

West Accommodation Review Committee Meeting

Ancaster High School

May 31, 2011

Public Meeting #2

Minutes

ATTENDANCE:

Committee Members

Chair –Superintendent Sharon Stephanian

Voting Members – Christopher Austin, Deborah Beedie, Rosemary Bellefeuille, Phyllis Chasty, Lawrie Cook, Allyssa Horning, Lori King, Deborah Knoll, Heather MacDonald, Sharon Ricci, Judy Shen,

Non-Voting Members – Gudrun Anderson, Paul Barwinski, Judith Bishop, Jessica Brennan, Krys Croxall, Em Del Sordo, Michelle DesRochers, Rick Hart, Alex Johnstone, Judy Langsner, John Laverty, Brian Lenart, Maria Rikic-McCarthy, Laurie Swackhammer,

Regrets

Voting Members - Bea Howell, Boris Williams

Non-Voting Members –Lloyd Ferguson, Brian McHattie, Russ Powers, Dan Thomson, Anne Waldie

Resource Staff

Daniel Del Bianco, Don Hall, Jim Wibberley, Ellen Warling

Recording Secretary

Tracy McKillop

1.0 Call to Order

Superintendent Stephanian welcomed everyone to the second public meeting. She thanked everyone for their interest in the process and the contribution that they will make to the accommodation review. The Chair introduced each member of the Committee, Jim Wibberley and Daniel Del Bianco the Resource Staff along with Don Hall, Senior Manager of the Facilities Department.

2. Opening Remarks

Superintendent Stephanian shared that the goal of the meeting was to do five things:

- Hear from the individuals who have registered as delegations.
- Provide an overview of the Accommodation Review Process and the work of the Committee.
- Offer a look at the information the Committee has received and discussed at its meetings. All of the information the Committee has received as well as the approved minutes are available on the Board's web site.
- Provide a brief overview of the work of the Committee including the concept options developed by the Committee and what the next steps will be.
- Provide members of the community the opportunity to ask questions and make comments.

3. Delegations

The West Accommodation Review Committee asked presenters to consider the following;

- Our region has excess capacity.
- We are faced with declining enrolment.
- The Board has a costly sum of deferred maintenance and can't afford to maintain existing schools.
- The Board would like to target 100 per cent utilization of the secondary school buildings.

Presentations should focus on a vision for the secondary schools in the West area. Presenters are asked to provide input on any of the following areas:

- Accommodation
- Programming
- Transportation
- Funding
- Timelines
- Implementation plans

There were six delegations for the evening. Each presenter was allotted ten minutes to make their presentation followed by a question and answer period.

Questions (Q) Answers (A) Comments (C)

The first presenter for the evening was Grant Linney. Mr. Linney gave a power point presentation which will be submitted at a later date and this will be posted on the web site once it has been received. His focus for the evening was why Parkside should remain open. He spoke of specialized programming that is currently operating in the Guelph area. The students are allowed to apply for the program. There are a number of them throughout the Province – about two dozen students in both of the programs in Guelph and they have a waiting list for other students who would like to participate. A member of the Committee shared that they had a similar program at Parkside however it was not that well attended due to transportation issues. A member of the audience shared that it sounded like a great program and wondered why they could not have it at Highland. Mr. Linney felt that it would be advantageous to have it offered right in core of the town and next to the escarpment. It would be an advantageous setting and many things are within walking distance. Another audience member shared that a similar program was offered at the Waterdown Secondary School. It began in Saltfleet and is now at Waterdown.

Mr. Dan Sheeler spoke of “Education for All”. To read the submissions please click on the following link:

<http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/arc/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/Education-for-All-by-Dan-Sheeler.pdf>

Trustee Brennan thanked Mr. Sheeler for his presentation and appreciated its clarity. She asked Mr. Sheeler where he felt the new school should be built. He indicated that it would be on the same property however further down the street. There would still be transportation concerns however perhaps this could be addressed with better bussing.

Q. Would it be possible to run a shuttle from some of the other schools so that more people could attend these excellent programs that Ancaster has to offer”?

