



**Breslau/Stanley Park Elementary Schools Pupil Accommodation Review
Minutes of Accommodation Review Committee Meeting # 18
April 6, 2011 – 6:00 pm**

The Eighteenth meeting of the Breslau/Stanley Park Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) was held at Stanley Park P.S. on April 6, 2011.

Committee Members Present:

Pauline Shiry, Principal of Mackenzie King P.S., Rob MacQueen, Principal of Stanley Park P.S., Karin Bileski, Vice Principal of Crestview P.S., Frank Ewald, Principal of Breslau P.S., Jane Pritchard, Principal of Franklin P.S., Crysta Fernandez, parent – Stanley Park P.S., Troy Starr, parent – Smithson P.S., Mark Richardson, parent – Stanley Park P.S., Laurie Tremble, parent – Lackner Woods P.S., Lorraine Buckley, alternate parent rep – Mackenzie King P.S., Anessa Selcage, parent – Franklin P.S., Aimie LeRuez, parent – Smithson P.S., Kathy Waybrant, Community Representative, Tania Hunter, parent – Crestview P.S., Lesley Kraehling, parent – Crestview P.S., Tracy Jasmins, parent – Mackenzie King P.S., Nancy Allan Catton, parent – Breslau P.S., Andrea Kean, Recording Secretary, Lauren Manske, Senior Planner and Chris Smith, Manager of Planning for the Waterloo Region District School Board.

Regrets:

Gregg Bereznick, Area Superintendent, Libby Martz, Vice Principal of Lackner Woods P.S., Ron Dallan, Facility Services, Doug Hudson, parent – Breslau P.S., Carolyn Graham, Principal of Smithson P.S., John Scarfone, Township of Woolwich, Brian Bateman, City of Kitchener, Carolyn Griffiths, Principal, Crestview P.S., Sean Mahoney, parent – Mackenzie King P.S., T. Ritchie, parent – Lackner Woods P.S., Janice Scherer, parent – Franklin P.S., Nathan Hercanuck, Senior Planner

1. Welcome

Mr. Smith, Manager of Planning welcomed members of the ARC and opened the meeting at 6:05 p.m.

Mr. Smith welcomed and introduced Karin Bileski, Vice Principal of Crestview Public School, Frank Ewald as the new Principal for Breslau Public School and Andrea Kean the new Secretary for the Planning Department.

2. ARC Meeting # 17 – Minutes Approved by e-mail

- Mr. Smith asked the group if there were any corrections/concerns with the e-mail approved minutes from the March 8, 2011 ARC meeting.
 - No other concerns or corrections were raised.

Tonight's ARC presentation can be viewed on the following link:

<http://www.wrdsb.ca/sites/www.wrdsb.ca/files/06Apr11.arcmtg.presentation.pdf>

3. Public Meeting # 4 Feedback

Mr. Smith commented that there was a lot of follow-up and e-mails after the Open House on March 30th. He noted the good conversation going on in e-mails sent between members of the ARC after the Open House.

C: It was noted that the feedback at the Open House was mostly from one point of view. Left some wondering if we are missing a voice and whether we have given a voice to the majority. Attendees at the Open House were mostly opposed to closing Stanley Park P.S. for the following reasons: rotary, lockers, special programs, and some prefer the change in school for students that may have been pegged at previous school.

C: A member from the ARC polled their school community for feedback, as she was concerned that given the feedback March 30, her school community may have changed their support of Mackenzie King Public School as new JK-8 School. Informal poll confirmed that the majority still support JK-8 (Scenario 2).

C: Parent member for Stanley Park P.S. presented the ARC with student letters of support for Stanley Park Public School addressed to the Trustees. Letters passed around during meeting and Ms. Manske to scan letters and make available for ARC members to review.

C: A lot of concerns expressed by community over the uncertainty of the type of development that could take place on the Stanley Park P.S. property and how it would affect homeowners in the area.

Q – The \$5 million in costs we recoup in Scenario 2, hearing this number is overstated; especially the amount indicated as an estimate for value of the property; do we have any information to back up this number?

R – Not overstated based on prices we are paying for properties right now. There is a range in the cost of land and we tried not to over value. Mr. Smith noted he has been buying and negotiating land on behalf of the Board for many years and would say that the estimate is not overstated. He noted that the \$5.0 million also included over \$1.2 million in avoided capital costs (maintenance on Mackenzie King P.S. and Stanley Park P.S.) as well as land value. Ms. Manske has a chart summarizing the information that was contained in the facility condition reports, she can make available if interested.

