

East Hamilton City 1 Accommodation Review Committee
Working Group Meeting # 6
Thursday, December 12, 2013
6:00 p.m.

Roxborough Park Elementary School
20 Reid Avenue North, Hamilton, ON

Minutes

ATTENDANCE

Committee Members

Chair - Peter Joshua

Voting Members - Abbie Boyko, Casey Eaton, Susan Fischer, Laurie Hazelton, Sandra Lindsay, Megan MacDonald, Brian McPhee, Barbara Mitchell, Brandy Paul, Brianna Okerstrom, Samantha Prosser, Norma Rookwood, Carla Shewell, Jennifer Voth, Chris Weston, Shannon Weston, Tracie Wilson

Non-Voting Members - Lisa Barzetti, Sandra Constable, Joanna Crapsi-Cascioli, John Gris, Dan Ivankovic, Ray Mulholland, Tiz Penny, Todd White

Regrets

Voting Members - Susan Pretula

Non-Voting Members - Elaine Pilgrim-Susi

Resource Staff

Bob Fex, Peter Sovran

Recording Secretary

Kathy Forde

Public - Nil

1. Call to Order

Peter Joshua called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. The purpose of the meeting was to review the ARC options and prepare to vote on the option(s) that will move forward.

2. Agenda

2.1 Additions/Deletions

Nil

2.2 Approval of Agenda

Approved by consensus by a show of hands.

3. Minutes from Working Group Meeting # 5

3.1 Clarification

Nil

3.2 Approval of Minutes

Approved by consensus by a show of hands.

4. Minutes from Public Meeting # 3

4.1 Clarification

Feedback from the Public Meeting was provided in a separate document for information and consideration as options continue to be developed.

4.2 Approval of Minutes

Approved by consensus by a show of hands.

5. Correspondence

No correspondence was received for distribution within the agenda package. A letter submitted by committee member Susan Pretula will be added as correspondence, which explains her temporary absence from the working group.

6. Review of ARC Options

6.1 Discussion

Feedback from Public Meeting # 3 was reviewed for information and consideration as options continue to be developed. Members noted that some comments may not be accurate reflections but rather opinions; most opinions focus on saving their schools; some comments deal with class size; many people are fine with a new Viscount Montgomery but not at 700 students; many like a small school best and indicate bigger is not better; busing may impact student involvement in after school programs; and, closures may impact community and services provided through the schools. Peter Joshua noted that there are provisions for busing in some circumstances.

Once the option(s) are developed, a report will need to be prepared and submitted to the Board. Cost estimates will also need to be reviewed for proposal of building a new school.

The final option(s) will be selected based upon a collective decision through the voting members. A secret ballot will be used as needed. Once the final option is put forward, it is the trustees who will vote on the final decision. Trustees will also consider the Long Term Facilities Master Plan (LTFMP) guiding principles. The LTFMP Guiding Principles were reviewed (Binder Tab A.2):

In order to ensure that Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB) provides equitable, affordable and sustainable learning facilities, the following LTFMP Guiding Principles have been created. These principles guide and assist in creating the framework for determining the viability

of our schools, which is a key component in the development and implementation of the Long Term Facilities Master Plan.

The following guiding principles are consistent with the commitment to provide quality teaching and learning environments that are driven by the needs of students and programs:

- 1. HWDSB is committed to providing and maintaining quality learning and teaching environments that support student achievement (HWDSB Strategic Directions, Annual Operating Plan 2011-12)*
- 2. Optimal utilization rates of school facilities is in the range of 90- 110%*
- 3. Facilities reflect the program strategy that all students need personalized learning, pathways, schools with specialization and cluster and community support (Learning for All: HWDSB Program Strategy)*
- 4. Transportation to school locations will not normally exceed 60 minutes one way (Transportation Policy, 2011)*
- 5. School facilities meet the needs of each of our students in the 21st century (Education in HWDSB, 2011)*
- 6. Accessibility will be considered in facility planning and accommodation (Accessibility (Barrier-Free) "Pathways" Policy, 1999)*
- 7. School facilities provide neighbourhood and community access that supports the well-being of students and their families (A Guide to Educational Partnerships, 2009)*
- 8. School facilities have flexible learning environments including adaptive and flexible use of spaces; student voice is reflected in where, when and how learning occurs (Education in HWDSB, 2012)*
- 9. Specific principles related to elementary and secondary panels:*

Elementary

- a. School Capacity - optimal school capacity would be 500 to 600 students, which creates two to three classes for each grade*
- b. School Grade/Organization –Kindergarten to-Grade 8 facilities*
- c. School Site Size - optimal elementary school site size would be approximately 6 acres*
- d. French Immersion - In dual track schools a balance between French Immersion and English track students is ideal for balanced program delivery*

Bob Fex presented a costing analysis of the options presented at Public Meeting # 3. Costing methodology includes the proceeds of disposition from schools closed, administrative and operational savings/costs, deferred maintenance (high and urgent) costs, renovation costs and

estimated cost for a new 350 capacity school (\$6.8M estimate based on enrolment numbers for Viscount Montgomery). Costs do not include demolition. All values are estimates based on a one-year period. Cost estimates provide a rough idea of associated costs for relative comparison of what may or may not be viable. The Staff Option with a new school was estimated at the meeting for discussion purposes only. Enrolment and utilization numbers were also reviewed as capacity must also be considered. Cost estimates were posted for members to view.