Q. Are you suggesting a new school in Ancaster and no school in Dundas?

A. No simply talking about a new school in Ancaster.

Q. Would an influx of money could that address the issues with Ancaster High without having to build a new school?

A. Another school is a long-term vision plan however it would depend on the money provided. If there was a sufficient amount of money allocated I feel that there could be renovations done that could address the issue.

Allyssa Horning shared that she met with the students and they are very dedicated and would not like to switch to another school.

Mr. Sheeler shared that they have lost a lot of students to the Catholic Board.

C. Thank you for being very clear with your message. The challenge for the Committee is to take all of these perspectives into account. We are facing this will all schools. What is different about your school?

A. What separates us is the availability of property for a rebuild and the programs that Ancaster has to offer. It is the depth and breadth of our program, the land available and the community that is strong and interested.

Q. Thank you for talking about the boundaries and the Meadowlands challenges. Which was bigger, the Catholic school or the boundary changes?

A. Bishop Tonnos was the biggest reason however the boundary changes had an impact as well. He noticed with the grade 9 welcome which originally started with 900 students is now down to 200.

C. Our kids are fearful of attending Parkside due to the changes and the closing of the school. Do the Ancaster students feel the same way?

Kathy Henderson presented on behalf of the Highland Staff. To view the presentation please click on the following link:

<http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/arc/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/Highland-Presentation-ARC.pdf>

Q. How many science labs would you require?

A. We don't have enough now. They were retrofitted. I don't know the answer to this I would have to look into this.

Q. Are you recommending that both schools be closed and build a new one?

A. No we need the facilities renovated so that we can take on more students. We have great kids and programs however we need the facilities.

Q. We could easily switch both Parkside and Highland. Is there something in the middle because both Ancaster and Dundas need a new high schools so what would be the appetite to build in Dundas?

A. Ms. Henderson felt that size was important and was not in favour of a Mega School.

C. Ancaster and Dundas are side by side. Perhaps a consideration could be building something in between to support both of the communities.

Howard Barker was the next person to present. For Mr. Barker's presentation please click on the following link:

http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/arc/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/WestARC_Delegation3_Barker.pdf

Q. How are you going to pay for all of this? Money is a reality and it is the bottom line.

A. There are grants out there. Programming could attract more students. I am not really sure how to get more money perhaps we would need to pay more taxes.

Q. Enrolment is a challenge. The ARC has requested a lot of information. We have also been provided with a tremendous amount of information. What other information would you like us to request? What support do we need to ask for?

A. Mr. Barker felt that we did not get the information that was requested.

Q. Is the information public?

A. Yes.

C. Mr. Barker shared that he has not found it...he has not found how the Board came up with the numbers. He feels that Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board projections and recommendations will inevitably create overcrowding.

A. The Committee has requested historical enrolment data from the last ten years.

Q. You would keep Highland open as well?

A. Yes because closure is not the answer. Times are tough and we have to be innovative. We need to move the schools to a greener environment – a green revolution.

Sally's presentation can be viewed by clicking on the following link:

<http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/arc/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/Final-Proposal-Social-Communications-Classroom-for-Middle-a.pdf>

Q. Would you need the middle school program before the high school program?

A. No you could begin them simultaneously.

Q. Have you put any thought into where you would have the programs and how many students in the West cluster?

A. Please read the document that I have provided. They will come back from the Catholic system to attend such a program. We would love to have it at Westdale however there are space issues and questions about who would be willing to travel to have this program. Her kid's support network is all over the city.

Q. I thought that you were talking about Ancaster because they have the same challenges. Would you like to see one per cluster?

A. Yes to begin with. We do a lot with the low functioning students in Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board but the high functioning students are suffering.

Q. This is a presentation that we are pleased to see. Are you bringing this to other arcs as well?

A. Just to this ARC at the moment. It is a pilot and we would like to bring this to the Elementary ARC as well.

Q. Can the presentation be sent to other ARCs or Superintendents of the other ARCs although presenting also has a lot of energy?

