

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB)

West Accommodation Review Committee Meeting

Education Centre Board Room

December 8, 2011

Working Meeting #10

Minutes

ATTENDANCE:

Committee Members

Chair –Superintendent Sharon Stephanian

Voting Members –Christopher Austin, Deborah Beedie, Rosemary Bellefeuille, Phyllis Chasty, Bea Howell, Lori King, Deborah Knoll, Heather MacDonald, Sharon Ricci, Boris Williams

Non-Voting Members – Gudrun Anderson, Paul Barwinski, Judith Bishop, Jessica Brennan, Michelle DesRochers, Rick Hart, Alex Johnstone, Judy Langsner, Brian Lenart, Maria Rikic-McCarthy, Virginia McCulloch, Laurie Swackhammer, Dan Thomson, Anne Waldie

Regrets

Voting Members - Em Del Sordo, Allyssa Horning, Judy Shen,

Non-Voting Members – Krys Croxall, Lloyd Ferguson, John Laverty, Brian McHattie, Russ Powers

Resource Staff

Daniel Del Bianco, Don Hall, Jim Wibberley, Robert Fex

Recording Secretary

Tracy McKillop

1.0 Call to Order

Superintendent Stephanian welcomed everyone to the tenth working group meeting.

2.0 Agenda <http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/arc/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/West-ARC-Agenda-December-8th.pdf>

2.1 Additions and Deletions – There was a request to flip 4.3.2. and 4.3.3.

2.2 Approval of the Agenda – The amended agenda was approved by consensus.

3.0 ARC Updates

3.1 North ARC– the North ARC held its 4th and final public meeting and presented its final recommendation and program strategy – closure of Sir John A Macdonald, Delta and Parkview. A new facility will be located between Sir John A Macdonald and Delta and the Parkview program will be located in the new school.

3.2 South ARC – The South ARC are currently working on two approved concepts:

1. Concept B – falls outside of their terms of reference. Realign boundaries of Barton, Hill Park will contain the Westmount program, Mountain will contain the Mountain program and additional programs, Sherwood and Sir Allan MacNab will close, a new school to be built south-east of the Linc and Westmount becomes a composite school and contains the Hill Park program.
2. Concept C – realign the boundaries of Barton, close Hill Park, Mountain program will close and go to the new school, close Sherwood, realign the boundary of Sir Allan MacNab and build a new school south-east of the Linc. Westmount will remain unchanged.

Mr. Wibberley shared that the invitation was taken to the South ARC to determine if they are interested in meeting with the West ARC and they have respectfully declined.

What does realign boundary around Sir Allan MacNab mean?

Mr. Del Bianco stated that they created the concept and left the boundary updates up to the facilities department to distribute students evenly amongst the schools.

Will they shift further west?

Mr. Del Bianco stated that they have created the boundaries within the Terms of Reference.

They declined our offer so does that mean the Sr. Staff can't consider this?

Mr. Wibberley stated that everyone is bound by the Terms of Reference and no one group can ignore the Terms of Reference. When they say that they don't want to engage we have to respect that. The West ARC recommendation from Staff can not include the closure of Sir Allan MacNab.

The South ARC is very protective of the Mountain program and the majority reside where the school is located. No one in the Parkview program wanted to come up to the mountain facility.

If we are looking at the totality of the entire Board can we have fewer school closures in our ARC since the other ARCs are closing more?

Mr. Del Bianco stated that all ARCs have surplus space and even with the closures and building of a new facility we still have excess pupil places.

Q. Presuming that this proposal was the best solution for all students does that mean that we can't get to that solution because the other ARC is not interested?

A. It comes back to having to follow the Terms of Reference and the Ministry of Education is very clear when you create the Terms of Reference and then you need to work within that cluster of schools. The people affected need to be at the table otherwise it is unfair to make changes to their school. This could likely be appealed successfully.

There may be ways to get there; however, not through the ARC process

Q. How is a boundary review prompted?

A. Don Hall shared that it can be initiated several ways. Superintendents have approached the planning department in the past. The reviews themselves don't take that long and they require public meetings.

Q. Could we propose a new school be built and in a few years time, if another school was to close and the students desired to come to Ancaster could that provoke a review of the catchment?

A. Mr. Wibberley stated that a boundary review can be initiated by a school being under utilized if you have a migration of students to a school and away from another. Mr. Del Bianco noted that when you move 50% of a student population you have to create an ARC and you can't have another ARC for a five year period.

Q. The Terms of Reference are created by the Board of Trustees so can they not be amended by the Board of Trustees if they are not working out? These have been cumbersome so can they amend their Terms of Reference?

A. Mr. Del Bianco shared that when you amend a Terms of Reference to include another school you would have to begin another ARC or two ARCs in this case both the South and the West. This was already addressed with the South ARC and the Board of Trustees opted not to change the Terms of Reference.

