



**Accommodation Review – Ancaster  
Working Group Meeting #2  
January 18 2017 - 6:00 pm  
Rousseau  
Minutes**

**Attendance**

**Committee Members:** Sheri Mainprize, Max Brett, Gint Murphy, Stephen Obermeyer, Emily Cain, Elizabeth Crawford, Jennifer Kershaw, Sandy Bovair Young, Henry K., Mike Bell, Sarah Hopen

**Committee Member Regrets:** none received

**HWDSB Resource Staff:** – Laura Subonovich, Jenny Seto-Vanderlip, Tammy McLaughlin, John Gris

**Trustees:** Alex Johnstone, Greg Van Geffen, Jeff Beattie

**Public:**

**Media:** Richard Leitner

**Recording Secretary:** Sue Phillips

**1. Welcome & Introductions**

Bill Torrens welcomed the public and community members to the meeting. Trustees Jeff Beattie, Greg Van Geffen and Alex Johnstone were introduced. Introductions were made around the table.

John Gris toured the school with the group.

Bill Torrens reviewed the agenda noting that the working group will have the opportunity to go through a similar process as the public meeting regarding the initial option and alternative option.

**Approval of Minutes**

Request to receive minutes on the weekend before the meeting if possible.

Stephen Obermeyer moved to approve Working Group #1 minutes.

Emily Cain seconded

Minutes approved

Ian Hopkins reviewed the correspondence asking for any questions.

In addition to the letters and emails in your package there is a petition for Queens Rangers that was received. We have the hard copy here. Will not be publishing the petition online due to privacy issue. The cover page is in your package. 576 signatures. It was noted there are two petitions.

Elizabeth Crawford noted that the Queens Rangers community connected to the Rural Schools Educational Reform piece. It speaks a lot to our current issue with Queens Rangers. The study looks at what happens to a community after a closure. I think it is current and relevant.

Stephen Obermeyer noted the correspondence reinforced the idea of school as community rather than a building. The local community aspect is what people value.

**Information Requests**

Ian reviewed the handouts, analysis charts associated with initial options. Information is available for all six alternative options for review. The second component regarding new school building costs associated with alternative options, as I said we could not do a full analysis of what it would be like if we renovated schools but I can tell you what it would cost to build new a school of a certain size. The costs are associated with each alternative option. You can see the varying costs of different sizes of schools.

Q. Alternative option #1 is not listed. Does that mean that all the schools stay as is?

A. Yes, that financial information is broken down in the report itself, Appendix C, Feasibility report.



- Q. If alternative option #1 is what we go with, does that mean there are no funds from government for renovations?
- A. The difference between Initial & Alternative Option one is the funding source. The initial option is 25 million and the alternative is about 24 million. With the Initial option – the ministry has a program called the school consolidation capital priorities which considers capital project requests generated through school consolidation and closure. This funding is \$750 million over four years. We are three years into the program. The alternative option would be funded through school maintenance and condition grants allocated to HWDSB annually. HWDSB receives approximately 30 million a year to maintain all 103 schools. Right now HWDSB is revitalizing secondary school science labs, gyms, sports fields. At the end of 2017 HWDSB will produce an elementary benchmark strategy. We would go through all areas needing improvement and they would be systematically done over a five-ten year period. Basically if we go back to the Alternative Option the schools would go back into the pool of schools awaiting renewal.
- Q. Just to clarify then the only option on the table for Queens Rangers to stay open means there is no funding?
- A. Yes there is no formal option.
- Q. Is consolidating schools the only way to get funding?
- A. Yes, to receive school consolidation capital funding you must meet the basic criteria of reducing unused pupil places in school.
- Q. Why is there a wide variance of operating costs between schools?
- A. There are a lot of reasons for variance - depends on rentals, school use and many other factors.
- Q. Is funding tied to student places being consolidated?
- A. Financially appropriate to keep them running operationally, better learning environment.
- Q. If pupil places are consolidated by boundary review will it unlock some funding?
- A. The ministry is looking for reduction in renewal costs, get rid of a lot of back log in each building and reduction pupil places.

Bill Torrens noted that consolidation allows us to seek grants under one envelope of cash, but we need to be mindful that there are grants that we don't receive if a school is closed. Financial issues are important but they don't have to be the only driver of our job here, I am sharing this as we think more globally.

Comment: Rather than globally, let's go back to community based. While it appears that the financial issues are the driver lets go another way.

