



**ELMIRA BOUNDARY STUDY**  
**Minutes of Working Group Meeting #7**  
**September 12, 2013**  
**From 1:00 pm – 2:30 pm**  
**John Mahood Public School**

The seventh meeting of the Elmira Boundary Study Working Group, involving [John Mahood](#), [Park Manor](#) and [Riverside](#) Public Schools, was held at John Mahood Public School on Thursday, September 12, 2013.

**Attendees:**

Tracy Tait, Principal, John Mahood PS, Brent Hatcher, Principal, Riverside PS, James Bond, Principal, Park Manor PS, R. Playford, Parent Representative, Riverside PS, Tracey Williams, Parent Representative, Riverside PS, Liz Robinson, Parent Representative, John Mahood PS, Sabrina Windatt, Parent Representative, Park Manor PS, D. Sinclair, Parent Representative, John Mahood PS, Nathan Hercanuck, Senior Planner, and Andrea Kean, Recording Secretary.

**Regrets:**

Dennis Cuomo, WRDSB Manager of Planning, Lauren Manske, Senior Planner, John Scarfone, Manager of Planning Township of Woolwich, Becky Ribble, Parent Representative, Park Manor PS, Ron Dallan, Manager of Capital Projects and Elaine Ranney, Area Superintendent of Education.

**1. Welcome/Introductions**

Nathan Hercanuck, Senior Planner, welcomed members of the Working Group, and Board staff present at 1:10 PM.

Mr. Hercanuck led the group through the presentation (available online at <http://www.wrdsb.ca/planning/boundary-studies/elmira-boundary-study>)

**2. Draft Minutes Review:**

Mr. Hercanuck noted that the minutes from **Working Group Meeting #6 (June 18, 2013)** were approved via email on July 16, 2013.

**Moved by: D. Sinclair      Seconded by: B. Hatcher**

The minutes were posted on the Board's website at:

<http://www.wrdsb.ca/planning/boundary-studies/elmira-boundary-study>

**3. Objective Review: (slides 3 and 4 of the online presentation)**

Mr. Hercanuck did a review of the Elmira Boundary Study Draft Objectives as follows:

- *To determine the size and program configuration of the replacement Riverside PS, having regard for Board Policy 3002: Elementary School Size and Configuration*
- *To develop a transitional accommodation plan for elementary school enrolment in the Town of Elmira while awaiting the completion of the replacement Riverside PS.*
- *To establish boundaries that are long-term (approx. 10 years) that consider:*
  - *Walking distances (community/neighbourhood-level schools)*
  - *Efficiency of transportation*
  - *Capacity of schools*
  - *Current and future population density and demographics*
  - *Proximity to other schools*
  - *Impact on feeder and surrounding schools*

- *To minimize the impact on students where changes are proposed (consideration for grandparenting, phasing, transitions, etc.)*

Mr. Hercanuck asked if these objectives could be finalized or if the Working Group would like to revise, add or remove an objective.

Q: Principal Bond asked if a scenario's cost will be important to the Trustee's decision making process; if so, should we include "cost efficiency" as an objective?

R: Mr. Hercanuck responded that the third objective encompasses cost efficiency; and noted that the foremost intention should be to develop solutions that are in the best interest of the students and then to consider the cost after those solutions have been determined.

Mr. Hercanuck advised that the Ministry of Education has asked boards to submit their list of top Capital Projects by October 31, 2013. This list must first be approved by our Board of Trustees before being submitted to the Ministry. The Ministry picks which projects it will fund based on certain criteria, one of them being growth which is the reason the Riverside rebuild is being requested.

Mr. Hercanuck advised that this year's list of Capital Priorities has yet to be finalized but noted that the Riverside Public School rebuild will likely be near the top of the list when it is submitted to the Ministry in October.

The Working Group discussed the Ministry's top criteria for capital funding which are partnerships between neighbouring school boards. Mr. Hercanuck noted that this criterion is in response to declining enrolment across the province and noted that Waterloo Region's enrolment is growing. Currently our Board does not have any partnerships where we share a school building or site with another Board but there is one such partnership in talks for future development between our Board, the Catholic Board and the City of Cambridge (Library) for South East Cambridge. This facility, if developed, would have a library as a buffer between the two schools.

#### 4. **Status Quo Scenario Review:** (slides 5 – 7 of the online presentation)

- Boundaries and organizations remain the same (JK-5, 6-8)
- New development in the North end (Lunor subdivision) places further enrolment pressure on Riverside PS and Park Manor PS.
- Development in South end (Birdland) increases enrolment at John Mahood PS and Park Manor PS.

