



**East Kitchener-Waterloo Elementary Schools Pupil
Accommodation Review
Minutes of Accommodation Review Committee Meeting # 12
April 20th, 2010 - 4:30 pm**

The twelfth meeting of the East Kitchener-Waterloo Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) was held at Margaret Avenue P.S., on April 20th, 2010.

Committee Members Present:

Elke Whitmore, Principal of Bridgeport P.S., Frank Ewald, Principal of Lexington P.S., Leisa Kuntz, Principal of Prueter P.S., Brian Ward, Principal of Margaret Avenue P.S., Jon Lencz, Vice Principal of King Edward (covering for Janet Hale), Naya Markanastasakis, Vice Principal of Elizabeth Ziegler P.S. (covering for Kelly Wilkinson), Ian Gaudet, Controller, Facility Services, Elizabeth Brown, Development & Technical Services Dept., City of Kitchener, Amy Stewart, parent – Margaret Avenue P.S., T. Gilhuly, parent – Lexington P.S., Peter Brown, parent – Lexington P.S., D.L. Brown, parent – Suddaby P.S., Carrie Dawson-Thomas, parent – Margaret Avenue P.S., Cindy Shirley, parent – Elizabeth Ziegler P.S., Michael Reinhardt, parent – Bridgeport P.S., Tara Bridger, parent – Bridgeport P.S., Mary Hingley, recording secretary, Chris Smith, Manager of Planning, Nathan Hercanuck, Senior Planner and Lauren Manske, Planner for the Waterloo Region District School Board.

Regrets:

Gregg Bereznick, Area Superintendent, Mark Schinkel, Area Superintendent, Kelly Wilkinson, Principal of Elizabeth Ziegler P.S., Janet Hale, Principal of King Edward P.S., Darlene Stubbs, Principal of Suddaby P.S., Kelly Miller, parent – Elizabeth Ziegler P.S., Don Snider, parent – Prueter P.S., Carolyn Laurie, parent – King Edward P.S., Susie Fowler, parent – Suddaby P.S., D. Welsman, parent – King Edward P.S., Laura Dick, parent – Prueter P.S.,

1. Welcome/Introductions

Chris Smith, Manager of Planning opened the meeting at 4:40 pm and welcomed members of the ARC.

2. Meeting # 11 – Draft minutes approval

- Mr. Smith asked the group if there were any corrections/concerns with the minutes from the April 13th ARC meeting.
 - No concerns or corrections were raised.
 - Minutes from the April 13th meeting were approved.
 - Moved by: Tamara Gilhuly
 - Seconded by: D.L. Brown
- Mr. Smith noted that since this is most likely the last meeting for the ARC to assemble, the minutes of this meeting will be emailed to the group for review and approval.

3. Public Meeting # 4 – Re-cap

Mr. Smith asked the group for feedback from Public Meeting # 4 that was held on April 15, 2010 at Elizabeth Ziegler P.S.

- good turnout, 61 people signed in
- supportive of the Report, people seemed comfortable with the recommendations
- some lingering concern/frustration about the 7/8 issue not being addressed/decided
- want the Board to state their preference once and for all
- the Elizabeth Ziegler boundary change piece (where a small number students are diverted to MacGregor instead of Margaret Avenue for 7/8) they want this to happen sooner rather than later
- some felt focus was on the North and that is why the 7/8 issue was not addressed
- feeling was that the ARC members represented their communities well, and are happy that a consensus was reached versus going to a vote

- Mr. Smith asked the group if the previous statement was a fair assessment – did everyone on the ARC represent all students and school communities throughout the process, and was that generally the public perception as well? He noted that a member of the Lexington community had pressed this issue at the public meeting, as well as creating a flyer for neighbourhood distribution.
 - Mr. Smith also commented that one parent indicated they had children at both Lexington and Margaret Avenue schools at the initial ARC meetings.

- the ARC agreed with that assessment, it was stated early on that members would look at the whole picture
- since all of the schools in the review area feed to Margaret Avenue for the 7/8 program, the parent reps all had an interest in Margaret Avenue (it was also noted that an ARC member has a spouse working for the Board at Margaret Avenue currently, and this was disclosed informally early in the process)
- the ARC agreed that no members had a hidden agenda – all was open and transparent
- written comments from the public meeting wanted a JK-8 in the North and an accommodation review done for the 7/8 schools in the South
- our recommendations address that, we really do need the staged approach that we proposed, its fiscally responsible and the 7/8 issue may be answered before the construction at Lexington and Falconridge begins
- to the question of building the JK-8 at Falconridge instead of Lexington – it would ultimately cost less, and Falconridge is where the growth is coming from, and is the best location of the three (including Bridgeport)
- Lexington community concerned that a hasty decision was not made – that the 7/8 issue should be treated separately
- parents with very young children cannot even envision the 7/8 program, however, it was commented that once they got there they were very happy and supportive of the senior school

- the ARC is charged with the responsibility to look at the big picture, to represent everyone and every school community (to meet the needs of all students), and that was accomplished here
- also noted was the fact that opportunity for constant feedback does not stop with the ARC, the process allows for at least 4 public meetings, boundary feedback email, contacting Planning by phone directly and approaching your school council or principal
- voices can and will be heard, you don't have to be sitting on the ARC (perhaps this was a misconception for those unfamiliar with the review process)

Mr. Smith reiterated that a policy is being worked on (for delivery in May) to have the Board state their preference for JK-8 versus the 7/8 model, so that future ARC's have a clear direction.