Option D

- **Parkdale closes and students assigned to W.H. Ballard and Hillcrest;**
- **Roxborough Park closes and students assigned to Hillcrest and Viscount Montgomery;**
- **Woodward closes and students assigned to Hillcrest;**
- **Rosedale becomes a JK-6 with a boundary change**
 - **Boundary change: Viscount Montgomery area south of King**

With a New School (350 capacity)

-Savings \$10.4M
 -Costs \$13.3M
 -Difference (\$2.9M) deficit

No New School

-Savings \$10.4M
 -Costs \$6.5M
 -Difference \$3.9M savings

Option F

- **Parkdale closes and students assigned to W.H. Ballard and Hillcrest;**
- **Roxborough Park closes and students assigned to Hillcrest and Viscount Montgomery;**
- **Woodward becomes a JK-6 with a boundary change**
 - **Boundary change: Hillcrest area south to Vansitmart**
- **Rosedale becomes a JK-6 with a boundary change**
 - **Boundary change: Viscount Montgomery area south of King**

With a New School (350 capacity)

-Savings \$7.6M
 -Costs \$13.9M
 -Difference (\$6.3M) deficit

No New School

-Savings \$7.6M
 -Costs \$7.1M
 -Difference \$500K savings

Staff Option

- **Consolidate Roxborough park, Hillcrest and Woodward into Hillcrest in 2014**
 - **minimal construction/renovation costs**
- **Consolidate Rosedale and Viscount Montgomery into Viscount Montgomery in 2014**
 - **minimal construction/renovation costs**
- **Consolidate Parkdale and W.H. Ballard into W.H. Ballard in 2014**
 - **minimal construction/renovation costs**

With a New School (650 capacity)

-Savings	\$17.4M
-Costs	\$18.3M
-Difference (\$900K) deficit	

No New School

- Savings	\$12.3M
- Costs	\$5.5M
- Difference	\$6.7M savings

The staff option is a starting point and should not be a bearing on the options developed. In terms of dollars, all Boards seek funding under capital priorities submissions and even with \$350M available it was not nearly enough to satisfy all Boards. There are budgets for new builds and renewal but these too are limited. The Ministry will need a compelling case for a new school as funds are limited province wide. Options with a new build should have a back-up plan in case Ministry funding is not available. Schools with growth and joint use facilities however are often considered favourably.

Comments

- From my own research that indicates a JK-5 environment is beneficial for kids in many aspects, it is difficult to appreciate the JK-8 model which contradicts this theory. We need to know if only JK-8 schools will be acceptable so we are not wasting time. In response it was noted that just because a JK-8 model is recommended within the LTFMP guiding principles, this format is not carved in stone. However, guiding principles are the focus for trustee decisions.
- From personal experience, kids who have attended various elementary schools ranging from 175 to 600 students felt the same sense of school community regardless of school size. Many people base their perspective on experience. The benefits of a large school should not be disregarded.
- A key commitment was to avoid having portables.
- In terms of the FCI there are three schools that are not needed.
- Regarding a baby boom echo, the level of confidence would not be sufficient to boost numbers.
- The JK-6 boundary change should perhaps be reconsidered in terms of numbers.
- The Rosedale area is small so would not be a big impact to boundary changes.
- Rosedale remains open for both Options D and F but it was expressed that the idea of keeping Rosedale open cannot be justified if building a new school.
- It was noted that the reason behind building a new school on Viscount Montgomery was not to accommodate other school closures but that high maintenance costs was a key factor.
- Basically, schools suggested for closure do not meet the criteria.
- Accessibility, transportation and walking distances remain key points of interest.
- Without a new school there would be savings but the deficit incurred with a new school is not that extreme considering the outcome and benefits received.
- With respect to the staff option, costs without a new school over 10 years would closely match costs for a new build so it is important to ask where you want to be in ten years from now. The payoff for a new school needs to be carefully considered.
- The staff option can be modified to create a new option.
- Final option(s) will indicate a timeline of June 2015 or beyond for any changes to occur.
- In determining the final option(s), we bring our best thinking to the table.

6.2 Refine Options/s

Peter Joshua suggested that a silent ballot be used to help narrow options down to two. If needed, further information can be provided to refine options and voting can occur at the next meeting. An opportunity was provided for members to consider how they would like to move forward:

Yes = starting to look at eliminating options [7 votes]

No = need all information on all options before voting [10 votes]

Members expressed the need to further review enrolment numbers, costs and boundary changes. Bob Fex will send out an email before the next meeting with details as requested and noted on mapping for:

- **Option D1** - new school
- **Option D2** - no new school
- **Option F1** - new school
- **Option F2** - no new school
- **Staff Option** - no new school with boundary changes (some Parkdale students going to W.H. Ballard and Hillcrest; Parkdale Ave becomes the line of divide instead of Adeline; Roxborough Ave would be the north-south boundary between Hillcrest and Viscount Montgomery)
- **Staff Option** - new school with same boundaries

7. Next Steps

- Prepare for next meeting and be ready to vote
- Prepare draft committee accommodation report for presentation at Public Meeting # 4
- **Next Working Group Meeting # 7 - January 16, 2014 at Woodward**
- **Next Public Meeting # 4 - Tuesday, January 28, 2014 at W.H. Ballard**
- **Final Working Group Meeting # 8 - Thursday January 30, 2014 at Hillcrest**

8. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Handouts

- Agenda
- Presentation
- Draft Minutes - Working Group Meeting # 5
- Draft Minutes - Public Meeting # 3
- Feedback - Public Meeting # 3
- Correspondence
- High Level Costing Analysis