

South Accommodation Review Committee Meeting

Sherwood Secondary School

April 26, 2011

Public Meeting #2

Minutes

ATTENDANCE:

Committee Members

Co-Chair - Scott Sincerbox & John Miholics

Voting Members - Bill Barrett, Beverly Bressette, Jackie Brown, Alexandra Butty, Donna Dixon, Ken Durkacz, Margaret Eagle, Kim General, Al Pierce, Susan Pretula, John Whitwell

Non-Voting Members - Wanda Bielak, Donna Clappison, Gary Deveau, Angela Ferguson, Manny Figueiredo, Randy Gallant, Mag Gardner, Brian Greig, Wes Hicks, Peter Joshua, Deb Jukes, Ted Kocznr, Renee Majic, Joanna Maul, John Miholics, Lillian Orban, Laura Peddle, Kevin Robinson, Terry Whitehead

Regrets

Voting Members - Derek Hambly, Anne Pollard, Julia Shen

Non-Voting Members - Scott Duvall, Tom Jackson, Paul Vukosa

Resource Staff

Daniel Del Bianco, Jim Wibberley, Steve Stirling, Don Hall

Recording Secretary

Tracy McKillop

1. Call to Order

Superintendent Scott Sincerbox introduced himself and welcomed everyone to the second Public South ARC Meeting. He thanked everyone for their interest in the process and the contribution that they will make to the accommodation review. Superintendent Sincerbox shared that he would be working with a co-chair appointed by the ARC, John Miholics, who is also a member of the South ARC. He commenced the meeting by introducing the members of the Committee, the resource staff Daniel Del Bianco and Jim Wibberley as well as Don Hall and Steve Stirling from the Facilities Department. He shared that at the meeting they would be doing four things:

1. Provide an overview of the accommodation review process and work of the Committee.
2. To offer a look at the information the Committee has received and discussed at its meetings. All the information the Committee has received and approved minutes are available to the public on the Board's website at:
http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/arc/?page_id=10
3. Provide a brief overview of the work of the Committee.
4. Provide members of the Community the opportunity to ask questions and make comments.

Superintendent Sincerbox stated that at the previous public meeting the feedback was that people felt the presentations were too long. He assured the public that portion of the meeting would be short in order to allow more time for their questions and comments.

Daniel Del Bianco was called upon to give a brief overview of the ARC process and to summarize the information presented to the Committee. To view the overview presentations please click on the following link:

http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/arc/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/SouthARC_Public_Meeting2.pdf

John Miholics proceeded to share with the public the work and events that had led up to the public meeting. In the March 8, 2011 meeting the exclusion of Westmount and Saltfleet were raised. Mr. Del Bianco gave a Demographic and Enrolment Presentation that evening and at the end of the meeting a motion was passed to take a pause from the ARC process. At the April 5, 2011 meeting the agenda was not approved due to a lack of Committee quorum. A decision was reached however to have the public meeting and Mr. Miholics agreed to Co-Chair this meeting. The Committee had not had the time to work on the recommendations and members would like to move toward reaching their own options. The Co-Chair stated that the Committee would like to hear from the public to support them in moving toward this goal. Superintendent Sincerbox thanked the staff and the students of Sherwood for providing the facilities and the support. The voting members were asked to take a seat on the stage. Superintendent Sincerbox shared the meeting norms with the public.

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

C: Mr. Harrington has been watching the process and finds the Terms of Reference ridiculous and applauds the Committee for stepping away and encourages them to stay away.

Q. Pauline Perry questioned the feasibility of closing one school and having another one over capacity. Has this been discussed?

A. Mr. Del Bianco stated the Board option proposes a new school south of the link and in Ward 6. No site has been chosen yet.

Q. Grant Darby – if we are looking for a new property why has there been no property found yet.

A. Don Hall – The Board is constantly looking for property. The staff has looked however nothing has been purchased because the ARC has to do its work and until such time as this Committee comes up

with its recommendation there will be no purchasing of property. He stated that Facility Management is the team that looks at these sites.

C. Robert Whitelaw wanted to do a power point presentation and feels that our numbers are incorrect. He would still like the opportunity to present to the Committee.