Q – What about prices being paid for other closed schools that sold for very small amounts – could this happen here?

R – Mr. Smith asked for more details, since the WRDSB has not sold properties recently. Which properties are being referred to here?

Q – Have you looked into what you sold properties for in the past?

R – Mr. Smith - Yes, most recently we sold property on Ira Needles Blvd., and the price was on par with the market conditions.

Q – Has the Catholic Board sold the recently closed St. Patrick and Notre Dame schools?

R - Mr. Smith stated that we understand they are holding on to St. Patrick and have no intention to sell at this point. In regard to Notre Dame, as far as staff are aware, it is currently up for public sale, so information will not become public until a deal has closed.

Ms. Manske said she would call the Planner at the Catholic Board for more information.

Note: Since confirmed that sale of property is not yet closed.

Q – At the Open House, members of the community were under the assumption that if Stanley Park P.S. is closed that the property would become high rise residential.

R - Planning staff advised ARC of process to dispose of surplus property as regulated by the Education Act (O.Reg. 444/98) but anticipated likeliest buyer would be for residential redevelopment. Could be high density in apartment form, or townhouse developments, that really depends on the buyer and zoning allowed for by the City of Kitchener. Someone may also choose to convert the existing building – all of this is an unknown at this point.

Mr. Smith noted that there is a rumor that the Board has already sold or made a deal with a developer on the Stanley Park P.S. property and wanted to state that this rumor is false and that we absolutely are not negotiating with anyone.

Q – There were questions raised over the scenario preference vote at the March 8th meeting and why the numbers were 9 to 6 totaling 15 when there are 17 voting members on the ARC. Can we clarify this in the report?

R – Ms. Manske confirmed that the count was actually 9 to 5 (incorrect information was published in the Kitchener Citizen). Three people were not present and decided not to vote by e-mail, so tally was confirmed as 9 to 5 with abstentions. We will make this addition to the final report.

Q – French Immersion parents from schools (Sheppard P.S. and Suddaby P.S.) not included in the accommodation review process feel that not all stakeholders were accounted for.

R – Mr. Smith responded that within the home school boundaries, we have French Immersion representation on this ARC. French Immersion is a choice program so parents have to select a site for senior program when it is not offered at their 7/8 home school. While probably most of Sheppard's and Suddaby's partial French Immersion Grade 6s go on to Stanley Park P.S., not all do. The ARC ensured that partial French Immersion would be able to continue in both scenarios. If you were to include French Immersion then you

should include representation from Special Education, ESL and any other specific programs as well, which we have not done.

C: Mr. Smith suggested that if this is felt to be a big enough issue, going forward, should the Board change its current Pupil Accommodation Review Policy and Procedures to include representation of choice/special programs on the ARC?

Q - Some have questioned why Stanley Park P.S. supporters are speaking out at such a late date – it was noted that unless you have a child in school or read the papers (“The Record” or “Kitchener Citizen”) you would have no way of knowing about the review.

Q – Should we have another public meeting to make sure people are aware of all the issues?

R - Certainly looking back, an information meeting might have been useful. To do so now would: (a) push ARC process timelines back and window of opportunity for decision before end of school year is lost; and (b) would likely be too late at this stage to have any affect on the position of most of the folks that are concerned about Stanley Park closing.

Consensus was to stick to current schedule as it was agreed that there is no new information to share.

Mr. Smith then suggested that given the discussion this evening, if the ARC wanted to consider an alternate course of action, now was time to do so.

Motion: To validate the response of the community support for Stanley Park, the ARC supports the removal the word “Preferred” from Scenario 2, and will present both Scenario 1 and Scenario 2 to the Board of Trustees as equally capable of addressing the objectives of the review.

Moved by: Aimie LeRuez

Seconded by: Anessa Selcage

4. Discussion: Report on Motion

A lengthy discussion ensued around both scenarios and impact of ARC changing position adopted prior to March 30, 2011.

C: Smithson P.S. parents feel they are at a disadvantage as their kids still have the transition going in with kids that have been together from JK – 8 and may have problems fitting in. The process seems to be making it harder for the kids that still have to transition. Have had experience other way, small groups going into much larger group, and it was not a good experience.

C: Mackenzie King P.S. families are saying this (Scenario 2) is what they want despite the fact that they will be totally disrupted in the short-term, but in the long-term, they see the value; kids staying together at the school and being able to walk to school.

C: Looking back on meeting #1 the purpose of the review, it seems we are losing sight of objectives. We should take pause and step back – what elements have we forgotten – long term – energy, walk-ability, under enrolment, over enrolment, new direction of Ministry on curriculum, age of facility.

