

West Flamborough Accommodation Review Committee

Working Group Meeting # 6

Wednesday, December 11, 2013

6:00 p.m.

**Greensville Elementary School
625 Harvest Road, Sheffield, ON**

Minutes

ATTENDANCE:

Committee Members

Chair - Mag Gardner

Voting Members - Sara Ardiel, Karen Baille, Pamela Beach, John Belanger, Tania Brittain, Jessica Dymont, Colleen Evans, Candice Goodale, Cairine Grantham, Brett Humphrey, Anthony Hunter, Rachel Kott, Patti Lee, Callie Matthews, Stephanie Munro, Heather Ryan, Janine Vandenheuval, Sue VanEgdom, David Wardell

Non-Voting Members - Stewart Cameron, Doug Dunford, Kate Fischer, Eddie Grattan, Kim Short, Karen Turkstra

Regrets

Voting Members - Kristin Glasbergen, Shelley McGuire, Marguerite Richer, Melissa Slote,

Non-Voting Members - Nil

Resource Staff

Bob Fex

Recording Secretary

Kathy Forde

Public - 3 public attendees present - Greensville (2); Dundana (1)

1. Call to Order

Mag Gardner called the meeting to order. The intent of the meeting was for reflection and consideration of details to move towards one or two recommendations.

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

Nil

4.2 Approval of Minutes

Approved by consensus by a show of hands.

5. Correspondence

Correspondence has provided healthy public input. Members continue to review the insights and comments received. Public concerns are understood. Correspondence is not edited. It is intended for information and consideration relevant to the ARC review. New correspondence from the Millgrove Children's Centre was provided as a handout. All correspondence is posted on the website at www.hwdsb.on.ca for information.

6. Review of ARC Options and Public Meeting # 3

6.1 Discussion

Guiding principles created by committee members to assist in collectively developing options were reviewed. Capacity numbers have been added to the options based on various scenarios of renovation and new builds. The goal is to optimize facilities and get as close as possible to the 85-95% utilization target since under-utilization is one of the main factors of the ARC review. School closures are intended to accommodate students and programming. Data, public feedback and School Information Profiles provide the details needed for narrowing down the options. The three options presented at Public Meeting # 3 were also reviewed:

Option #1

- **Close all 5 schools**
- **New school on Spencer (for Spencer, Millgrove and Greenville)**
- **New site (Beverly Central Community Centre) for Beverly and Seaton (involves a realignment of catchment area to generally balance the two schools' populations)**

Option #2

- **Close Millgrove and Greenville and renovate Spencer Valley (making it a JK-8)**
- **Close Beverly and Seaton with a new JK-8 school on the Beverly Central school site (involves a realignment of catchment area to generally balance the two schools' populations)**

Option #3

- **New school for Seaton and Beverly at a central location**
- **Greenville goes to a renovated Spencer Valley (JK-8)**
- **Millgrove remains open status quo or explore the viability of a JK-8 (there would be no change in current catchment area)**

Members took time to review the options, process the information and share ideas. Initial discussions included the following details and potential options:

Option 1 & 2

- Consolidate Greenville, Millgrove and Spencer Valley in 2015 (new school or construct permanent addition at Spencer Valley)
- Consolidate Beverly Central and Dr. Seaton on the Community Centre site or at Beverly Central in 2015 (new school capacity to be approximately 350)

Option 3A

- Consolidate Greenville and Spencer Valley in 2015 (new school or construct permanent addition)
- Consolidate Beverly Central and Dr. Seaton at a central location in 2015 (new school capacity to be approximately 350)
- Millgrove remains status quo

Option 3B

- Consolidate Greenville and Spencer Valley in 2015 (new school or construct permanent addition)
- Consolidate Beverly Central and Dr. Seaton at a central location in 2015 (new school capacity to be approximately 350)
- Millgrove becomes JK-8 (portable accommodation or construct permanent addition)

Regarding property, it was noted that school lands are not sold simply for the sake of money. Lands can also be exchanged. In the past, new schools have been built on existing sites and on purchased lands. Although land procurement takes more time it should not be considered negatively by Trustees. Trustees would look for any money needed and deferred maintenance costs can also be utilized. Karen Turkstra noted that there will be an investigative meeting with the City regarding the idea of obtaining some green space to build a new school. The property

at the Beverly Community site is expansive but is utilized with fields and parking. Discussions will indicate whether the idea of pursuing land at the Beverly Community site is a complicated venture or if there is potential.

Members noted that according to the greenbelt map, Seaton seems to have a protected layer which may make it difficult to sell to the general public. Feasibility needs to be considered. Bob Fex can explore any zoning restrictions that might apply if and when needed. A geographic perspective may be added as a new layer of data.

