

King George Elementary Accommodation Review Committee Meeting

Prince of Wales School Gymnasium

September 21, 2011

Minutes (Public Meeting # 3)

ATTENDANCE:

Committee Members

Chair –Pat Rocco

Voting Members – Agnes Clarke, Jennifer Drahusz, Dianna Gillespie, Felicia Guarascia, Anna Macky, Brenda Reid, Crystal Provo, Brian Seamans, Lisa Cameron

Non-Voting Members – Karen Bikinis, John Bradley, Lori Helt, Susan Neville, Tim Simmons, Janet VanDuzen, Michelle Pickett, Linda Wilson, Irma Belanger.

Not Present:

Voting Members –Lori Helt (regrets)

Non-Voting Members – Bernie Morelli

Resource Staff - Ellen Warling, Todd Salerno, Daniel Del Bianco

Recording Secretary

Claire Vander Beek

1. Welcome and Introductions – Superintendent of Student Achievement Pat Rocco

Chair Pat Rocco welcomed the members of the public to the ARC meeting. Everyone was encouraged to sign in and advised that questions will be entertained at the end of the meeting. ARC members and resource staff were introduced.

2. Purpose of the Meeting

Mr. Rocco referred to the Committee's Terms of Reference, stating the object of tonight's meeting is to provide an overview of the ARC process, share the work of the committee to date, explain the staff and alternative recommendations and next steps.

3. Presentations

3.1 Brief Overview of the Process

Ms. Ellen Warling, Manager of Accommodation and Planning provided a PowerPoint presentation

http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/arcelementary/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/KingGeorge_PublicMeeting3_Final1.pdf of the following areas:

- Accommodation reviews must follow established Ministry of Education (MOE) guidelines. Each school board develops its own guidelines/policies based on MOE guidelines.
- Terms of Reference are created for the ARC and approved by the Board Trustees. The Terms of Reference identify schools in the ARCs, members, mandate and timelines. The ARC will develop an accommodation solution to address long-term requirements of the community. The Terms of Reference are posted on the Board's website. http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/arcelementary/?page_id=66
- The ARC process consists of four Public or "Town Hall" style meetings (tonight is the third) and four Working Group meetings used by the committee to develop their own options. Working meetings are open to the public on an observation-only basis. The next working meeting will be held at Education Centre.

- The King George ARC will prepare a report to the Trustees with their recommendation. This and the Senior Administration option, will be submitted to the Board of Trustees who make the final decision.
- The next and final public meeting is scheduled for November 2, 2011, at which time the ARC committee option(s) and report will be presented for community input.

The ARC members have been presented and reviewed School Information Profiles on each of the three schools involved in the ARC. These profiles consider the value of schools to the students, the community, the Board and the local economy. They are not meant to be used as a “ranking” system but instead as a way for the ARC members to familiarize themselves with each facility.

The accommodation option prepared by Board staff was presented to the ARC and provides a foundation for the ARC to start their deliberations. Additional information requested by the ARC has been provided.

While developing their option, the ARC will consider Reference Criteria as outlined in the Board policy which includes: a) Facility Utilization, b) Permanent and Non-Permanent Accommodation, c) Programs, d) Quality of Teaching and Learning Environments, e) Transportation, f) Facility Partnerships [This process is currently in the initial phase of implementation]. HWDSB is starting to explore partnerships and opportunities to promote student learning with community partners. To qualify the partnerships must be linked to our strategic directions, and in particular, to improving student learning and equity.

3.2 Work completed by the King George ARC

Felicia Guarascia, a parent rep from King George School, spoke to the work completed by ARC since the last public meeting. http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/arcelementary/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/KingGeorge_PublicMeeting3_Final1.pdf

School Information Profiles (SIP)

The ARC undertook a review of the data from all three schools collected in the School Information Profiles which contains 21 sections including some of the following areas: enrolment versus available space, range of programs offered, extra-curricular activities, EQAO and DRA data, and community use and partnerships.

Review of Alternate Accommodation Options:

- Different boundary configurations were considered

Additional Information Requested by the ARC:

- List of capital expenses by school (2000-2010)
- List of outstanding renewal needs by school – projected expenses related to upkeep.

School Tours:

Each of the three schools involved in the accommodation was toured in conjunction with the principal and board staff. Not being a parent of the Memorial (City) or Prince of Wales school communities, Felicia spoke to how she felt the tours had the greatest impact on her perception and understanding of the decisions to be made and how adding students could impact the schools. She saw classes with a specific focus such as special needs, nutrition rooms, Kindergarten rooms and French rooms. The tours also showed the condition of the three buildings and their grounds. Ms. Guarascia felt each school had positive and negatives. Particularly she was impressed with the pod concept utilized at Prince of Wales, the available technology (Smartboards) and special programs such as Mohawk language. Ms. Guarascia commented that Memorial (City) School is very historical with a beautiful auditorium and gym, phenomenal music room and amazing grounds. As a King George parent, the tours affirmed for her that the King George students would gain by going to either of these two schools.

