



**Lower Stoney Creek Accommodation Review
Working Group Meeting #2
January 27, 2016 - 6:00 pm
Collegiate Avenue, 49 Collegiate Avenue, Stoney Creek, ON - Library**

Minutes

Attendance

Committee Members - Kim Adam, Heather Archibald, Candice Babbey, Patrick Coulter, Jeff Gillies (Chair), Ljuba Lush, Monique Moore, Marilyn Murray, Joelle Narancic, Irina Omari, Mubina Panju, Dave Quinn, Denise Rainford, Sarah Solter, Christine VanEgmond, Linda Wallace

Committee Member Regrets - Nil

HWDSB Resource Staff - Lisa Barzetti, Jeff Gillies, Ian Hopkins, Ian Pellizzari, Brian Playfair, Pam Reinholdt, Mark Taylor, Jenny Seto-Vanderlip

Trustees - Jeff Beattie

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

Recording Secretary - Kathy Forde

1. Welcome

Jeff Gillies welcomed everyone to the meeting and provided opening remarks. Information provided at meetings may appear extensive but is a Ministry requirement. Tonight, interactive discussions would focus on the proposed options. The agenda was reviewed.

2. Review & Approve Minutes

Draft minutes from Working Group Meeting #1 January 20, 2016 were reviewed and accepted. Minutes from the Orientation Session January 13, 2016 were provided as a binder insert (tab 10).

3. Binder - Review Section 9 & Capital Funding

Ian Hopkins reviewed content under Section 9, which includes mapping to illustrate French Immersion student distribution, student distribution by school and walking distances. Each dot represents an address not a student. Transportation information was also reviewed in terms of total students and eligible riders.

Binder Update: Section 9 / 5th page / new map titled "Lower Stoney Creek - Current Walking Distances" added to replace map titled "Lower Stoney Creek - Recommended Option Walking Distances" (title error) / old 5th page is double-sided so remains in binder.

Capital funds were explained. Through School Consolidated Capital Funding, \$750M has been earmarked province-wide over four years to support consolidation and renewal. Last year, approximately \$19M was received by HWDSB. Through Capital Priorities Funding, resources are aimed at school consolidation, facility conditions and supporting accommodation pressures where immense growth is experienced. Both sources will be considered. Renewal grants support school maintenance and repair costs. In 2015, HWDSB received approximately \$19.5M. However, needs far outweigh funds available.



Questions/Comments

Q. Do you plan to spend all \$19.5M?

A. Yes. The projects are itemized by the facilities management department based on the needs at each facility. Health and safety issues are resolved then high and urgent items are taken into consideration.

Q. If we propose to rebuild, what happens to that renewal money?

A. The entire \$19.5M is intended for all elementary and secondary schools here at the Board. When a school comes off the list due to a rebuild, high needs at other schools move up the priority list.

4. Accommodation Options - Discussion

Members gathered into three groups to view the initial options and provide input on the pros and cons of each. Open dialogue provides an opportunity for members to share thoughts, express concerns and discuss advantages. Perspective provides a deeper understanding and is important for envisioning the best possible option and for providing advice to the trustees. Members regrouped to review comments. The main discussion points are noted below. Member feedback is attached.

Status Quo

- Smaller class size - class size is a provincial requirement in terms of maximums which apply to all schools in the system province-wide
- Split classes - when a few kids do not get along there is no opportunity to shift classes - some schools only have a small cohort - combined grade classes are a reality in many schools and is not necessarily a negative thing - split classes can provide good learning opportunities - a classroom often contains a range of abilities and teachers are able to handle a range of capabilities
- Afterschool programs - four of the six schools offer these programs - statistics/numbers are not currently available - Ian Hopkins will gather counts by school and report back