##### i. **Enrolment/Projections Check:**

Mr. Hercanuck noted that for the 2013-14 School year we expected total of 1023 elementary students across the Schools based on projections done last year.

As of September we are at an enrolment of 1013 (off by 10 students or about 1%); but we may gain these 10 students by October 31, 2013 which is our official Ministry reporting date.

There is no immediate need to alter the projections/assumptions, but we will look at the student distribution by area when it becomes available.

Mr. Hercanuck advised that going forward the 2013 enrolment numbers will be used.

#### 5. **Scenario Discussion/Review:**

- **Scenario 1** (slides 8 – 10 of the online presentation)
  - School organizations change to JK-6 (John Mahood and Riverside) and 7-8 (Park Manor).
  - New Riverside PS constructed in Lunor subdivision.
  - Development in south end (Birdland) and addition of Gr. 6 increases enrolment at John Mahood PS.
  - Removal of Gr. 6 at Park Manor PS reduces enrolment at facility, better matching its capacity.
  - School Boundaries remain the same.

i. **Scenario 1 Costing:** (slide 10)

**Capital needs for Scenario 1:**

- New Riverside PS - built at approximately 550 pupil places = \$10.35 million
- John Mahood PS – (138 pupil places) 6 classroom addition = \$2.63 million
- Total 688 pupil places required = \$12.98 million

Mr. Hercanuck advised that the funding requirement is based on the Ministry of Education's Capital Funding Benchmarks as set out in [Memorandum 2011:B6](#); and noted that actual tender amounts for construction could be higher or lower than funding provided by the Ministry.

**Working Group Discussion – Scenario 1:**

Q: Principal Hatcher asked if an addition to John Mahood PS would happen before or at the same time as the rebuild of Riverside PS.

R: Mr. Hercanuck responded that it may be possible to complete the addition earlier than the rebuild of Riverside PS.

Q: L. Robinson asked if the Board would chose to use portables at John Mahood PS rather than build an addition; because it would be a cheaper interim measure.

R: Mr. Hercanuck responded that we would build a case for an addition on the basis that we know the students are coming and large numbers of portables are not a viable long-term solution.

- [Scenario 8:](#) (slides 11 - 13 of the online presentation)
  - New Riverside PS constructed as JK-6; receiving *areas G1* and *I* from John Mahood PS. Long term transportation required for *area I*.
  - John Mahood PS (JK-6) receives *area F* from Riverside PS.
  - Loss of Grade 6 reduces enrolment at Park Manor PS (7-8).
  - Boundary changes between Riverside PS and John Mahood PS.

i. **Scenario 8 Costing:** (slide 13)

**Capital needs for Scenario 8:**

- New Riverside PS – built at approximately 575 pupil places = \$10.74 million
- John Mahood PS – (115 pupil places) 5 classroom addition = \$2.21 million
- Total 690 pupil places required = \$12.95 million

**Working Group Discussion – Scenario 8:**

Mr. Hercanuck noted that Scenario 8 costs approximately \$30K less than Scenario 1

- [Scenario 9:](#) (slides 14-16 of the online presentation)
  - New Riverside PS constructed as JK-8. Provides *areas C* and *F* to John Mahood PS.
  - John Mahood PS becomes JK-6 provides *areas G1, I, J, L* and *N* to Park Manor PS.
  - Park Manor PS becomes JK-8 receiving Gr. 6 feed from John Mahood PS. and receives *area G1* from John Mahood, portions of *areas D & E* move from Riverside PS to John Mahood PS; 3 year average of 40 students JK-6; & 12 students 7-8).
  - Boundary changes for all schools.

i. **Scenario 9 Costing:** (slide 16)

**Capital needs for Scenario 9:**

- New Riverside PS – built at approximately 550 pupil places = \$10.35 million
- Park Manor PS – (138 pupil places) 6 classroom addition (including FDK classrooms) = \$2.69 million
- Total 688 pupil places required = \$13.04 million

**Working Group Discussion – Scenario 9:**

Mr. Hercanuck noted that:

- The Ministry's capital funding benchmark calculation is the same for both JK-6 and JK-8 facilities.
- All costing for required pupil places is based on enrolments that include any applicable boundary changes.
- September 2016 is the earliest possible date that the new Riverside PS could be ready for operation (if it receives Ministry approval and funding in the next funding announcement); based on the amount of time required for approvals and construction.
- Only \$90K difference between the 3 scenarios.