Trustee Johnstone stated that a boundary review can be prompted by a community and students in a particular area.

Mr. Del Bianco showed where the Mountain students are located on the plotted map.

4.0 Minutes of the Meeting of November 22, 2011

4.1 Errors or Omissions – There were minor changes made to the minutes.

4.2 Approval of the Minutes – The amended minutes were approved by consensus.

4.3. Business Arising from the Minutes

4.3.1. Deadline Extension and Meeting Dates – Daniel Del Bianco

The Board of Trustees approved the Committee's report extension in principal, extending the deadline to Feb. 3rd. This will be finalized at the December Board of Trustees meeting. The January 9th meeting needs to be changed due to a conflict. There was some discussion of the dates.

Trustee Brennan shared some concerns about the meeting dates and the public meeting and the fact that these dates have also been shared in student newsletter.

The decision of the dates will be put on hold until the end of this meeting in order to see how the Committee progresses.

4.3.3. Boundary Information re: Ancaster/MacNab Option

http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/arc/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/WestARC_WG10_Dec_8_2011.pdf

Mr. Del Bianco shared that the planning department put together a package which offers clarification of discussions that the ARC had earlier.

Mr. Hall reviewed the presentation with the Committee. He spoke to the closure of Ancaster High and Sir Allan MacNab and a proposed south/west option. He shared the utilization rates and the benefits of such a proposal.

Mr. Wibberley clarified that this is outside of the Terms of Reference and that the committee did ask for this information hence why this option was presented even though it is outside the committee's Terms of Reference.

Heather Macdonald shared that she went to the South ARC meeting and she spoke to some people. She was added to the agenda and spoke to the Committee and clearly stated that she was not representing the West ARC. Heather asked if the South ARC has received this option presentation.

Mr. Del Bianco shared that the south ARC did not receive the presentation. They did not ask to have this option explored so resource Staff could not present it. The only way to have it shared would be for the West ARC to share it through correspondence. Mr. Del Bianco stated that they did receive a brief overview of this option; however, they have not seen it to this level of detail.

Trustee Johnstone shared that the West ARC could still recommend that a new school be built in Ancaster at the old or the new site. If the recommendation were to go forward the Board would not have wait for Ministry of Education approval because HWDSB could self fund with the selling of property.

Mr. Del Bianco shared that the only struggle that he sees is that you would still have under utilization. This new option works because you have a larger population to draw from – Ancaster High and Sir Allan MacNab.

Mr. Del Bianco shared that you can't complete this option without the full co-operation of the other ARC.

If we send this through as correspondence we are not stating that we support this 100% because we still have some concerns.

Mr. Del Bianco shared that the other ARC can do whatever they want with the correspondence. They can read it, discard it and choose whether or not to consider it.

Bea Howell stated that the Staff could come up with their recommendation as well so they could come up with their own solutions.

Mr. Del Bianco shared that everyone has to follow the Terms of Reference.

Heather MacDonald put forth a motion to share this with the South ARC as correspondence indicating that they would love to have a chat with them. There was consensus on this motion.

4.3.2. AHS Right Sizing – Analysis of Staff Submission

Don Hall shared the information regarding the right sizing of Ancaster High.

Q. Does the demolition of the west wing include the auditorium?

A. Yes it would. It would be problematic to try to keep it.

Q. Would the auditorium be gone or would it be rebuilt?

A. No it would be gone.

Q. Would a portion of the land be sold to fund this?

A. That would be the decision of the ARC Committee.

Heather MacDonald shared that if we lose land, space, the auditorium and the gym then Ancaster loses through this process just to deal with utilization. She shared her concerns.

Don Hall shared that the Board of Trustees will be submitting the recommendations to the Ministry of Education so they may consider funding this 3 million dollar renovation.

Q. Could we then look at going for it to properly right size Ancaster to see if we could get funding?

A. That would again be at the discretion of the ARC.

Laurie Swackhammer shared that the idea was not to demolish the entire west wing. The whole plan was to look at eliminating the outside edge of the building to support the utilization issue.

Bea Howell spoke about the possibility of partnering with a wealthy benefactor from Ancaster.

Don Hall shared that this has not been common practice with the public Board of Trustees.

Sharon Ricci feels that we need to move forward with what is best for Ancaster and that does not include cutting it up and expecting people to come to it. She would support building a new school in the Meadowlands.

Q. Do we have a site in the Meadowlands?

A. To identify that land without any direction from the Board of Trustees would be premature; however, there is land available in the Meadowlands.

There was some discussion on building in the Meadowlands versus the right sizing of the existing property.

A motion was put forth to have Staff provide information on the construction of a new Ancaster Secondary school on a site in the Meadowlands and the construction of a right sized new building on right sized land on the existing Ancaster site. There was consensus on the motion.

There was concern about requesting more information at this stage of the process.

Mr. Del Bianco shared that we have been consistent with the Dundas recommendation.