Further collaboration was required to move towards selection of a preferred option. The optimal recommendation will be put forth with the best information, data and facts available at the time of discussions noting that a few unknowns can always be expected. It was noted that much public feedback focuses on transportation and the length of bus rides. Again, with guiding principles, public input and data in mind, members formed breakout groups to collaborate on the following possibilities:

Millgrove - JK-5 / JK-8 /close

- Low student population will present a challenge for sports, activities and programming and would reduce competition
- The public preferred JK-5 for Millgrove
- The public was concerned with the number of transitions for students and some seemed unclear about the transition to high school
- The exact date for the next ARC review for West Flamborough is unknown although policy stipulates no sooner than five years. Year two (2014/15) of the current ARC review will be postponed for one year which pushes the entire process back. Either way, we would not want to take communities through this process again anytime soon.
- The aim is to reach overall total utilization numbers at percentages desired with all schools together. Rural schools are considered a little differently due to transportation. There may be more flexibility in terms of utilization numbers.
- The idea of Millgrove as a JK-3 school was also explored. Members could not identify any benefits but noted that low enrolment could result in combined classes with multiple grades. Based on data, enrolment would only amount to approximately 125 students. As such, this scenario would not meet criteria, tiny schools are not desired and the formula used to calculate staff needed to run a school (principal, secretary, custodial) may not work.
- A vote by secret ballot was conducted on the preference for Millgrove as:
 - **JK-5 [18 votes]**
 - JK-8 [1 vote]
- Additional discussion was needed to become grounded for moving forward.

- Millgrove has been a school of significant interest to the public. It will be important to determine whether Millgrove stays open or closes. Members formed breakout groups again with representation from each school to discuss the benefits and challenges for Millgrove to remain status quo (JK-5) versus closure.
- A vote by secret ballot was conducted on the preference for Millgrove as:
 - **Status Quo (JK-5) [11 votes]**
 - Closure [8 votes]

Mag Gardner noted that the group has worked cohesively with collective leadership. Progressive thinking has come a long way. The votes provide a sense of direction for moving forward. If Millgrove remains status quo (JK-5) then Options 1 and 2 are off the table. As such, members formed breakout groups again to look at Option 3 and any potential implications. Main insights were reported from each group as follows:

- Keeping Millgrove open may impact the proposal for a new school for Spencer Valley and implicate funding since Millgrove would generate extra costs needed for renovations - costs need to be explored.
- Leaving Millgrove as a K-5 school may create a concern with the dynamics between small and large school populations especially if Spencer Valley becomes top heavy in terms of intermediate classes. However, a top-heavy school with many intermediate classes can be a positive thing allowing programs such as reading buddies where all ages learn together and mingle well.
- Balance in population is important.
- We have abandoned the idea of building on Seaton too quickly where a large footprint exists.
- If asking for a new school, knowing the size of the Beverly site we could build up to ensure the footprint does not get bigger - we can build up and improve septic.
- It makes sense for all students in grades 6, 7 and 8 to go to one school (Beverly Central)
- If the Beverly Community site is not available, we should build on the Seaton site which has more land then change the boundaries.
- Septic and location to be considered.
- If using a larger site to combine three schools (Millgrove, Spencer, Greenville) and if building to address walkability, consider potential for building on Greenville site.
- Karen Turkstra added that as a whole community, people need to be aware of any greenspace that enhances the quality of student life. As such, the arboretum should be noted since the idea of building on Greenville has been raised even though we do we have enough information.

6.2 Boundary Alignments

Boundary realignments will need to be done before numbers are run.

6.3 Refine Options

Final thoughts to move forward:

- Will the Ministry provide funding to build two new schools
- Will be wise to put forward one option with a new build and a backup plan
- Identify things that are walkable i.e. libraries, field trips
- How does being in a village/hamlet contribute to the life of the school - what are the advantages
- Is Spencer Valley in poor enough state to close
- Option 3 to be carefully considered - what are the impacts
- Fresh perspective in January will help to advance our thinking

For the next meeting, Bob Fex will add projected costs and savings (another layer of data) for comparison and further examination to help inform refinement of the options as work moves forward. Insight on septic issues was conveyed. Septic systems and the ability to meet septic requirements based of ARC options do not appear to generate construction barriers. This information was gathered from an experienced engineer consultant who has done work in the Flamborough area including school in this review. If they cannot go deeper they can build upwards so there are options although testing would be needed and money available.

An opportunity to visit a new school (Guy Brown / Sir William Osler) will be explored.

7. Next Steps

- **Next Working Group Meeting # 7 - January 15, 2014 at Beverly Central**
 - Finalize options based on public consultations
- **Next Public Meeting # 4 - January 22, 2014 at Greensville**
 - Present draft ARC report with options

8. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Handouts

- Agenda
- Presentation
- Draft Minutes - Working Group Meeting #5
- Draft Minutes - Public Meeting # 3
- Options Presented to the Public
- Correspondence