3.3 Accommodation Options

Ms. Warling presented the following boundary options:

http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/arcelementary/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/KingGeorge_PublicMeeting3_Final1.pdf

Original Staff recommendation – closure of King George School, June 2012, with students relocated to Prince of Wales and Memorial (City) Schools effective September 2012 based on new boundaries.

Why a staff option? The Board is required to develop a staff recommendation to present to the ARC, which the ARC may accept, reject or modify.

Based on input received, alternative boundary options have been developed taking into consideration points such as utilization (school capacity versus enrolment) walking distance, major roads, and balancing of population between the two schools. These three options allow the ARC to make comparisons from one option to another to better inform their decision on the recommended boundaries.

Three alternative options will be presented and each option will consist of two phases.

Phase 1

Each option shows different boundaries for Prince of Wales and Memorial (City), which will determine where the King George students will go, and what the new enrolments for these schools will be.

This is Phase 1 and will only involve the ARC schools [King George, Memorial (City) and Prince of Wales

Phase 2

There will also be a Phase 2 presented for each of the options; which involves a Queen Mary boundary review proposal. This will have students from the King George ARC going to and coming from Queen Mary.

This can only be an additional consideration for Trustees as Queen Mary is not a part of the ARC.

The current boundary situation was outlined (including Queen Mary School). Principal Bradley noted that King George students currently attend Memorial (City) School for grades 7 and 8. Each of the options include data relative to the projected enrolment and percentage of utilization based on the recommended boundary. Each of the options reflect the current boundaries in black line, but the proposed boundary areas are colour coded for ease of visual identification. Queen Mary data is included in all Phase 2 options.

Option A Phase 1:

Map: This is the original Board option utilizing Barton Street and Gage Avenue North as the boundaries and trying to balance enrolments at 85% utilization rate per school. Both schools would be JK-8. *Queen Mary is identified for reference only.*

Utilization:

Memorial (City) approx. 78%

Prince of Wales approx. 96% dropping to 88%

with an average between the two schools at around 83%

POW and Memorial enrolment increase

Option A Phase 2 – Queen Mary boundary review

Map: Phase 2 is a Queen Mary Boundary Review proposal with boundaries for Prince of Wales, Memorial (City) and Queen Mary Schools running north/south. It would have Queen Mary School taking students north of its current boundary and Memorial (City) School would be taking in the west segment of the current Queen Mary boundary.

Utilization:

Memorial (City) increased to 90%.

Prince of Wales drops to 83%.

Queen Mary drops from current 86%, to 83% (because there are more students living in the West Segment of the Queen Mary boundary (around 85 students), compared to the north-of-Queen-Mary area (around 57 students).

Option B Phase 1

Map: Uses current east boundary of Prince of Wales, instead of Gage Ave North.

Utilization: (Similar to the Board option)

Memorial (City) approx. 80%, up slightly from the original Board option.

Prince of Wales approx. 86%, down slightly from the original Board option.

This difference is from the Gage Ave N to Balsam Ave N area.

Option B Phase 2 - Queen Mary boundary review

Map: Follows north /south boundaries. Attempts to move students closer to home.

Utilization:

Memorial up slightly to 92%.

Prince of Wales down slightly to 80%.
Queen Mary utilization is around 83%.

Option C Phase 1

Map: This option splits the students in the northern portion of King George between the two schools.

Utilization: This adds more students to Memorial (City) and less to Prince of Wales compared to the other two options.

Memorial (City) much higher at approx. 94%

Prince of Wales much lower at approx. 75%

Option C Phase 2 – Queen Mary boundary review

Map: Uses north / south line for Queen Mary

Utilization:

Memorial (City) 98%

Prince of Wales 75%

Queen Mary utilization 83%

Estimated timeline:

The King George ARC is to submit their recommendation in November, 2011 with the Board of Trustees making a decision in January 2012. Any potential Queen Mary boundary review would have to occur during the winter of 2011/12.

Closure of King George School would be effective June 2012, with students relocating for September, 2012.