Bill reminded the committee of their mandate. We are not a decision-making body, we are an advisory body and our role is to channel voice and advice to trustees rather than decisions. No voice will be excluded. We all wear our school related hats and they are all vital and important, but it is also about wearing a second hat – that wider five-school community hat as well. Yes, we have an emotional attachment to our schools, but we also need to bring a lens to the wider community. It is a dispersed area but I think as a group we can do this, we can bring that lens and it will make for fruitful information for the trustees.

Alex Johnstone noted that trustees are making important decisions. We want your advice. You are helping us plan for the long term of this community.

- Q. How does the initial option become the initial option, through trustees?
- A. We as staff are required by the ministry guidelines to create the initial options. The initial option is created using the Long-Term Facility Master Plan guiding principles.
- Q. Is there an algorithm to judge how to calculate the optimum budget?
- A. No



Q. What are the resources the board will have in front of them when we make this decision?

A. There is an opportunity for trustees to ask staff for information after the submission of the interim report which contains feedback from the advisory committee. Typically, a decision wouldn't be made until May or early June. Once we are done here the trustees will ask for additional information. Bill noted that the community voice through working group, correspondence, public meetings and delegations helps to drive the decision making. There will be an opportunity for people to present their opinions to the board of trustees at a board meeting. Through the delegation process. There are multiple opportunities for community voice.

Emily Cain noted that she was troubled at the public meeting with the facilitator's review at the end of the meeting. I hope the notes collected reflects what we were saying at our table.

Bill noted we have snapshot summaries and that at our next working group meeting we will have access to the information from the feedback session.

Q. Can we find out which schools have the LED upgrades? Pretty sure the electricity is so high is due to portables at CH Bray and Fessenden. Can you speak to what would be the big user at Ancaster Sr.? It has the highest natural gas. Why is water so high?

A. Every building is different depending on school use and systems. Ancaster Sr. has a lot of rentals after hours which creates more usage. It would be the highest rental use of the 5 schools as it has the largest gym.

Q. What are the caretaking property costs, is it based on student?

A. Day to day maintenance, such as cleaning supplies, landscaping, snow ploughing etc. not costs like roof replacement. They are the costs to do the work with Board staff.

Ian reviewed the French Immersion distribution map.

Q. Is it typical that the home school for French Immersion is the school where it is housed?

A. Yes. FI in terms of doing enrolment projections, if you place a program in an area where there isn't FI you will see the number of enrolments increase.

Q. In the initial option it talks about having dual track at 2 facilities - Is it reasonable to predict, if there were two schools with French Immersion, the increase in enrolment?

A. Yes, that is reasonable assumption.

Q. Are there enough French teachers in the board to increase the population?

A. By moving to two sites we are likely looking at being able to staff it. It would be worked out over time. Absolutely we could find great teachers to do that, ie; teachers college. What would happen from one to two sites would be worked out over time. We would absolutely work hard to do that. It would be a gradual process.

Q. Do we have French Immersion closer to Ancaster?

A. Closest would be Dundana and on the mountain Norwood Park.

Bill noted that over time enrolment increases.

Sarah Hopen noted that with the boundaries regarding French immersion there is a concern that some students would not be able to take French immersion due to growing popularity of the program.

A. We don't cap the French Immersion program so it shouldn't be an issue.

Bill noted that what is predicated on the initial option you will likely see students at Fessenden who would be coming here to Rousseau.

Ian reviewed energy efficiency/ measure of efficiency referring the committee to the website for efficiency information.

Q. What would be the smallest size of a Jk-8 school?



A. 500-600

Q. Are most of these schools multi-story?

A. Yes most are two-story

Q. Would we be able to get a tour of a new school?

A. Yes we could tour the new Tiffany Hills, it is something we can work in to the schedule. We could do some location changes for next meeting for everyone to consider. When we do the Fessenden location tour we could double book to tour ASPS as well.

Review of closed school and demolishing costs.

Q. if we do demolish can the space be kept with HWDSB?

A: That is a trustee decision.

Trustee Johnstone noted we are not funded to keep an empty space open for eg; green space. We must have a planned purpose for the space.

Q. Concern from CH Bray parents – hypothetical. If Fessenden is closed and moves to Ancaster Sr. Public School is there potential for the lot to be severed and sold. How can that be considered?

A. We have strict guidelines regarding surplus properties and it is a long process. There are a lot of safeguards in place before severing / potential real estate development gets involved. There is a lot of democracy involved with the process. If you would like we can provide more detail on the process at another meeting.