A. Anything that we receive is passed onto the Committee members and gets posted on the web site. We could share it with the other ARCs under correspondence – you just need to request it.

C. It is an integrated model as well as segregation. It would be nice to have this option as well because the students could be with some of their friends from the regular academic programs.

C. I drive my child to Burlington every day for school and I think that this is awesome and would love to see this in every school.

Q. Is the Catholic program similar?

A. Yes it is similar. Their programs have students that don't mix well with other special need students. Not all special needs kids can be put together in the same classrooms.

Q. If you have students in the same program that don't get along with other identified students how would that work?

A. Integration is an important piece so that is what we need to work toward.

C. We need to find a pathway that can support these students and expand on this thinking.

Superintendent Croxall shared that Tier 3 and 5 are in the new program strategy and Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board is in the beginning stages of this. This is perfect timing and is something that we can take into consideration and look into with further detail.

C. These children really enjoy each other's company.

The final presenter was Richard Bartley and his presentation can be viewed online by clicking on the following link:

http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/arc/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/WestARC_Delegation6_Bartley.pdf

Superintendent Stephanian thanked Richard for his presentation.

4.0 Presentations

4.1 Brief Overview of the Accommodation Review Process - For the full presentation please click on the following link: http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/arc/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/WestARC_Public_Meeting2_Presentation.pdf

Daniel Del Bianco gave a brief overview of the Accommodation Review Process:

The Accommodation Review Process

- The process follows Ministry of Education guidelines, Board Policy and the Terms of Reference
- There are committee working meetings and public meetings.
- All meetings are open to the public
- The Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) is tasked with developing an accommodation solution that will address the long-term requirements of the community

ARC Recommendations

- The ARC will prepare a report that will be presented to the Board of Trustees
- This report will include the ARC's recommendations
- The Trustees will also receive a report from Senior Administration with their recommendations to the Board of Trustees
- The Board of Trustees will make the final decisions

ARC Timelines

- 10 Working Group Meetings
- 4 Public Meetings
- ARC work scheduled to conclude in January 2012
- After receipt of final report, Trustees have to wait a minimum of 60 days prior to voting on a final decision

Information Presented to the West ARC

- School Information Profiles (SIP)
- Accommodation recommendation prepared by senior administration
 - Close Delta and Parkview (June 2013)
 - Relocate students to existing facilities (September 2013)
- Correspondence from the community

4.2 Work Completed by the West ARC

Heather MacDonald spoke on behalf of the West ARC Committee. She stated that since the last Public Meeting they have completed the following:

- 3 Working Group Meetings
- School Tours – they learned that none of the schools are in great shape. The tours were extensive.
- Had a review of the detailed Program Strategy
- Developed concept options

The options are simply concepts at this point in time. They are very preliminary and the Committee is looking for feedback on these concepts. She stated that at working group meeting #3 – March 29, 2011 it was the initial discussion of the accommodation options. Three options were generated from those discussions and the Committee has chosen to share all three options at this meeting. At the fourth working group meeting the Committee heard a presentation on the program plan. Every school cluster will offer all of the programming (schools with specialization, apprenticeship programs as well as tiered programming). For the full presentation please visit the web site at:

http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/arc/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/ProgramStrategy_spreads_web-3.pdf

The Committee has had a presentation on enrolment trends. Please click on the following link to view the presentation:

http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/arc/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/WestARC_Enrol_Demo_Final_Revised_April14_20111.pdf

The Committee has also spent a day viewing all of the schools within the West ARC. This was led by the Principals along with the Facilities Staff. They looked at the programs that were being offered in each school, the conditions of the schools, the gymnasiums, libraries, etc. The Committee found this to be a very interesting and informative event.