3.4 Next Steps

The next ARC working group meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 12, 2011 at the Education Centre to finalize the ARC recommendation. The public may come and observe the committee's deliberations, but there will not be an opportunity for input until Public meeting #4 scheduled for Wednesday, November 2, 2011 at which time the final ARC recommendation will be presented. All information will be available on the Board's website

4. Questions/ Comments from the Public

Susan Neudorf (parent, Prince of Wales) asked what year's data was used in determining utilization rates and enrolment?

Ms. Warling noted that the data is based on historical data over a five year period and that data projections have been done for the next 10 years, every year, and every three years.

Don Ruddle (King George community rep/School Council) supported the north/south boundary option to establish a Memorial (City) corridor.

Mr. Rocco observed that the community living below Barton Street has continually asked to attend Queen Mary School rather than being bused to Memorial (City).

Trustee Tim Simmons commented that school boundaries are off kilter across the board and families can be living closer to Queen Mary or Cathy Wever Schools rather than Prince of Wales or Memorial (City) Schools.

Don Ruddle asked if extending the Prince of Wales boundary westward towards Sanford Avenue had been considered?

Mr. Rocco stated that a boundary review was conducted between Hess Street School and Dr. Davey School which included Cathy Wever School. Of those three schools the review revealed that only Cathy Wever has increasing enrolment. That would impact on your suggestion to move the boundary westward. The problem is we have built new schools within old boundaries and they need to be rectified.

Susan Bird (parent, Prince of Wales) asked whether boundaries couldn't be set up to include the immediate area surrounding the school?

Daniel DelBianco: Any change to the boundary affects families with children currently attending the school. As new schools have been built, they have retained their previous boundaries. From a planning perspective it would be easier if all the schools were the same size, but schools have different capacities and need different boundaries.

Susan Bird – What about people living within a two-block radius?

Mr. Rocco – Part of the City's revitalization goal is for neighbourhoods to support families in their neighbourhood – this area is called the Pan Am corridor. As a school board, our numbers have fluctuated downward in certain areas which impacts on boundaries and certain schools. The Board will be undertaking a review of the lower city boundaries as part of their Facilities Master plan.

John Bradley (Principal, Memorial (City) School): Referring to Option A, Phase 1, what impact does it have on enrolment at Queen Mary – might it result in high enrolment?

Ms. Warling: Queen Mary is currently at 86 or 87 percent utilization. This boundary change results in very similar numbers moving in and out of Queen Mary (around 85 students), compared to the north-of-Queen-Mary area (around 57 students).

Janet VanDuzen (Principal of Prince of Wales): Enrolment figures are from 2009 and do not reflect our move in March 2009 and our continued growth. 2009 SIP data has us at 509, however this year we have 537 students while Memorial and King George are experiencing a downward pattern. So in projecting long term to 2015 and 2020, I would like to recommend that the 2009 numbers be updated with 2011 actual numbers to ensure we don't go over-capacity.

Mr. Ruddle: How often do you reassess boundaries? Would the Board reassess if there are significant changes?

Mr. Rocco: Yes, we have a boundary review process, which was used in the Dr. Davey scenario I referred to earlier. Boundaries can be reviewed. This area is starting to settle. Adelaide Hoodless has experienced a steep decline. Dr. Davey opened at 450 and has settled at 570. Accommodation and Planning take that into account. As a neighbourhood changes, a boundary could be reviewed. The boundaries in the lower city do need to be looked at.

Trustee Tim Simmons: Could Ms. Warling comment on the way Accommodation & Planning is looking at the lower city over all after the ARCs are done?

Ms. Warling: Accommodation and Planning was moved into the Facilities Management Department portfolio to facilitate the two departments working more closely. We are working on a Long term Facilities Master plan which will take into consideration areas such as: enrolment, demographics, condition of all facilities, implementation of full day Kindergarten and how to address excess pupil places. Presently we have three Secondary and two Elementary ARCs underway. All their reports are due to the Board in January. Based on the direction approved by the Trustees with those reports, it would allow the Accommodation and Planning and Facilities Management departments to look at buildings and communities, to compile long term recommendations that would result in better facilities for students. The long term Facilities Master Plan will come to the Trustees later this school year and will contain recommendations regarding capital and maintenance projects.

5. Adjournment

There being no further questions from members of the public, Mr. Rocco thanked the school community for their time and comments on the options outlined. Further input to these options can be emailed to claire.vanderbeek@hwdsb.on.ca for consideration of the King George ARC. The next King George ARC meeting on October 12, 2011 at the Education Centre is a working group meeting, but the public are welcome to attend to observe. The public meeting to present the ARC's final recommendation will be on Wednesday, November 2, 2011 at Memorial (City) School. All the presentations made to the King George ARC are posted on the Board's website at http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/arcelementary/?page_id=62

Adjournment took place at 6:50 p.m.