Q – If the policy is being worked on now for May, what's in it?

R – We can't really share the contents until the Board has had an opportunity to see it, however, we can say that it will be a transition strategy, it is not feasible to close all the 7/8 schools.

4. Finalize Valuation Report and Recommendations – Submittal Date

- At this point in the discussion an ARC member asked the group at large to consider adding a statement he put together to Recommendation # 2 (paragraph 3) of the Report to reflect his communities desire for a 7/8 school.

Recommendation # 2 (paragraph 3) as it reads currently:

The school located at 410 Falconridge Drive, Kitchener be designed in a manner that would allow for future expansion to accommodate additional students as well as the facilities for grades 7 and 8.

Suggested addition:

“Upon the determination of a 7/8 solution in the “South”, Falconridge will be granted 7/8 status”.

The ARC member wanted more of a guarantee that 7/8 will come to the North area, that decisions regarding a 7/8 accommodation review could be done before construction started on the new school, so it could be built as a JK-8 initially. He expressed concern from the community that if nothing is stated here – in this ARC, there may not be another chance to do so. It was mentioned that Scenarios 2 and 10 were the most popular with the public at Public Meeting # 3. The member also stated that this additional wording would not come at the price of sacrificing Margaret Avenue P.S.

Group discussion ensued around the request:

- the North does need a voice in the future ARC's and we need to ensure them that this process was not the only chance to be heard
- there is significant population in the North, with more growth happening, they will be heard in a future 7/8 accommodation review

- there really are no guarantees for the future, and by adding that statement we may be handcuffing the Board, leaving the wording as is expresses the desire of the ARC while leaving options open
- we don't want to predetermine the outcome of a 7/8 review with our wording in this Report
- the Falconridge area could be directly represented in a 7/8 review
- if you made Falconridge 7/8 now, they would not need to be involved in the 7/8 review
- although we have heard support for JK-8, there is still strong support for the 7/8 model and Margaret Avenue P.S., we heard this throughout the public meeting sessions (from the North and South)
- Recommendation # 2 does a very good job of meeting student needs, we don't know what the future will be, and this statement gives us the flexibility needed to meet the future

After the discussion, the ARC member agreed to go forward with Recommendation # 2 as it reads with the provision that Planning makes reference to the concern when the Report is presented to the Board of Trustees.

5. Presentation to the Board of Trustees

Q – Who presents the Report to the Board and what is the process?

R – Planning staff will present the Report on behalf of the ARC.

- Mr. Smith noted that ARC members are welcome to attend the Board meeting for the presentation, and will be acknowledged at that meeting.

Q – Will you let the Board know about our diverse comments and the concerns that have been raised?

R – Yes, we will present the concerns and the flavour of the ARC.

C – The ARC should be commended for the good job they have done even with the very small group of dissenters coming forward.

Mr. Smith detailed the presentation process:

- The ARC's Report and transmittal letter is submitted to Director Fabi and made available to the public and the Trustees. (Aiming for April 22, 2010 submittal date).
- There will be a presentation likely in May to Committee of the Whole or Board, that is for information only as no decision can be made by the Board until 60 days after receipt of the ARC's Report and Recommendations.
- Senior Administration (Director Fabi) responds with their own recommendations, these may mirror the ARC's or have some variations.
- It would be hard for senior administration to ignore the ARC's recommendations; they understand the hard work done and community consultation process followed to get here.
- The Board can of course adopt, amend or reject some or all of the recommendations from staff.
- The only issue may be around the new Capital Funding Model and its implications for new school construction and timelines.
- As stated earlier the Board generally does not want to be tied down to a guarantee, the more options left open in our ever changing school environment, the better.

Q – Is there a firm date for the first Board meeting in May yet?

R – Not at this point, Planning will let the ARC know as soon as the agenda is set.

- Delegates can appear at that meeting – there will be no vote though. The Trustees can ask questions of clarification. There will be no questions from the public at that meeting.
- Delegations can register online at www.wrdsb.ca and search: delegation procedures, or call into the Board office at 519-570-0003, ext. 4336.
- The final vote by Trustees will take place on either June 21 or June 28, 2010 after the 60 day waiting/deliberation period has been met.
- Planning will ensure the ARC is sent the dates for the Board meetings, as well as posting the information on our website under the East K-W Accommodation Review.

6. Roundtable

Q – Recommendation # 3 (paragraph 2) states:

The WRDSB prioritizes the undertaking of an accommodation review of the senior elementary school facilities in the vicinity of the East K-W Review Area

What is meant by the East K-W vicinity exactly?

R – Schools close to Margaret Avenue, the area is not defined yet, we will leave that for the Board to recommend which schools should be included. It was noted that there are 2 other Accommodation Reviews currently underway involving Sunnyside and Stanley Park senior public schools, and until those reviews are complete we don't want to include them in the wording.

- We have listed some schools in the text of the Report but since we know that we are referring to schools like Courtland and MacGregor, should we state that saying “such as”?
- The ARC agreed to the addition of “*such as Margaret Avenue, Courtland and MacGregor Public Schools*” to Recommendation # 3.

7. ARC Wrap Up and Thank You

- Mr. Smith thanked the ARC again for their hard work and dedication throughout the process – JOB WELL DONE.
 - An ARC member thanked Planning staff for their leadership in the process – I thoroughly enjoyed this opportunity.
 - The meeting adjourned at 6:05 p.m.
-