C: Feeling that community was not provided with adequate information and we can not get all the information out – can we get more information to relay to them?

C: Our job is to make decision for community because we can't possibly get all information to all of them.

It was noted that the Planning Department staff attended a school council meeting at Breslau Public School and would be available to attend meetings at other schools interested in learning more about the process. To date, no other schools have taken up this offer.

Q – Rotary and lockers always seem to come up in discussion with public – Do persons saying that even know what a 7–8 in a composite JK-8 looks like?

R – Would it be beneficial to do a comparison chart for 7-8 and JK-8 to supply to busy families who can't get to meetings?

It was suggested that the Planning Department could develop a chart and post on the Board website as information: eg: FAQ

Q – In the future, it would be helpful to have a brief ten-minute overview presentation at the beginning of an Open House meeting. This might be a helpful meeting, as the Open House did not afford the chance for everyone to have their concerns heard, or questions answered.

R – To be fair to the issues and volume of information it would take at least a twenty five minute presentation to go through everything. Part of the challenge is maintaining interest of people who have done homework and just want to comment. At same time others want the opportunity to soapbox, and that can intimidate others who may have a differing opinion. We're open to any model. Certainly a drop-in session with 300 people, most coming all at the same time, wasn't the best forum at the peak to facilitate much information sharing.

C: Mentioned one of the issues we ran into, is that the Board has adopted a stand based on Good School Committee discussion – with respect to JK-8 schools, but have not presented and obtained consensus in the larger community.

C: Discussion continued. Did Good Schools Standing Committee look at Pros and Cons of 7-8 level and JK–8? In our family's experience, when children are pegged early on – coming to new school is very beneficial. Our child was identified negatively in early years and that "label" stayed with him until he changed school after Grade 6. Would that have continued in a JK-8 school? Stanley Park offers strong support for children who may be marginalized.

Does not make sense to shut down strong community school at a cost that is 3 times more than other scenario.

C: Key points to Stanley Park opposition – not so much the model but dedicated staff – that can happen in any model.

R - Direction of Good Schools Committee Report – moving to where that makes sense, but still recognizes existing 7/8s.

Q – Is the \$250,000 staffing savings an estimate?

R – Yes, it's an estimate based on what we know of current staff salaries.

C: Process is not about which one is cheaper.

From a capital perspective:

- S2 – is more expensive to begin with because of capital costs of new JK-8 Mackenzie King rebuild and Crestview 7/8 addition.
- S1 – is less expensive, because we have all four existing facilities and smaller Mackenzie King addition at less cost.

(Note that all capital money comes from the Province via WRDSB capital priority request.) However, longer term, S1's initial savings are offset by higher operating costs of four, less energy efficient sites, more staffing, ongoing major maintenance costs, etc., as noted earlier.

Energy savings will continue to increase over time, which will result in decreased operating costs in S2. New building will run at half the cost of older buildings, based on energy consumption figures of current schools.

Mr. Smith noted that it is important in the ARC process to listen to the community and noted that a few trustees were present at the Open House and also heard the input. Trustees will be the ones making the decision. The ARC did a good job with a well thought-out review, covering all the bases. Both scenarios, as noted by many people writing in, addressed the ARC's review objectives.

Q - Some residents are terrified of what development will be put on the Stanley Park property if the school closes. Need to get assurance from the City of what would happen to site and what type of development would be allowed.

R – Mr. Smith stated that it would most likely be a higher density residential use, and not single family as is there now. He felt it would not be commercial as it is not in the designated Ottawa/River node of the City for this type of development.

Q – Has there been any traffic review to accommodate school drop off from parents for the proposed changes at Crestview Public School, as the proposed changes will increase traffic at

this site (includes French Immersion students being dropped off by parents as they are not eligible for busing) and that parking is something that would have to be addressed during the site plan approval process. It was noted, the Board currently pays \$2,000.00 per year for parking at a nearby church for Franklin P.S. which was a solution at that site.

R – Mr. Smith stated that if the changes are approved in Scenario 2, this project could include upgraded parking and better site circulation.

C: In response to a question, Mr. MacQueen noted Stanley Park does not currently have any bused students but will have busing in the 2011/12 school year.

It was noted that busing in a 7-8 school is not very cost effective as kids come to school early for special programs and often walk with friends in afternoon. It is not uncommon to have 2 or 3 kids on the bus, even though more are eligible. Poor weather has an effect too!