4.3 Concept Options Created by the West ARC

Mrs. MacDonald spoke about the concept options created by the ARC. She shared that they were new ideas and open to criticism. How the students are serviced is of most importance to the ARC. She asked for feedback from the public. Items that the ARC must take into consideration include:

- Implementation timeframe
- Program
- Funding
- Boundaries
- Location/ availability of school sites

The Options were as follows: each option has benefits and limitations and these can be seen beginning on page 16 of the following presentation:

http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/arc/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/WestARC_Public_Meeting2_Presentation.pdf

- A) Closure of Parkside and Highland and construct a new school on a site in Dundas.
- B) Closure of Parkside and Highland and construct a new school on the existing Highland site.
- C) Closure of Parkside and Highland and construct a new school on the existing Parkside site

4.4 Next Steps

Mrs. MacDonald indicated that this is the halfway point for the Committee. She shared that these options will need to be refined and adjusted as they see fit or possibly they may develop a new plan. She stated that the Committee is here to hear the voice of the Community and the students. The committee heard the community's voice at the first public meeting and will continue to. Mrs. MacDonald indicated that the program piece is a huge part of the process as well. When the Committee is comfortable with these models then they will look at the program strategy and refine them as well. She asked the community to please look at the web site and familiarize themselves with the information. The goal is to have equal access to learning for all students.

5.0 Questions

Question (Q), Answer (A) Comment (C)

C. Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board has done a great job at recognizing and working with the special needs students. We really need something for the high school students with special needs. Mental health is a very important piece. It is very challenging for these kids who do not share how they are feeling which then ends up being a mental health problem and it takes enormous toll on every member of our family. There are wonderful models out there and we need to adopt them. I would be thrilled if Ancaster could be that school.

C. I read the front page of The Spectator today and I am outraged if this is true "Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board" will be putting the interests of the Board over the interest of the Constituents.

A. This is not the right forum in which to address these concerns.

Diana Kenel shared some enrolment data that she had gathered as well as her recommendation. To view Diana's submission please click on the following link:

<http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/arc/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/Article-written-by-Diana-Kenel-for-Public-Mtg.pdf>

Sharon Stephanian clarified that there are two reports – one is from Board Senior Administration Staff not the Board of Trustees and another report will come from the ARC. The Board of Trustees will vote on the final Decision.

Q. Has there been consideration given to have a French Immersion program in Ancaster so that they do not have to travel to Westdale?

A. We can take that back to consider.

Q. Looking at Option B – building a new school on Highland. The traffic congestion would be a problem and how would this transition this?

A. Grades 9 & 10 would be housed at one school and grade 11 & 12 would be housed at the other school.

Q. What will be committee recommend if they do not get the funding to build a new school?

A. We don't have that answer at this time.

Q. Would the sale of one or two schools produce enough money to build a new school as well as give money to the other schools in the cluster? Has there been any discussion about integrating both public and school transportation? Our students are spending more time commuting than their parents so please keep this in mind when making your decisions. Please keep the students within the transportation timelines.

A. Mr. Del Bianco shared that they will be putting that information together over the summer and will be reporting back to the Committee in September.

Q. Transportation a big issue as well so when are you making those decisions?

A. Mr. Del Bianco shared that there is one more working group prior to summer. In September we will come back with a feasibility study. In October and November the Committee will refine their options. On January 19, 2011 the report will be presented to the Board of Trustees and the final decision will be in the spring of 2012. Timelines for implementation is still being determined.

C. Please take into consideration the special needs children. We need to put plans in place. If you are building a new school please take this into consideration for these students. It could generate funds if the school board goes green.

C. I left Dundas to go to university and learned to appreciate Dundas. I met kids from all across Canada. I talked about my graduating grade of 100 students and learned that the other kids didn't even know half of the kids graduating from their school. I was taking an art program and some of the kids in my university class went to special art schools and I felt intimidated by that. This year I came out with top mark in drawing class and I realized how great Parkside was and how well prepared I was for University. A small school is very important to the learning program.

Q. Have you talked to the City staff? Please consider the walkability of those two schools and strengthening the core. In Portland Oregon each school is allowed to fund raise and anything over \$10,000 the schools have to share with all of the other schools. This might be something for us to consider.

The meeting adjourned at 8:54 p.m.