C: L. Robinson commented that 3 years is the most optimistic timeframe for the new Riverside PS.

R: Mr. Hercanuck responded that once the Board receives approval and funding from the Ministry it can then go through the tendering process to hire an architect (which in turn has to receive approval from the Ministry); it takes 18 months from approval to completion. September 2016 is being optimistic; and is why we need to decide on interim transition plan to accommodate the expected enrolment from the planned new development areas within Elmira.

Q: T. Williams asked if the Ministry might consider accelerating the process.

R: Mr. Hercanuck advised that Ministry would not likely consider acceleration; citing the need for an Accommodation Review for the Board to close a school that had burned down in May 2008 (Alison Park PS) before a new school could be built to replace it (Moffat Creek PS which opened in September 2012).

**6. Transitions:** (slides 17 – 19 of the online presentation)

Mr. Hercanuck noted the following:

- Under all Scenarios, accommodation of student population from current Riverside PS necessary until replacement can be constructed.
- New Riverside PS earliest estimated opening date September 2016.
- Status Quo Enrolment projections indicate the need to accommodate 411 pupils JK-5 from current Riverside PS.
- Could require 5 additional portables at Riverside PS (12 total) for 2015-2016 school year.

Mr. Hercanuck advised that the projections are based on timing for the new subdivision development in the Township with student yield assumptions based on averages of enrolment that the Board expects to see from these types of new development.

Q: S. Windatt asked if there is a limit to the number of portables that can be placed at a school.

R: Mr. Hercanuck responded that there are guidelines (Ontario Building Code, Zoning By-Laws) to be followed; noting that there can be no more than 6 portables in a group but there can be additional groups of 6 if spaced according to required guidelines.

**i. Riverside PS interim accommodation options:**

Mr. Hercanuck noted that Options 1 and 2 are both geographical options that consider the interim accommodation of the Lunor subdivision population.

Option 1	Description	Accommodation Needs	Opportunities	Challenges
Riverside PS	Riverside PS remains JK-5 until new Riverside PS is built. Students accommodated in portables on site.	5 additional portables at Riverside PS (12 total)	Riverside PS community stays together	Riverside PS Infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Washrooms</li><li>• Gym</li><li>• Library</li><li>• Outdoor play space</li><li>• Electrical capacity</li></ul>

**Option 1 Discussion:**

Mr. Hercanuck noted that option 1 would direct all of the new Lunor Subdivision students to the current Riverside PS (requiring 5 additional portables for a total of 12 portables) until the school is rebuilt. This option allows the Riverside PS students to remain together and move to the new school together. He advised that the electrical capacity could be an issue requiring up to \$120K and while the washrooms situation is not ideal - it is within the [Ontario Building Code](#) requirement. Installation of a portable washroom, that would be located within the portable grouping (not an outside porta potty), could offer a solution to the washroom issue.

Q: Mr. Hercanuck asked how the community might feel about this option.

C: S. Windatt commented that 411 students and 12 portables could be too much for the site.

C: T. Williams commented that despite the drawbacks – it might be comforting to know that the student population could remain together until the move to the new school together.

C: Principal Hatcher commented that some changes could be made to the site or rotating shifts to limit the number of students using the outside play area at the same time.

C: D. Sinclair commented that there could be the possibility of more portables should the new school be delayed beyond September 2016.

Q: R. Playford asked if Floradale PS (which has additional space) could be considered as a holding school for the Lunor Subdivision enrolment until the rebuild of Riverside PS is completed.

R: Mr. Hercanuck advised that Floradale PS is not an option because it is still involved in the Woolwich & Wellesley Townships Accommodation Review and cannot be influenced by any other process.

Option 2	Description	Accommodation Needs	Opportunities	Challenges
Lunor Subdivision directed to John Mahood PS until new facility constructed	Riverside PS remains JK-5 until new Riverside PS built.  Lunor Subdivision directed to John Mahood until new school is constructed.	2 additional portables at Riverside PS;  4 additional portables at John Mahood PS.	Existing Riverside PS community stays together	Riverside PS Infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Washrooms</li> <li>• Gym</li> <li>• Library</li> <li>• Outdoor play space</li> </ul>

### Option 2 Discussion:

Mr. Hercanuck noted that option 2 would direct all of the new Lunor Subdivision students to John Mahood PS until the new school is constructed; requiring 4 additional portables at John Mahood PS and 2 additional portables at Riverside PS. This would allow the existing Riverside PS community to stay together in the interim.