Mr. Smith observed that we have no more speakers, and confirmed the intent of the Mover and Seconder that their intent was that ARC would recommend both Scenarios 1 and 2 to the Board as equally viable solutions to the issues of the Breslau/Stanley Park Accommodation Review.

C: Please clarify that the Motion does not completely eliminate Scenario 2, but puts both Scenario 1 and Scenario 2 forward as equals. Mover (Amie LeRuez) and Seconder (Anessa Selcage) confirmed the Motion.

Discussion around how the vote will proceed and if member absent will be able to vote by e-mail. One member had indicated her vote in an e-mail in the event of a vote on this specific question. It was decided that if numbers required (vote was close) the absent members would be asked to vote by e-mail. If vote close, that may be required, if not is a moot point.

Mr. Smith went around the table polling ARC members if they agreed or disagreed with the motion.

Result – 8 members agreed and 5 members disagreed.
2 voting members absent one of whom was also in favour, so would not have affect on this result - Motion passed.

Crysta Fernandez, parent representative for Stanley Park then brought forward the following **Motion:** To remove the ARC position of March 8th and have Scenario 1 as the preferred Scenario, and not include Scenario 2 at all.

Mr. Smith advised that this Motion would need a Seconder, and if successful would just negate the balanced position the ARC just arrived at by a clear majority. The risk was that there could now be a similar public outcry as just experienced, from anyone favouring Scenario 2 which might require further meetings so any concerned parties could present their position just as Stanley Park supporters have.

Discussion followed with potential Secorder summing up by suggesting that out of respect for other school communities and their positions, the ARC is best to send on the two Scenarios as just decided.

Mr. Smith called for Secorder twice, and having none declared **Motion lost** for lack of Secorder.

Mr. Smith acknowledged that the ARC did an amazing job with the task they had, and thanked them. He noted that staff had prepared the draft report so that either Scenario could go.

The Report will now go to the Board with Scenarios 1 and 2 reflecting that either addresses the Accommodation issues we set out with – each does the job in different ways. There will likely be delegations speaking for each scenario. In arriving at its decision, the Board needs to deal with how they feel about existing, community supported, successful 7-8 schools.

The intent of the ARC was to give the best advice we could, to go out and talk to the community and you did an exemplarily job.

You are welcome to come to the meeting on April 18th. Staff like to make sure that the Board recognizes members for their efforts on the ARC. The report will be presented that day as information and no action will be taken for 60 days. The Board may ask questions of clarification, but not discuss. Anyone can register as a delegation to come to the meeting or any meeting of the Board before the vote.

Q - About Delegation Process.

R - Sometimes the Board will hold a meeting just for delegations if there are many on an item. There will be 60 days before the Board will vote – tentative vote would be June 20th as it meets the 60 days and gets decision before the end of the school year, so delegations can come to any Committee of the Whole meeting of the Board during that time.

The ARC has now done its job and it's now up to the community and individuals to speak for and against the scenarios.

Mr. Smith again offered that the Planning Department is willing to come out to any school to explain the process and ARC Recommendations.

The Planning Department will send out follow-up information regarding the April 18th meeting.

Discussion on Specifics of ARC Presentation:

Staff will be removing “Alternate” and “Preferred” from the Scenarios.

C: The recommendations do not indicate boundary changes for Breslau. It was noted that it is important to identify the boundary changes for that school

R - That boundary change is shown under the Recommendation for Mackenzie King. Might be clearer to cross-reference? Staff wanted to ensure there wasn't a duplication.

Q – With respect to the review objectives, a parent at a public meeting found fault with S1 that it does not minimize the number of transitions for some in area E. Area E goes through more transitions. Do you feel we should check both boxes in Scenario 1 for transitions “meets” and “doesn't meet”?

R – No, okay as is as they are compared to current and not to each other. The ARC agreed.

Q - In Scenario 2, Breslau concern that students there for so long then they have to go on to Stanley Park for 7/8.

R - Yes, to address numbers at Breslau; while also allowing Grade 6s to remain so only one change. Principal to Principal transfer could be an individual option. Noted that 2015 everything should be implemented and by 2016 area E students have moved on.

C: Mr. Smith reminded the ARC that all the timelines assume Ministry funding supports as requested. If funding is delayed a year for example; everything gets pushed back a year.

Mr. Smith – Thanked the ARC again for their dedication and outstanding effort.

Minutes will be sent out by e-mail for approval.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm

6. Future Dates:

- **April 18, 2011 - ARC Report transmitted to Board**
- **June 20, 2011 - Board vote on recommendations (Tentative)**