Recommended Option

- Construction duration - two years from demolition to new school opening pending funding
- Naming new schools - a new policy is under review and trustees are aiming for balance between historical value and respect for new beginnings - where two schools form one new school there is a process for considering old names, merging names or new names
- Out-of-catchment - generally new schools are closed to out-of-catchment - if you move out of the catchment area you are given the remainder of the school year to stay as an out-of-catchment student but would have to reapply for out-of-catchment the next year if the school is open - when students are moving, grades 6, 7 and 8 tend to stay put so they can graduate with their peers but it can be tricky
- Programs - when a school opens, the goal is to be ready with full programs and activities
- Sports fields and tracks - needed to get students more active - elementary school properties are too small for tracks but include a playing field with various types of equipment - schools adjacent to parks often share the park space through an agreement - green space is maximized as much as possible
- Staffing organization - falls under collective agreement - staff with any concerns or specific questions should connect directly with Human Resources
- Student location during construction - falls under transition planning - Memorial may be large enough to allow for new construction while students remain on site - in some cases portables and other schools are used as needed - preference is for business as usual



Alternative Option

- Daycare or before and after school program - if the school closes, the program moves to the new school so the care program stays within the community just at a new location - community needs are a consideration
- School name change - we go through a renaming process with community input - trustees make final decision
- Estimates - did the Board get more than one estimate - only one firm provided estimates - when something is proposed a more detailed cost estimate would be conducted
- Enrolment - why the steady decline in enrolment at Memorial - typically stems from JK enrolment which is often a driving factor - Census data, city data and population projections are examined - numbers are often viewed as trends - no big housing starts in this area - turnover within existing neighbourhood is slow – There are 3 large cohorts in grades in grade 4, 5 and 6. Once these students graduate from Memorial (SC), the enrolment will decrease due to the smaller cohorts coming into the school at the JK level.

5. Public Meeting #1 - Planning

Format for the public meeting was discussed. Consultation provides an opportunity to share voice and support. In keeping with Ministry guidelines, Ian Hopkins will provide a synopsis of the process and initial options. Committee feedback will be shared. Public attendees can then circulate to view the options and provide comments. Public feedback will then be reviewed at the next working group meeting.

Meeting notices have been posted to the website, advertised in community news and provided as a student handout. It is unknown how many public attendees will come out to the meeting.

Policy related to accommodation reviews has been revised to improve the process and engage attendees. Feedback on the new process will also be gathered as work moves forward.

The date for Public Meeting #2 was discussed and will be scheduled for Tuesday, April 12, 2016 which allows Councillors to attend. Members concurred.

6. Future WG Meeting Locations

The meeting schedule and locations were reviewed. Members suggested a visit to a newer school in the Stoney Creek vicinity to view amenities, space, classrooms and technology. Gatestone was considered well-suited for a tour. Availability for a tour and meeting at Gatestone on March 23 and availability of staff to respond to questions will be confirmed. A tour of Green Acres before arriving at Gatestone will also be coordinated if possible. Details to follow.

Members considered the process to be a good one with a positive approach. Members also suggested that feedback from the public meeting be compared with member feedback for work to move forward.

The session adjourned at 8:00 p.m.



Lower Stoney Creek Working Group Meeting #2 Accommodation Review Initial Options - Committee Feedback

Status Quo

- No changes

Pros

- Whole buildings are not sent to the landfill
- Smaller class sizes
- We can keep all our awesome teachers
- No staff layoffs
- Our schools can stay open
- Keep historical feel of areas with old buildings
- Many schools have great size of land (outdoor activities)
- Neighbourhoods are maintained
- Less change/upheaval for students
- Sense of family in smaller community
- Small is nice especially for youngest students
- Established communities (school) [repeated 2 times]
- Comfortable/known

Cons

- Not as many programs
- Inability to reach ideal enrolment in all schools
- Location stays the same (Mountain View) - not ideal
- Chronic short-fall in maintenance funding in the long run
- Inequitable access to resources
- Split classes [repeated 2 times]
- Lack of specialized programming
- Constantly playing catch-up with renewals
- Not a great variety of teachers
- Not as many children - not as many “friends” to choose from
- Too many schools too close together
- Busing for many schools can be costly and logistically difficult for timing and distance/duration of ride (for each school)
- Not as many staff to lead extra curriculars
- Can't divide children often with small schools when there are only two classes
- Old buildings