Q. Is there Interest in more information on the disposition process?

A. No, the answer you've given would be sufficient.

Public Meeting Feedback

Currently creating the digitized info which will identify themes and will be available at 3<sup>rd</sup> WG meeting.

Q. What is the best way to get my voice heard, through the reviews email?

A. Yes. It is then logged as correspondence. People can also go through the trustee.

## Accommodation Options

Bill noted we are going to use a modified version of our public meeting to collect your input. The initial option and alternative options are posted on the walls. Wearing both hats please use post-it notes to provide the pros and cons to each option. We would look at themes.

Q. Providing pros and cons on the existing options limits our creativity. I would like to get to the heart of things. It has to not be about the current options. Can we put aside some time to think about the things that we aren't addressing e.g. transportation, environment, socio-economic etc.? Could we not just stick with pros?

Q. Could we please hear what other school's concerns are? I have the info on what Queens Rangers concerns are but not other schools. We don't have a good flavor of what the major concerns are for other schools.

Bill, I'm going to apologize. As a group, please have some trust in us. We do want to engage you in the wide-open thinking. We have multiple meetings ahead of us. We want to give you an opportunity, safe, on the pros and cons. We have many concerns from Queens Rangers for sure. Our next meeting is looking at the heart of concerns, positives and vision. We don't need to do everything tonight. We appreciate the passion from everyone. We are in a place to look at the global picture.

Comment – I do think its best to look at the wide-open thinking earlier rather than later.



Comment – the only option when keeping QR open leaves the other schools where they are now so creativity does have to come out of the group.

Bill, let's take 15 minutes to note pros and cons in a global sense. I am hearing strongly that you want to hear all concerns from all areas.

Emily – it would be a lot easier if we had more than only one option for Queens Rangers

Q. Mike Bell can we break out ½ hr. blocks at future meetings for people to present their points of views?

A. Can we park that idea to the end of this meeting?

Group activity with pros-cons took place. Feedback is summarized at the end of this document.

Bill thanked everyone for engaging in the process noting we would capture everything in the minutes and it will be included with the feedback from the public meeting.

Bill asked the group for suggestions or thoughts on activities or topics for future meetings. Looking for advice. I want everyone to share their thoughts by going around the horseshoe. Do you have a suggestion or thought of an activity or topic.

Sarah Hopen – we need everyone to identify their perfect vision for a school and what is so fantastic/special about their school.

Mike Bell – could someone have five or ten minutes to do a power point on their personal vision or additional options?

Henry Kolodziej – would like to look at boundary review/ shifting numbers. Would that change space use and ministry funds? I would like to see how things could shift.

Sandy Bovair Young – I would look at the good of all children over generations to come. CH Bray is in terrible shape.

Jennifer Kershaw – CH Bray can't remain open. I would like an activity to look at the boundary review process. Could we delve into boundary review?

Elizabeth – no suggestion that isn't already covered

Emily Cain – There are not enough options. There is only one option for Queen's Rangers. I can only support my community so I do keep repeating myself.

Stephen Obermeyer – would like to look at utilization rates of existing space to optimize learning environments. Also to explore K-8 schools with minor expansions/adjustments to interiors of the existing buildings to give us more classroom space.

Gint Murphy – I would like to piggy back on Sarah's suggestion, how would empathetic approach would work? We have emotional connections to our schools, but consider the village of Ancaster itself.

Max Brett – would like to see small group brainstorming/problem solving. What are the problems we can solve? One solution that makes everyone's job easier. What are the finishing touches? When do we get to talk about things like a green playground? It would be fun to bring those things forward. Get creativity going earlier.

Sheri – everyone has touched on my thoughts. I want to hear the pros and cons of every school. Would be great to be in a brand-new school but I love where I am now.

Bill – we have a great set of bullet points. We will take it back to planning team. We want you to take a look at what came from the community. We will try to do that and one or two main activities at the next meeting. This will give you



an opportunity to go wider than the two options tonight. People want opportunities to look at other schools. We will take that back and will get the agenda and minutes out as quickly as we can.

Stephen – can I make a request for Ancaster Sr. staff? Could they provide a brief presentation on the benefits of the middle school?

Bill – table that as we are at our finish time. We will find a way to provide the information. We have to be mindful that if we provide a presentation opportunity we have to provide that for others. Our preferred model is K-8.

Comment: There may be some things that we unanimously agree we don't want perhaps we could get some of those things off the table.