A. Mr. Del Bianco stated that he could not comment without seeing his presentation and numbers. He stated that there are historical enrolment rates on the web site. He also requested that Mr. Whitelaw forward his presentation to the Committee so that they could review his information. Mr. Miholics also encouraged Mr. Whitelaw to forward his presentation to the Committee.

Q. Mr. Whitelaw wanted to know why he was not permitted to present at the public meeting.

A. Mr. Miholics stated that the Committee did not have a quorum of voting members so the agenda was not approved. The Committee had a lengthy discussion about the public meeting however the Committee did not speak about delegations.

C. Take the money and put it into the existing Sherwood school – not in a new school.

Q. Why is there no site yet? Sherwood School has the best music program.

C. Jackie Brown stated that it is devastating not to have the answer for her own son who wants to know which school he will be attending because if Sherwood closes then he will have to go to another school for grade 12.

C. Susan Pretula indicated that it was her suggestion to have the public meeting. She felt that the public voice was important.

C. Jackie Brown gave Superintendent Sincerbox a petition with 701 signatures from the Sherwood students.

C. John Miholics stated that the Committee members are very compassionate and are listening.

C. Beverly Bressette stated that the Committee would like to hear Robert Whitelaw's presentation.

Q. Darren Green stated that the Mountain School group has a petition with signatures. He stated that in 2006 a growth plan was released and Sherwood meets the criteria of this plan. Why is Sherwood designated for closure?

C. Trustee Peddle indicated that she did not know the state of Sherwood and was as surprised as anyone else. She stated that both Westmount and Sherwood have come up with the short end of the stick – one is designated for closure and one is not.

C. Lyn Hicks – the boundary for Saltfleet was changed. It was over crowded and is now even more over crowded. Sherwood is a school with a staff that already works well together so fix the building. Westmount will have 26 million dollars in repair so that means that Sherwood can be repaired as well.

C. Mathew Thomas – the people are here because they want to keep Sherwood open. The Trustees and the ARC get to decide if Sherwood gets closed so can we have it back please.

C. John Matthews was upset that Sherwood School is a beautiful green space and part of the neighbourhood so why did the Trustees not let the money come to this school as well.

C. Steve Dungavel wants Mountain School to remain open as well. He feels that everything is due to money. He stated that wages increase however the schools do not receive any money.

C. Beverly Bressette stated that she is just as concerned and feels that the students would not be looked after when there are larger class numbers.

C. Jeremiah Jovanovic stated that he used to be afraid to go to school however now he is comfortable coming to Sherwood Secondary School. He would like to see the school remain open.

C. Kesianne Hagan praised Trustee Peddle and spoke of displacing 1000 students with the closure of Sherwood Secondary School.

C. Susan Pretula stated this is the reason for the public meeting and the Committee would like to hear from all of the schools.

Q. How much money would be spent to transport the student to other areas?

A. Susan Pretula stated the Committee has not had the chance to get to that yet and that there is work to be done.

Q. Grant Darby feels that the enrolment data needs to be addressed and stated that the numbers are not correct. Has the Committee looked at the numbers to ensure their correctness? He went on to ask if the Committee intends to go through the SIP line by line.

A. Mr. Del Bianco stated that if there is a discrepancy it will be changed however the Committee have not had a chance to work on this yet. Jackie Brown stated that she feels there will be discrepancies in the SIPs and that there is not enough time in the working meetings to discuss all of the information and a year is not enough. John Miholics shared that the Committee has pointed out some discrepancies and there is a lot of information to go over.

Q. The condition of Sherwood School is weighted heavily. Can the Committee not weight the condition of Sherwood so strongly?

A. Susan Pretula stated that the Committee has not had the opportunity to look at the entire package yet. Kevin Robinson gave an overview of what they have heard and spoke of some of the possibilities that could potentially happen. He spoke of the fact that some schools may need to close and how the accommodation could work. Mr. Robinson shared his thoughts on what could potentially happen.

