

South Accommodation Review Committee Meeting

Hill Park Secondary School

October 27, 2011

Public Meeting #3

Minutes

ATTENDANCE:

Committee Members

Chair -Scott Sincerbox

Voting Members - Bill Barrett, Beverly Bressette, Jackie Brown, Alexandra Butty, Ken Durkacz, Margaret Eagle, Alexandra Ewing, Kim General, Al Pierce, Anne Pollard, Cheryl Poot, Susan Pretula, John Whitwell

Non-Voting Members - Wanda Bielak, Donna Clappison, Gary Deveau, Angela Ferguson, Manny Figueiredo, Randy Gallant, Mag Gardner, Wes Hicks, Tom Jackson, Peter Joshua, Deb Jukes, Joanna Maull, Renee Majic, John Miholics, Lillian Orban, Laura Peddle, Kevin Robinson, Paul Vukosa

Regrets

Voting Members - Derek Hambly,

Non-Voting Members - Scott Duvall, Brian Greig, Terry Whitehead

Resource Staff

Daniel Del Bianco, Steve Stirling, Jim Wibberley

Recording Secretary

Tracy McKillop

1.0 Welcome and Introductions – Scott Sincerbox

Superintendent Scott Sincerbox welcomed everyone to the third South ARC public meeting and thanked them for their interest in the process and the contribution that they will make to the accommodation review. He also thanked the Hill Park Principal Angela Ferguson for hosting the meeting.

Superintendent Sincerbox introduced each of the Committee members as well as the Resource Staff, Jim Wibberley and Daniel Del Bianco.

2.0 Opening Remarks – Scott Sincerbox

Superintendent Sincerbox stated that at tonight's meeting we will do four things:

The first is to provide an overview of the accommodation review process.

The second is to offer a look at the work completed by the South ARC at its meetings. If you are interested, all the information the Committee has received and approved minutes are available to the public on the Board's website.

Thirdly we will share the accommodation options developed by the South ARC and what the next steps will be.

And the fourth piece is to provide members of the community the opportunity to ask questions and make comments.

3.0 Presentations - Daniel Del Bianco and Jackie Brown

3.1 Brief Overview of the Accommodation Review Process – Daniel Del Bianco

To view the presentation please click on the following link: http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/arc/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/South-ARC-Public-Meeting3-Oct27_2011.pdf

Mr. Del Bianco reviewed "Why we are here tonight" as well as the ARC process.

Why we are here tonight?

- Provide an overview of the Accommodation Review Process
- Review the work completed by the Accommodation Review Committee (ARC)
- Review of "Concept Options" created by the ARC
- Next Steps of the ARC
- Receive input from the community on the ARC process and concept options

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

- 10 Working Group Meetings
- 4 Public Meetings

Additional ARC meetings were added:

- September 15, 2011
- October 27, 2011

- Requested that the deadline for the ARC report be extended to January 19, 2012
- Work scheduled to conclude in January 2012

3.2 Work Completed by the South ARC – Daniel Del Bianco and Jackie Brown

Mr. Del Bianco explained the Terms of Reference <http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/arc/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/Secondary-South-TOR.pdf> as well as the difference between the working group meetings and the public meetings. He shared that the ARC works hard to achieve a recommendation and upon completion this report will go to the Board of Trustees (BOT) where they have a minimum of 60 days to make a final decision. Mr. Del Bianco shared the ACR timelines and stated that all of this information is on the Board web site http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/arc/?page_id=10

The Committee have looked at the School Information Profiles (SIP) which are profiles of all the schools involved in this ARC and contain 181 items.

Mr. Del Bianco shared the Staff Recommendation again and stated that this stirred up a lot of emotion; however, he explained that the Board is mandated to come up with a recommendation by the Ministry. Mr. Del Bianco indicated that the Board decided to put their recommendation out early in the process to initiate discussion. The Program Strategy has been shared with the Committee.

Mr. Del Bianco indicated that there are 1500 surplus spaces which equates to one facility empty. There has been lots of debate with projected enrolments; however, this is directed by the elementary enrolment. The Committee has received a lot of correspondence.

