fex – we have a liaison committee with the city and our trustees meet with city staff. It was recommended that we bring in 2 city planning staff at our next working meeting. Is the group interested in having this city staff attend?

The group agreed to have the city staff attend.

Sue had small groups of three discuss the suggested format for two minutes. Each group agreed with the small discussion group format with the following additional feedback/questions:

- Q. Are we able to make a 3-5 min video about a school? Could that happen before the group meetings?
- A. Sue indicated that is not the place for a video explaining the delegation process which takes place before the final report/final decision. The delegation process provides people the opportunity to make a presentation at a board meeting.
- Q. We want to make sure all voices are heard. 65% of our school is Arabic speaking, how will we capture this?
- A. It would be up to the skills of the facilitators to help.



Q. When does fighting for schools to stay open start?

A. We need to continue with our work and bring all info forward. We cannot be distracted by that. The committee is not asked to come up with final recommendations. The Ministry guidelines are different than they were for Queensdale school – it is not the same structure as it was before.

Q. When in our groups are we speaking to only our school or is it a mix?

A. It will be a mix.

Q. Some people would like written feedback. Could that SIP information be available for people who want a little more information.

A. Yes. We can have copies. We can also direct people to the website as well as have visuals around the room poster size.

Q. Could some people still do a delegation? Small groups can sometimes feel as if there is a “divide and conquer strategy”.

A. The purpose of the public meeting is to collect feedback. Anyone can share “strong” feelings. People can also write letters to the committee that could be shared with larger group.

Q. Would it work if facilitators presented at the end of the small group discussions?

A. Yes, they could present a snapshot of information gathered.

Q. Do we have to have only two public meetings?

A. No, we can have more if required.

Q. Could the public meeting and WG meeting be switched?

A. We need to schedule the all meetings within a certain time frame. The dates of all meetings have been published. If necessary, the committee can add meetings.

Sue noted that resource staff are here to answer questions from the public.

Q. Can I provide info if I know it?

A. Yes

Q. Will it be clear to the public who we are and what our role is?

A. Yes

Guiding questions – four open-ended. It was noted by Sue with apology that the slide with guiding questions was not included.

Group Suggested Questions:

- Based on the info you’ve seen today are there any immediate concerns or priorities?
- What concerns do you have?
- What benefits could you hope would result in your community from initial option?
- Is there information you think we need to pay attention to?
- What would you like to express around challenges or concerns facing you with regards to the school?
- How does this initial option impact you?
- What do you like most about your school now?
- What don’t you like about your school now?
- How can we keep our school open?
- Suggestion that we try not to refer to the initial option.



Q. Will there be translators
A. Yes

Q How does the info get captured and consolidated.
A. Facilitators would do it digitally – right into an excel spreadsheet.

One committee member noted, in talking about our schools what's driving this is to bring our capacity up. If you want to close schools, there have to be really compelling reasons.

Questions and Answers

Q. Regarding membership of the Working Group Committee - I thought it was going to be one parent, one staff etc. There seems to be more reps than I expected. Why do some schools have more reps here than others?

A. It is voluntary. No benefit to having more than one. Because we are using the membership as a conduit to the trustees, there is no reason to feel some schools are at a disadvantage. Some schools have Home and School and School Council. The community representatives are representing the community not just a school.

Q. In the city there aren't as many single homes. How do you factor in apartments for enrolment projections?

A. Accommodation and planning uses a formula to determine how many students are generated by apartment buildings, town home and single family homes. These things are factored in.

Q. Funding flowing to board – how rooms are utilized? Barbara Stares do we create different #s of students.

A. The Ministry of Education has a formula to designate the number of pupil spaces in schools. Some schools in this Pupil Accommodation Review have smaller class sizes, which we need to take into account. Also, there are a number of special classes using classrooms in the nine schools.

Q Aren't primary classes capped at 20?

A. We cannot go over 20 for primary class, but some schools can go over. There is a difference between capacity of the room vs how many students are in the school. There are funding pieces that come into play. Gr. 1-3 have to be below 20. The hard cap is 23. Other classrooms could be at 29 or 30. Ministry has identified that number.

Q. How does the percentage of that capacity apply to Strathcona?

A. We can provide the schools current organization as an attachment – (if we do Strathcona's, we may want to provide them for all schools)

Q If we have questions about SIP when should we ask them?

A. Now and at any time.

Q. How is rental revenue generated by schools? How is bus data generated as time on the bus and numbers of students didn't seem to match?

A. Rentals re: revenue – any schools that rent space. #s based on last year's rental rates and child care. The trustees have moved to a cost recovery rate. The #s will change over time. Large part of cost covered through grants. Schools that are priority schools will get space free. We get a separate grant to offset costs. We have moved to cost recovery for rental costs.

There are some students who might be on a bus for a long time if they are in a special education class and live elsewhere in the district. For instance, a school might have no students eligible for transportation in catchment, but a special education class of 12 students might all receive transportation to different places within the district.

Q. Regarding feasibility - which numbers should the committee be using when discussing/reviewing 5 yr. renewal costs they are slightly different than the urgent costs.



A. The ones that you see in the appendices SIP are ALL the costs. It is not up to the advisory committee to come up with the costs – we are here for ideas and concepts.

Q. What does designated and identified mean regarding a building?

A Designated means the City has outlined different components of a site that must be preserved. Identified means an assessment could occur.

Q. Which ones are designated?

A. Earl Kitchener and Strathcona are identified and Central is designated. An historical designation means if we wanted to close it it would be a very long process and possibly not successful. This has been factored into the initial option.

Q For future reports can this designated/identified information be included in the info?

A. yes

Q. Can we get walkability studies for the school areas?

A. We have the walking boundaries in the profiles.

6. Next Steps

Public meeting Jan. 11, 2017 at 6:00 pm. Sir John A. Macdonald School

Next Working Group meeting January 25, 2017 Bennetto School.

At the next WG meeting we will discuss tours of schools. There is time for a walk-through of Hess right now if anyone is interested.

7. Adjournment – 8:05 p.m.