Q. Is there any information available regarding the new Longos development?

A. We can bring something back to next meeting

Q Also are there other pockets of funding available?

A. We can provide a list of funding opportunities. Historically what we receive. Two grants we apply for each year – for consolidation and capital priorities. The vast majority of funding that comes to us is enveloped. We can provide a list of grants

Adjournment: 8:10

Next meeting. Feb. 2, 2017 Queens Rangers.



Wednesday, January 18, 2017  
Activity Feedback

## Initial Option

### Pros

- 2 FI sites allows for better accommodation
- Bray needs a new school
- No more portables
- QR way too costly for 128 students
- Increased FI capacity
- School board saves a lot by closing QR
- Evens out school population & usage
- Sense of community is inside the building not the proximity to your house
- New schools = better learning environment = increased student engagement
- The board can't continue to pay for school at 50% capacity
- 500-600 is a larger school, but not so large that kids become anonymous (600-800)
- 1500 kids get improved learning conditions
- Makes much more sense to rebuild Bray than to repair it
- Schools with larger student population allows for more opportunities for social connections
- QR EQAO scores may improve if put in school with revitalized learning conditions
- Reduce congestion all around
- Take advantage of ministry funding
- Building is beyond repair
- School is over capacity
- So many pros t K-8 model
  - Social networking
  - Leadership opportunities for 7-8
  - Fewer transitions between schools
  - Collaboration for teachers
  - Opportunity for extracurricular activities
  - Diversity
  - Easier for parents to have all kids at one school
- Reduce overload at Fessenden
- Best job at meeting guiding principles
- Facility improvement
- 97% QR kids already on bus, their 7s, 8s already come to Ancaster, and board says max bus time guaranteed

### Cons

- No real vision for community, just meeting needs
- Increased # students eligible for transportation/busing
- Additions to old schools leaves part of the building old
- Reduce property values
- Very difficult to find qualified candidates for FI
- Traffic flow at Bray and Rousseau
- Reduction of families moving to rural areas
- Grafting new buildings to old
- Traffic conditions – x2
- Time for students on bus – 2x
- Why are we doing boundary review for QR following Accommodation Review?
- How will buses be accommodated along Dunham Dr. @ CH Bray?



- Maybe increase the zone for which students are NOT eligible for buses (make use of new crosswalks from City)
- QR is Ancaster's rural school
- Lack of play area at Rousseau & CH Bray
- Rural community loses their school
- "urbanization" of school funding
- What does the board have in store for the closed properties? Based on past results, not favourable to community.
- Loss of small walkable community
- 2 FI programs concerns me due to lack of resources available
- Lose green space @Fessenden & QR
- Increased congestion and traffic at already traffic heavy schools, safety concern – 2
- If QR closed my community will be destroyed
- If QR closed the rural children will be limited until 4H opens opportunities in Gr. 5
- If QR closed the rural perspective will be submerged
- Loss of senior-specific programming and EAs x2 made possible by existence of a dedicated junior high school
- Loss of small school at Fessenden
- Close rural school
- Larger school populations at odds with community voice saying current configurations foster great community

## **Initial Option additional feedback/questions – none received**

### **Alternative Option**

#### **Pros**

- Keeps small school – x2
- Community based program-x2
- Least capital cost
- Program at senior public
- Specialty programs such as music, art, fitness
- Main/reduced transportation issues
- We need to proceed from 1<sup>st</sup> principles – what is best for the school community from that community's perspective
- More time for community consultation about next steps?
- More palatable (people are generally resistant to change)
- Rural school remains open – x2
- Preserve communities
- Equality – no one school community gets a new school

#### **Cons**

- no vision for community needs/wishes
- doesn't address traffic congestion & overpopulation
- CH Bray is at a point where renovations won't solve the problems
- Too many kids bused to one school
- No \$ to improve buildings
- Does not involve facility improvement
- Aging buildings
- Pushes problem to the future = crisis
- Bray is in shambles. Students cannot remain there.
- Learning environment age, size of space e.g. library shared, retrofit "fixes"





- Schools are over capacity or not used to capacity – x2
- Involves unnecessary disruption to families if boundaries change
- 1400 kids don't get newer/updated facilities so that 128 kids can stay in their community
- We can't access grants that we really need
- Learning environments in many of the schools are impacted by ageing facilities – x2
- Learning environments will become a big problem
- Many of the schools would be at or over capacity – any growth means portables.

Alternative Option additional feedback/questions – none received