



**East Hamilton City 2 Accommodation Review
Working Group Meeting #3
February 18, 2016 - 6:00 pm
Sir Wilfrid Laurier Elementary School, 70 Albright Road, Hamilton, ON (Library)**

Minutes

Attendance

Committee Members - Lisa Corsini, Tamara Cummings, Jeff Gillies (Chair), Lisa Hardie, Drazena Hidalgo, Sasha Kajganic, Judy Kloosterman, Suzie Spelic, Terri Trimble, Marissa Turner, Meagan Walker

Committee Member Regrets - Cherie Evans, Laura Neubrand

HWDSB Resource Staff - John Bradley, Anegret Cucuz, Sue Dunn, Robert Faulkner, Sherry Halla, Susan Jackson Boshier, Rhonda Moules, Pam Reinholdt, Mark Tadeson, Curtis Tye, Ellen Warling

Trustees - Ray Mulholland, Todd White

Public - 1 public attendee - Hamilton Community News (1)

Recording Secretary - Kathy Forde

1. Welcome

Jeff Gillies welcomed everyone and provided opening remarks.

2. Review & Approve Minutes

- **Working Group Meeting #2** - Minutes accepted without any changes. Members concurred.
- **Public Meeting #1** - Minutes accepted with revision to attendance and spelling of Wilfred to "Wilfrid". Members concurred.

3. Review Feedback from Public Meeting #1

Feedback from the Public Meeting was reviewed. Members provided comments as noted below:

- **Initial Report Recommended Option** - In response to public comments around the perceived loss of green space in the Glen Echo/Brae area should a new build occur, it was noted that rather than losing green space with a new build there is the possibility of gaining green space.
- **Initial Report Alternative Option** - No comments.
- **Initial Report Status Quo Option** - Members thought public attendees did not express interest in the Status Quo Option because it represented no change. Public attendees are aware the schools are old so when they looked at costs and realities, felt the Status Quo Option was not doable so focused more on the other two options. It seems people are quite excited about having new schools.

Overall, committee members felt that the public consultation forum was a positive session. Attendees had an opportunity to view all three options and share various perspectives. The smaller group discussions were considered productive as people rotated among the three options posted.



4. Correspondence

Correspondence was reviewed. One writer expressed concern around school drop-off and pick-up, and on exterior/interior modernization. Members recognize that traffic is a real concern and there is an opportunity to get it right with a new build. It was noted that bus loops and “Kiss & Ride” configurations are incorporated within the design of new builds based on Ministry benchmarks. Communication with City staff would occur and site plan approvals would also be required. In terms of sprucing up schools, the Board will continue to help maintain school exteriors but no major renovations would be done if building new schools.

5. Review Key Issues that are Emerging

Members, principals and staff shared thoughts and dialogue on some of the key issues that are emerging as noted below:

Feasibility of Keeping Elizabeth Bagshaw Open

- Size of a new school is a concern - boundary mapping would need to be addressed
- A super school seems feasible only with a boundary shift
- Families that could not attend the public meeting still have questions around school size and services such as special needs - they do not want to lose personal touch or personal connection - they understand the money aspect but wonder what impact an extra 150 kids would have
- People impacted by change need to ensure it works for them
- Access to the green space around Elizabeth Bagshaw and Sir Wilfrid Laurier is an item of interest - this space however is not on school property so organized visits are considered a field trip - access is similar from either school - both schools have great green space
- Should Elizabeth Bagshaw close, the impact on green space and on increased numbers at Sir Wilfrid Laurier must be carefully considered
- Elizabeth Bagshaw is a high needs school - some parents have expressed concern around staff and student numbers
- It is recognized that various students have different needs within a school - it will be important to ensure all student needs are met - members wondered if any protocol exists for reference
- It was noted that larger schools generally provide more choice, opportunities and staff however, EA staffing is not connected to school size but to student need - when a student switches school location the allocation follows the student not the individual staff member - staffing occurs based on Ministry benchmarks however, with a larger number of students there may be some advantages in terms of obtaining additional staffing support - an outline on past history will be provided for reference at the next meeting (Pam Reinholdt)
- When changes occur, many staff members often shift over to the new school

Feasibility of Reducing Student Population at Sir Wilfrid Laurier

- First two key emerging issues are related but are also separate
- There is a section of students that could be shifted but beyond that it would be difficult to pull families from the school they currently walk to and expect the kids to bus to another location
- Other large elementary schools exist in the Board (Winona / Bellmoore) but deal with different demographic populations so cannot be compared with Elizabeth Bagshaw and Sir Wilfrid Laurier



Kenora Neighbourhood Going to Lake Avenue

- Lake Avenue is a unique school with positive school culture - student voice is evident and students are engaged - there is also a serenity - the relationships are happy and there are many smiling faces - the school works with its community which is an empowering feeling for those connected with the school - teachers are on top of academics - it has strong ESL support and excellent learning resource - the ESL population is approximately 85 percent but ESL does not unite the school, it is everything else - walking may be the only issue
- Additional students would be welcomed in a positive inclusive environment - it would be worth the walk - students should adapt easily
- Information or an orientation session on transition could be arranged - many transitional experiences can be incorporated
- Concern about families and students crossing over Centennial Parkway - a very busy street - crossing guards would need to be considered
- The Advisory Committee provides advice to trustees and can highlight concern around safety when crossing Centennial Parkway
- Members can continue to talk with their school communities and can still look options
- Members suggested that perhaps discussions take place with the Lower Stoney Creek Advisory Committee concerning boundaries to maximize facilities
- French Immersion students outside of the review area should perhaps be considered
- Any impacts to high school boundaries must be carefully considered

Feasibility of Closing Glen Echo and Glen Brae and Building New on Sir Isaac Brock Location - No discussion

Building Location of New Glen School (on existing building site or not) - No discussion

Parking Issues at Glen Site

- Parking issues are common to all schools

6. Discussion Regarding Narrowing our Focus Regarding Existing Options

Todd White acknowledged the dialogue on emerging issues and shared an observation noting that folks seemed to feel limited by what currently exists. He noted that mapping is a starting point and suggested that perhaps members might want to look at a map without boundaries in order to envision how neighbourhoods could be grouped together to design the communities best suited to the study area. A mapping exercise would allow members to mark boundaries without limits. Members should not feel restricted by the status quo. Schools should be designed with community growth in mind. In response to members wondering if this approach would be an effective use of time or would provide the outcome desired, Todd advised that a business case would need to be built around any recommendation or a new design if desired by the Committee.

In response to a member asking whether the hybrid option ever transpired, it was noted that the committee will go through an exercise at a later time to review details.

With more questions than answers at this point and hearing from Trustee White, perspective from a wider scope may assist in moving forward. Members gathered to view neighbourhood and student distribution mapping. A planning map will be emailed to members to assist in their thinking around feasible community and neighbourhood groupings. Ideas, comments and any other options can then be discussed at the next meeting.



7. Meeting with the Lower Stoney Creek AR Group to Share Thinking

On Wednesday, March 23rd the Lower Stoney Creek Advisory Committee will be meeting at Gatestone Elementary School and touring the facility to view a newer build. An invitation has been extended to the East Hamilton City 2 Advisory Committee to attend a joint meeting. Attendance will be determined by the Committee at the next meeting depending on progress of the work underway. Members will hold March 23 as a tentative meeting date.

8. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Next Meetings

- Working Group Meeting #4 - Tuesday March 01, 2016 6:00 pm - Glen Brae