Q. Robert Whitelaw stated that the school Board closes schools around 40-44 years old. He has never seen the budgets and would like to see a maintenance schedule and urged that these costs and budgets are made available. Will you make these costs available?

A. Mr. Don Hall stated that a document has been created to show the Committee where the money has been allocated. This will be distributed to the ARC.

Q. Why haven't we invested in our high school facilities?

A. Mr. Hall shared that for every \$10 of building renewal need, the Board has \$1 to allocate.

C. A student came to Sherwood for athletics and stated that he did not have to make a choice of which sport he wanted to participate in – he can participate in them all.

Q. Quinn Pallister – every student at Sherwood has the opportunity to try out for sports. Can you do that in a larger school?

A. John Miholics shared that his son is in the hockey program and loved it. He stated that everyone will be given a chance to try out. Kevin Robinson stated that he does not like a mega school and the new school would be for 1250 students just like Sherwood.

C. A student feels that you can't easily move programs and worried that she would have to start over if she moved to a new school.

Q. Have you considered offering the self paced program to other schools?

A. Superintendent Mag Gardiner stated that Westmount is a self paced school. A student can go at a fast pace, a slow pace and most importantly they can go at their own pace. This is a system school. Through the Program Strategy some of the courses will be offered at different schools however not necessarily the same as Westmount. Mag gave an example of a student timetable.

Superintendent Peter Joshua shared that they will have those programs available in all of the schools however the South ARC has not had the opportunity to look at this yet.

Q. Jackie Brown asked if that program could be put in Sherwood.

A. Superintendent Joshua indicated that the ARC could make that recommendation.

C. Al Pierce stated that 81.5% of the students at Westmount come from other schools on the mountain.

Q. Can you keep one of the schools, Barton or Sherwood, open instead of closing both? Can you adjust the bussing for those that want to stay after school to participate in extra curricular activities?

C. Ron Teufel shared that the Sherwood staff have stepped outside of the box. If Sherwood were not slated for closure then it would be over capacity next year.

Q. Dale Duncan asked what the process was for selling off the land. Could the Catholic Board purchase this property?

A. Mr. Steve Stirling stated that the disposition of property has to be offered to other Boards and the City for 90 days and then it is up for private sale. It is not up for sale because the ARC has to come up with its own recommendation and the Board of Trustees makes the final decision. Yes the Catholic Board could purchase the land if it were up for sale.

Q. Grant Darby – stated that at the previous public meeting why was the programming not considered. The Program Strategy was not available. Sherwood has the lowest cost per pupil. Why were these numbers not included with the recommendation to the ARC Committee?

A. Mr. Del Bianco shared that the Program Strategy would have been shared at the last working meeting. The more students that you have at a school the lower the cost per pupil. If it is under utilized its costs more due to heating, hydro, etc. The program strategy was in its final stages when Associate Director Bain made his Board option public.

C. Jackie Brown stated that Sherwood is being punished for running efficiently. It has taken twelve years to create what you have created here. It can happen somewhere else but again it will take time.

Q. Andrea Richard wanted to know if the students out of the catchment area are included in enrolment and are student numbers inflated at some schools due to programming because we use these numbers to decide about closing schools.

A. Superintendent Joshua stated that the Board is not creating overcapacity in the schools due to programming and the program strategy will create an equal spread of programs across the cluster. Mr. Del Bianco stated that students out of the catchment area are factored into the projections. Susan Pretula stated that the Committee is aware of those types of questions and have been asking similar questions as well. Mr. Del Bianco stated that the Committee has asked for things like “where the students who attend certain schools reside or where are the students coming from.”

C. Lynn Hicks – this is a huge job in front of the Committee. They may need more time to make a decision. Will the Board extend the deadline due to the complications and the implementation as well? Can the closing dates move as well?

A. Superintendent Sincerbox stated that the Committee has to abide by the Terms of Reference however this will be taken away for consideration. John Miholics stated that they would like to explore that possibility.

C. Don't close Sherwood or Barton. In a new school it is important to have a real auditorium. Sherwood has a self paced program to a certain extent and they are doing a great job at offering this.

C. A gentleman felt that the elected people are not listening to the public and wanted to know where Judith Bishop was as well as the other Trustees were.