Don Hall shared that the Ministry of Education template dictates that Ancaster High does not require a third gym based on the enrolment numbers. He shared that we need to stay within the planning factor.

There was a motion to have Staff right size the Ancaster West wing, keeping the auditorium, the tech rooms and the hallway.

Mr. Hall shared that they could look at both, keeping just the gym, keeping the gym and the auditorium, or tear down the entire west wing and rebuild it.

There was consensus to have Mr. Hall complete the work on this.

4.3.4. Parkside Plan B - Analysis

Don Hall shared the plan "B" proposal.

Would it be possible to replace the running track that is currently at Highland site on the Parkside site? We would not have room to put one on the Parkside site; however, there is one on the parkland.

Q. Is it a proper size track?

A. I am not sure that it is; however, we would have to have an agreement with the City.

Q. Does the renovation include upgrades for the tech programming that is currently at Highland?

A. Yes it does.

There was some discussion about the running track and a map was put up on the screen for everyone to see.

Brian Lenart disagreed that a track could go on the Parkside park land and he felt that the football fields were not the proper size as well.

Q. Does the school have first dibs on the recreation land or do we have to share it with other groups?

A. Paul Barwinski shared that this had not been a problem to date.

Q. Does this meet the program strategy and would this structure accommodate this?

A. Don shared that yes it would meet the programming needs with the renovations.

Q. Does the 12 million include upgrading the old building?

A. Yes it does.

Q. What would be the costs to update Highland?

A. 5.3 million

Q. How many students would be attending the plan “B” school?

A. 1000 students would be attending the plan “B” school.

There would be no boundary review if the students go to Highland or to Parkside.

4.3.5. Other:

Robert Fex shared the rural student counts with the Committee. These numbers were based on three year averages.

5.0 Accommodation Options

5.1 Full Committee discussion of accommodation options

Mr. Wibberley mentioned the timelines to the Committee once again. He suggested that the Committee may want to look at Dundas and work on the recommendation for the Dundas area and then perhaps look at a plan “B”. When they receive the Ancaster information they could look at making a decision regarding Ancaster. They still need to consider program placement as well.

The Chair gave an update of the work the Committee has completed to date.

The floor was opened for discussion.

Some Committee members shared their perspective and feelings around the ARC process, the decisions to be made, timelines, the sharing of information.

Under plan “B” the Seaton students would go to Ancaster which would support their numbers and the numbers at Parkside.

Mr. Del Bianco shared that would increase bus times for the Seaton students and this concern has been raised during the public meetings so all of the students currently at Highland and Parkside were shown in the Plan “B”.

A motion was put on the floor to recommend to the Board of Trustees to close Parkside and Highland and to build a new school on the Highland site. There was not consensus.

The floor was opened for discussion on the motion.

Mr. Del Bianco clarified the site size for the Committee; there are municipal requirements for bus parking and parking spaces available. Don Hall shared that you can build on any size site; however, this would require considerations of what you would be compromising e.g. football fields, a track, etc.

This spurred further discussion of the Committee. Mr. Del Bianco shared that it is important to have a clear plan “A” and then have a plan “B” if the Ministry of Education does not provide the funding for plan “A”.

There was discussion of having a Plan “A” versus having a Plan “A” as well as a Plan “B”. If we are looking at a Plan “B” then we need to look at a Plan “B” on both Highland and Parkside.

Heather MacDonald shared that the Plan "B" was not adopted by all Committee members. They were giving it its due diligence due to the fact that it came through correspondence.

Trustee Bishop asked when the Committee will be considering possible boundary changes.

Mr. Del Bianco stated that the primary recommendation can not include anything outside of the Terms of Reference. An additional consideration, post ARC, could be a boundary study of the rural students and the Waterdown Secondary School.

A vote was taken and the motion was passed by a 7 in favour and 3 opposed.

5.2 Program Placement - was deferred until the next meeting.

6.0 Correspondence – Beverly Central School is speaking about the public meeting on December 13th. Please flag this to notify them of the change.

7.0 Other Business

There was consensus to extend the meeting until 9:15 p.m.

January 9th is a conflict for the Trustees.

Do the Trustees need to be there?

The Trustees feel that it is important to hear the public input.

The Committee proposed a public meeting on Thursday the 12th of January instead of January 9th. Sharon is not available on the 12th. The week of January 24th is exams. **There was consensus that the public meeting date changed to be held at Highland on January 12, 2012.**

The January 9th meeting is being left as a working group meeting for now.

Can we have proxy votes? We will need to take this away and get back to you.

Sharon Ricci asked if at the beginning of the next meeting we can take a vote on whether the group even wants a Plan "B".

If you can't make the 20th meeting please let Tracy know because we need to have quorum to proceed with voting.

Mr. Del Bianco asked the group to do their homework and look at the program strategy and placement.

8.0 Adjournment – The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.