Mr. Del Bianco ended by encouraging everyone to view the web site or feel free to attend the meetings.

Jackie Brown gave a quick overview of how the Committee got to the six recommendations. She reviewed what the Committee had completed since the last public meeting which included the following:

- 6 Working Group Meetings
 - Including 1 joint meeting with the North ARC to review vocational school programming and other common interests
- 3 Presentations
 - Review of program strategy for the staff recommendation
 - Facilities Management Overview
 - Overview of the Mountain/ Parkview programs
- School Tours
- Developed 6 preliminary “Concept Options”

Additional Data Requested by the ARC:

- South ARC student plots
- Summary of Secondary Capital Expenses (2000-2010)
- Summary of “High and Urgent” renewal needs as identified in ReCAPP
- Administrative recommendation decision criteria
- Summary of Community and Continuing Education programming

- Summary of HWDSB leased space
- HWDSB Facilities Partnerships Interim Policy
- Ministry of Education Facility Partnerships Guidelines
- Information regarding Programs of Choice, SHSM

Summary of Working Group Meetings:

- **Working Group Meeting #5 (May 17, 2011)**
 - Presentation: HWDSB Program Plan
 - Discussion and review in small groups
- **Working Group Meeting #6 (June 7, 2011)**
 - Presentation: HWDSB Facilities Management Department
 - Preliminary discussions regarding accommodation options (small groups)
- **Working Group Meeting #7 (June 7, 2011)**
 - Preliminary discussions regarding accommodation options (small and large group discussions)
- **Working Group Meeting #8 (September 6, 2011)**
 - Preliminary discussions regarding accommodation options (small and large group discussions)
- **Working Group Meeting #9 (September 15, 2011)**
 - Joint Meeting with North ARC to discuss Mountain and Parkview programming
- **School Tours (September 17, 2011)**
- **Working Group Meeting #10 (September 27, 2011)**
 - Develop decision criteria for proposed options
- **Working Group Meeting #11 (October 18, 2011)**
 - Establish decision criteria
- Minimal disruption to students
- New school
- Closure of Mountain (but retain the program and students in one of the remaining facilities)
- Closure of 2 of the remaining composite schools
 - Develop 6 concept options

3.3 Concept Options Created by the South ARC – Jackie Brown

Ms. Brown shared that the Committee had a lot of discussion in both small and large groups. She indicated that last week they were discovering some decision making criteria as well as some options; however, they have not really had an opportunity to go over them in detail. The Committee has asked for an extension into January to have the opportunity to review these options.

Criteria as Established by the ARC:

1. Construction of a new secondary school in the South ARC
2. Closure of Mountain Secondary School but retain the Mountain program and keep all of the students together
3. Closure of 2 of the remain facilities
4. Minimal disruption to students

The Committee would like a new school and the North ARC would also like a new school. They have had a great deal of discussion regarding the Mountain students and the Committee has decided to keep the students together and keep the program; however, they will close the building. Ms. Brown indicated that due to the large number of empty pupil places they did decide to close two additional schools. She

showed a map where all of the schools currently reside including the location of Saltfleet and Westmount.

Ms. Brown shared that these schools would close only after the new school has been built and these options are in no particular order:

- #1 Close Mountain, close Sir Allan MacNab and Hill Park.
- #2 Close Mountain, Sir Allan MacNab and Sherwood. This would be closing one on East mountain and one on West mountain
- #3 Close Mountain, Sir Allan MacNab and Barton.
- #4 Close Mountain, Barton and Hill Park.
- #5 Close Mountain, Sherwood and Hill Park.
- #6 Close Mountain, Barton and Sherwood.

Ms. Brown reiterated that the Committee had not had the opportunity to discuss any of the options yet but this will be discussed at their next working group meeting.

Mr. Del Bianco showed two potential sites on the map - South of Linc (27 acres) and a site south of Stone Church Rd midway between Garth St. and West 5th St (29 acres.)