Additional Comments

- Will larger schools mean fewer split classes?
- Do you have any statistics regarding afterschool programs, daycare options, etc.? How many parents utilize these services



Recommended Option

- Rebuild Collegiate Avenue, Eastdale and Memorial (SC) - Anticipated occupancy September 2019
- Close Green Acres, Mountain View and R.L. Hyslop - Anticipated June 2019
- New Construction - 500 pupil place school on Collegiate Site anticipated opening September 2019
- New Construction - 460 pupil place school on Eastdale Site anticipated opening September 2019
- New Construction - 550 pupil place school on Memorial (SC) Site anticipated opening September 2019

Pros

- Busing routes can be more centralized
- Greater potential for students to walk to school
- Sense of community pride with new schools in Lower Stoney Creek
- More students = more clubs/activities/sports in each school
- New/better facilities for many generations of students to come
- Ability to grow your education options as demands dictate
- Boundaries make sense
- Not passing other schools on way to catchment school [repeated 3 times]
- New schools may attract students to Board
- Get the money while we can (only four years of funding)
- Closed schools and land can be sold to bring in funds towards other projects
- More collaboration for teachers
- We have three years to prepare students who will be attending a new school
- New facility will meet IT needs
- Three new schools mean all students have access to new facilities and equipment
- New buildings
- Schools of this size are ideal - smaller doesn't allow for full utilization - bigger lends itself to problems with students - also meets enrolment projections
- Walking to school is healthy for children not just physically but mentally and emotionally - allows kids to grow and improve independent skills

Cons

- Close walkers become bussers [repeated 2 times]
- Increased transportation costs
- Large amount of construction waste from demolished buildings
- Homeowners who purchased homes for one boundary may be disappointed to be reallocated
- Large school for children social/emotional challenges potentially
- Children who have thrived with their current school/staff will have to adjust
- Why is there one school smaller - could they not all be closer in size and potentially have same programs
- Short-term disruption to students currently in the schools
- Bigger class sizes
- Feel like there is more community pride with smaller schools not bigger new ones
- Big school populations - losing the small "community" "family" feeling (caring for and knowing everyone)
- Worry about the Riverdale community being lost in the process of a larger school - it is an extremely impoverished neighbourhood that may have benefitted from a smaller school



Additional Comments

- If we get new schools they should all have new names
- Where will students be relocated during construction?
- Where are the students going during construction?
- Staffing organization?
- How is staffing organized for closed schools?
- Will new schools have sports fields and tracks? We need to get kids much more active
- Renaming the buildings
- Please explain out-of-catchment. If a child moves out-of-catchment can they remain in their enrolled school?
- Will there be programs up and running for students in older classes?

Alternative Option

- Close R.L. Hyslop in June 2018
 - Students residing west of Lake Avenue directed to Green Acres (34% of students)
 - Students residing east of Lake Avenue and west of Gray Street directed to Collegiate Avenue (20% of students)
 - Students residing east of Gray Street directed to Eastdale (46% of students)

Pros

- Three whole buildings would not be in landfill
- Minimal changes in boundary
- Catchment areas are reasonable (walking distances)
- It is a reasonable option regarding space for children
- School sizes remain smaller

Cons

- Seems least cost effective
- Separating the R.L. Hyslop students
- Unfair to close/uproot one school only
- Schools left are still older and not conducive to current learning environment
- Still old schools that need a lot of repairs
- Renewal costs are huge
- Sustainment costs are not ideal for schools that are so old already
- Doesn't address issues for after school programs (parent inconvenience)
- Worst of all options
- Worst option - changes for one group of students does not address the issues
- Does not solve the issues with age, size, future changes in educational needs, sustainment costs and functionality

Additional Comments

- What is reasoning for the decrease in enrolment forecasted for Memorial School (significant decrease)?
- What are the renewal costs based on? Did Board get more than one option?
- Would school names change?