C. Evan Hayward asked if Sherwood offered the self paced program and Superintendent Joshua stated that the accelerated program is available. Evan asked how many students would change to a catholic school and he stated that he would definitely consider doing that. He felt that it was not a good idea to change schools in grade 12.

C. A Mountain parent would like his child to attend Mountain Secondary School. He wanted to know why the decision was made to discuss where programs would be going if schools have not closed yet and he felt like the decision had already been made. Why have you not considered combining Parkview and Mountain Schools?

A. Superintendent Joshua stated that it is only a recommendation at this point in time. He indicated that the Board would like to be able to offer the types of programs that are currently offered at Parkview and Mountain to all schools. They will have the successful pieces that are currently in place as well as adding to that more depth and breadth. Superintendent Joshua stated that the Program Strategy still needs to be presented to the South ARC and they will need to make their recommendations. What have been put together are things that have been tried and found to be successful.

Q. Can you move Mountain and Parkside into Westmount?

A. That could definitely be an option.

A. Joanne Maull stated that the Committee recognizes the uniqueness of Mountain and would look at what makes the school work. If they feel that it should be separate then they will make that recommendation.

Q. Ryan Baker, head of the music program at Sherwood, wanted to know why the Superintendents and Trustees were not on the stage as well. He stated that the Sherwood enrichment band consists of students from grades 6, 7 & 8 who come to practice every Monday night. He asked the students last week if they will be coming to Sherwood and they said that they are going to Brebuff. He stated that the Board is going to lose young teachers. Has the Board looked at that?

A. Mr. Del Bianco stated that when you get to the Secondary level it is more difficult to get the enrolment numbers because you have students going to different schools or areas. It is difficult to determine how many students will leave due to this process. It is often who offers the best programs.

Q. Prior to the recommendation announcement the Board had a certain number of students enrolled and now that has dropped. Is there any way to track that?

Q. Devin – If it is our voice that counts then why are these people making our decisions?

A. Susan Pretula – No one has been denied to make a power point presentation and we are listening to the people however under the circumstances we were not at a place to hear delegations.

C. Would like to see all schools included in the Terms of Reference.

C. This gentleman currently has children in the Catholic School and would like his children to go to Sherwood Secondary School. There are no Catholic schools in the area and he would like Sherwood to stay open.

C. John Miholics would like to see schools spread out without having a Catholic school next to a public school and this would give all students a chance to go to whatever school that they would like to.

Q. What is the plan now for the Committee?

A. Al Pierce stated that if the Committee cannot look at all of the pieces then they cannot make a valid decision. He shared that perhaps they could have a meeting with Judith Bishop and the fellow Trustees.

Q. To the Trustees – “How do you put a higher dollar value on leasing a piece of land for 99 years then putting the money back into the programs and school?”

A. Trustee Hicks stated that the City does the same lease with recreation centers across the City and this is not just for Westmount.

C. A student who volunteers for the band does not feel that it is fair that kids have to make a choice between the music program and the sports program.

C. A Special Olympics Volunteer has a Mountain student who is on her Special Olympics team and shared that this student was very upset about having to write a literacy test. She feels that it is very important to have at least one vocational school remain open.

Q. What would it entail if an extension was needed to the timelines for the South ARC?

A. Superintendent Sincerbox stated that every ARC is on a different timeline and this would have to be addressed by the Committee.

Q. Have transportation costs been considered?

A. Superintendent Sincerbox stated not at this time because the recommendation is a point in time recommendation and no final decision has been made.

Q. Will you receive more grant money for a new school then repair the current school?

A. Mr. Hall stated that the Ministry allows us to apply for capital priority to build a new school. When you apply for capital priority you are competing for those dollars province wide.

Q. To the ARC Committee – when you ask for help are you receiving it and are you receiving the information when you ask for it? Why are the Trustees not here and do they vote.

A. Susan Pretula – we receive the information prior to the working meeting.

A. Trustee Peddle – there are three Trustees on this Committee and two out of the three have been outvoted.

The meeting adjourned at 9:17 p.m.