4.0 Questions/Comments from the public

Q. What will we do with the properties that are being closed?

A. There is a policy that governs this. The properties have to be offered to all co terminus Boards at fair market value before it is opened up to the public for sale.

Q. Is either of these sites in Ward 6?

A. No outside of ward 6.

Q. When would the new school open?

A. We have no date set however have been told approximately 2 years.

Q. Does Lynden Park have to be closed also due to the shared heating system with Hill Park?

A. Hill Park is linked with Lynden Park so some provision would have to be made. The closure of Hill Park doesn't mean the closure of Lynden Park and Lynden Park is not a part of this ARC. It would have to go through its own ARC process.

The microphones were not working so everyone shifted forward in the auditorium.

Q. Wasn't the new school supposed to be on the east side?

A. The staff recommendation which was released early on in the process was a starting point and yes it identified a school location to be on the East side. It will be up to the ARC Committee to propose where they would like the new school.

C. A Committee member shared that the ARC says that if we close one school in the east and one in the west then we are open to choosing a space for a new school. We will need to present a business case to the Ministry.

Q. If you don't get the funding can you go back and change the recommendation?

A. If we don't get the funding we don't have a plan "B" yet.

C. The idea of closing any of the schools is a loss for everyone. When looking at the bar graph it does not indicate that we have to close three schools. Can we look at having community hubs like businesses, doctors, dentists, etc? Would the ARC consider other options and focus on keeping every school open?

A. Mr. Del Bianco explained Community partnerships. There were over 400 letters that went out to potential partners as well as advertising in the newspapers. There was a total of 18 expressions of interest and out of those only one was interested if it was in a new school and other 2 said tell us what you have available and we will let you know if we are interested. A Community partner has to share the costs and it has to be on a cost recovery basis.

Mr. Del Bianco reviewed the enrolment slides and shared that you can lease the space; however, now with a lower enrolment how do you offer programs and have enough students to fill the programs that are being offered. Partners have said call us when you are done because they are in the exploratory stages at the moment.

The majority of the development is south and they also want to have a community school. The Board gets funding on a per pupil basis so how do you meet everyone's needs. Hamilton has the majority of aging schools in its portfolio. Renewal needs continue to rise and the enrolment is going down.

C. I hope that when the ARC looks at the legacy costs they realize that once the land is sold we won't be getting that land back. When the families move back into the area they will be moving into a ghetto area.

C. My neighbourhood is changing and new families are moving in. I think that the 10 year projections are short sighted.

A. We want as little disruption to the students as possible and I do not see that we will be moving the children more than once.

C. One of the feeder schools for Saltfleet is Billy Green; however, the catchment changed to Sherwood. Saltfleet is bursting at the seams so it would make sense to create boundary changes and shift some students to the east mountain schools that need higher enrolment. The Binbrook area is bursting and Saltfleet will be in more trouble. Can the ARC look at boundary changes?

A. Mr. Del Bianco shared that the Committee has the ability to do anything with the schools within the Terms of Reference including boundary changes. They can recommend a boundary review in their report to the BOT for schools that sit outside of the TOR.

C. We need to maintain the enrolment at Sherwood and if this comes out in the media that could affect the enrolment for the next few years. I trust that the Board will not adjust the boundaries while these changes are taking place.

C. A student is concerned about where she will be going if Sherwood closes and does not want to be bussed to another school. She shared that all of the students are quite confused by this. Why can't you build a new school but leave the other schools alone?

Q. Are you planning on putting the Mountain students into their own school or in with another school? These students have left composite schools due to bullying. We love the teachers and programs at the Mountain school.

A. Joann Maull shared that that Mountain students have quite a few advocates and the most important part is the program and being together. She shared that at this point the Committee does not know where they will be going but they do know that they will recommend keeping the students together. Anne Pollard stated that the safety of the vulnerable kids has been brought up many times. If they stay together then they can have the teachers who know them. The potential benefits of sharing the school is the opportunity for programming like auto or mechanics so the students who are interested can have access to that program. The safety of the kids is very much on the Committee's minds.

C. I did a lot of research when I came in from Toronto and Sherwood offers my son what he needs. He has special needs and is very bright and athletic. She teaches ESL and participated in an ARC in Toronto. Now Toronto regrets closing the schools and admits that they made a mistake. We pay for maintaining the schools and building the school. The Ministry wants 80% capacity and Sherwood has more than 80% capacity. You need to do your job and use the tax money that we pay and maintain our schools. The hockey program is a terrific program and I have been told that the program will be maintained. When you destroy the school you destroy the community and Sherwood is a beautiful community.

Q. Can you fix the old buildings? If more information comes out could the staff recommendation be altered?

A. I think that with the information that has come forth staff could consider altering their recommendations. Mr. Del Bianco shared that what was originally proposed by the Board will not necessarily be the final proposal. Over the course of the cool off period (60 days) the public has the opportunity to address the BOT.

Steve Stirling indicated that the Staff has been actively watching the ARC. This process has been enlightening and Staff has not made a final decision. Superintendent Peter Joshua shared that the staff has made changes based on what they have heard.

Q. Is everyone on the Committee happy with the 6 options?

A. Jackie Brown indicated that she is not speaking for the entire group; however, she does not feel confident with any of the recommendations. She stated "I do not like closing schools. The Committee came up with the options last week and we are a vocal group and have a lot of differing opinions. There is a lot of emotion and there will be lots of discussion which will take place at the upcoming working group meetings. We do all have a common goal and that is what is best for the students.

C. The forecasting models are not great and we put a lot of weight in the forecasting. Does the Board use the same model as the Province?

A. The forecasting is done at the Board level. We do not use the Province's system.

C. I work for the City of Hamilton Planning Dept and I question you working with the City in the land use.

C. I am under the understanding that Hill Park was given to the Board and that it had to be used for education purposes.

A. Not that I am aware of.

Q. If you were going to take this building down why not use some of the green space around the school and then take this building down? I moved here 5-6 years ago and this is a lovely community and we have many seniors in our area. This is going to change the enrolment in the future.

Q. Is there a third site called a Broughton?

A. In addition to the two sites we have a number of smaller sites. These sites may be excluded due to the size however they may be part of the disposition. Secondary sites are generally between 10 and 15 acres.

Q. A lot of the kids that are coming out of grade 8 are shopping around and avoiding the schools that are slated for closure. How are we affecting the kids if we are moving them 2-3 times in four years?

Q. Some of the students do a repeat of grade 11 and 12. Have these numbers been taken into consideration.

A. Yes they are considered in the enrolment projections.

Q. When you were talking about building in ward 6 did the Board have a site planned?

A. There is no property in ward 6 right now so the staff would be required to purchase a site.

C. Councillor Tom Jackson shared that to his knowledge the Broughton site is about 11 acres and is still owned by HWDSB. I am wondering if you can put a pause on the process. Perhaps the Board, the City and the Province can we walk hand in hand and work on the funding. I ask the South ARC to delve into the demographics. There have been a lot of families that have moved back into the area and could the ARC look at the demographics.

A. Steve Stirling shared that the Broughton site is south of Rymal between Miles and Nebo Rd and is 9.5 acres.

Q. Could Westmount be moved over to another school?

A. Jackie Brown shared that the Committee wanted to have a discussion about the Westmount school. They also asked if they could move the program and learned that it would difficult to run it in different locations.

Superintendent Mag Gardiner stated that the Committee has been looking at Program Strategy. She shared that the Board knows from doing lots of research and hearing from the students that they would to learn at their own pace and have a choice of programs offered. In Hamilton and well beyond we struggle with how to meet the needs of the students. There are strategies happening in all of the schools not just Westmount so this new approach to learning can be offered across the cluster of

schools. Westmount is a self contained self paced school. We are working toward offering this program to many students.

Q. I attended the North ARC meeting and it was very emotional listening to the Parkview students. Could the Mountain and Parkview move into a school of their own school and does the funding formula change? Could it change to an Alt Ed or Spec Ed school?

A. Mr. Del Bianco indicated that the operational renewal funding would be the same. The Ministry allocates funds on a per pupil basis.

C. I understand the two ARCs can't talk or work together. I heard this at the North ARC meeting.

A. Beverley Bressette shared that at the meeting the North ARC shared that the Parkview students do not want to come up the Mountain and they would like a new school. Susan Pretula stated that under the TOR we can only make recommendations for the schools within the South ARC.

C. Mountain and Parkview offer unique and great programming and it would be a real loss to have those programs eliminated.

C. I feel very comfortable at Sherwood and I would like to remain at Sherwood.

C. Contrary to what you are saying students and learners want to know that people care. It causes anxiety and instability in the students when they do not know what will be happening to their school. When you change the dynamics you destroy the community.

Q. You mentioned changing catchment area so why can this not be addressed prior to the closing of schools?

A. We still have 1500 empty pupil places so we can change the boundaries but it does not necessarily change the 1500 issue.

Q. If Barton is closed what happens to Richard Beasley?

A. Richard Beasley is not part of the ARC so there would be no recommendation to close this school.

C. The bricks and mortar do not make the Westmount program and I feel that the program could move.

Q. What is the size of the Sherwood and can it be rebuilt on that site?

A. It is 13 acres and yes the Committee could recommend building a new school on that site.

C. A student shared that she would like to have a high school kept on the East Mountain and can they be kept in the schools until a new school is built.

C. A mother spoke on behalf of her daughter and asked the following questions:

1. Why are you closing down our school?
2. I want to know if you are thinking of putting all our schools together.
3. I don't agree with your putting the special needs kids along with the regular kids together because us special needs kids can't handle a regular school because of bullying, anxiety issues,

and coping issues. You're forcing [the two groups] together and it isn't fair and it could lead to more problems, such as drop outs, unable to finish what they started and fear of never be able to fit in a regular school environment.

4. I finally found a school where I actually feel like I fit in and feel comfortable and enjoy going to school every day and finally made some friends. Now you're taking that safe and happy environment away from all of us here at Mountain Secondary.
5. Isn't there a better way or solution than closing down Mountain Secondary and other possible schools you're planning to close? Where are all these special needs and regular kids supposed to go?

Q. Enrolment and condition of the schools is this the criteria that you are using to determine the closing of the schools?

A. Mr. Del Bianco reviewed the slide that showed the mandate of the Committee.

Q. Is transportation paid for by the Board?

A. No it is funded through the Ministry? Everyone south of the Linc is being transported elsewhere so we have to look at the overall impact.

Q. I understand that the assessments are severely out of date is that true?

A. They were done in 2003 and are looked at annually. The RECAPP was done in 2003 and are inflated annually. This is a Ministry designated software program that treats every building the same.

Q. So they are not last year's estimates they are based on a software program? So can we not get real estimates?

A. The RECAPP data is a guideline. When projects are finalized it is studied by engineering staff. We do have concerns about the RECAPP data and there are millions of dollars in outstanding renewal needs.

Q. If you tore down Barton or Sherwood we would question that you are looking at the property value as opposed to what value it offers the community.

Q. Are my taxes going to be affected?

A. Susan Pretula shared that years ago that was taken away from the Board so perhaps you could direct that question to the city councillors.

Q. What are the program placement ideas?

A. Peter Joshua shared that the Board proposal of program placement is on the Board web site. We want to offer a variety of programs across the cluster.

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

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

Q. If you are going to close these schools with challenges with Boilers, lighting etc. is the Ministry going to cut that funding? There should be a huge saving on operating costs.

A. The funding is based on a per pupil basis.

C. I can't stress how important it is not to move the students to many schools during the four years. My daughter was afraid of going to Sherwood and feels unrest at not knowing what will be happening with her school. It would certainly support the students if they do not have to move more than once. The students are under huge stress until a decision has been made and I just want to acknowledge that and ask that this will be taken into consideration.

C. Trustee Wes Hicks stood up and shared that Trustee Ray Mulholland has been to all of the North, South and the West ARC public and working group meetings.