C: Principal Tait commented that this extra enrolment would put additional pressure on scheduling of gym time; grades currently only getting 2 gym classes per week due to single gym. She also noted that because of the Fire Code she cannot accommodate the entire school population in the gymnasium for assemblies or for tornadoes.

Q: D. Sinclair asked if John Mahood PS would qualify for a double gym if it takes on the Lunor Development area.

R: Mr. Hercanuck responded that John Mahood PS could be considered for a new double gym, larger library as well as a 6 classroom addition; however, this Boundary Study process will concentrate on necessary classroom spaces.

Q: D. Sinclair asked if John Mahood PS would be granted these additions given that it might only be 2 years before the new school is built.

R: Mr. Hercanuck responded that John Mahood PS may have to accommodate some of the Lunor Subdivision students longer depending on where the students fall in the grade structure; they may have to be grandfathered so that they don't have to change schools 3 times in 3 years.

Q: Mr. Hercanuck asked if Option 2 was better or worse than Option 1.

C: D. Sinclair commented that Option 2 is more complicated than the Option 1.

C: Principal Hatcher commented that Option 2 creates complications for 2 schools as opposed to 1 school under Option 1.

Q: T. Williams asked if Riverside PS would be able to accommodate its entire expected student population (under Option 1) inside the school in case of emergency (i.e., tornado)

R: Principal Hatcher responded that there would be safety issues with accommodating 18 classes inside a building with 7 classrooms.

C: L. Robinson commented that there is a tossup between what the community might value more; keeping the kids together or the educational experience.

Mr. Hercanuck noted that Options 3 and 4 both consider the relocation of Grades 4 and 5 (approx. 108 students) from Riverside PS to either John Mahood PS or Park Manor PS.

Option 3	Description	Accommodation Needs	Opportunities	Challenges
John Mahood PS	Temporarily relocate Riverside PS Grades 4-5 to John Mahood PS (approx. 108 students) until new school is built	7 existing portables remain at Riverside PS;  5 additional portables at John Mahood PS (8 total)	Less pressure on current Riverside PS site and facility;  Riverside PS Gr 4,5 students integrated into existing Gr 4, 5 population at John Mahood PS	Divide current Riverside community.  Transition to new scenario more challenging (phase out Riverside students from John Mahood)
Option 4	Description	Accommodation Needs	Opportunities	Challenges
Park Manor PS	Temporarily relocate Riverside PS Grades 4-5 to Park Manor PS (approx. 108 students) until new school is built	7 existing portables remain at Riverside PS;  5 additional portables at Park Manor PS (10 total)	Less pressure on current Riverside PS site and facility;	Divide current Riverside community.  Transitions to new scenario more challenging.  Riverside PS students only 4, 5s on Park Manor site.

### Option 3 and Option 4 Discussion:

Mr. Hercanuck noted that option 3 would temporarily relocate Riverside PS's Grades 4 and 5s to John Mahood PS (including any students in Grades 4 and 5 from the new Lunor Subdivision). Lunor Subdivision Grades JK-3 would attend Riverside PS and Option 4 would relocate the Grade 4 and 5s to Park Manor PS.

- C: R. Playford commented that the Grade 5s from Riverside PS currently attend Park Manor PS for Grade 6 and this earlier transition is difficult on some students and families given the age levels involved – it is likely that the Riverside PS community will not be in favour of them having to attend Grades 4 and 5 there as well.
- C: S. Windatt commented that personally, if it affected her children, she might prefer to send them to Park Manor PS earlier as opposed to sending them to John Mahood PS; because they would be going to Park Manor eventually.
- Q: T. Williams asked why the Riverside PS community does not want their Grade 6s to attend Park Manor PS.
- R: R. Playford responded that Park Manor PS is a senior elementary school with a different mindset; the community does not feel that it is the best atmosphere for its junior students.
- C: Principal Bond commented that the Grade 6s are kept separate from the 7 and 8s and are also kept separate for the lunch period.
- Q: Could we look at just sending the Grade 5s to Park Manor PS.
- R: Mr. Hercanuck responded that both the Grade 4s and 5s would have to relocate to make any meaningful reduction in enrolment for Riverside PS.
- C: Mr. Hercanuck noted that the only other option would be to direct students to EDSS (Elmira District Secondary School).
- Q: D. Sinclair asked if the Board operates any 7-12 schools or have they ever been used temporarily.

- R: Mr. Hercanuck responded that consideration had been given to such a grade structure at Southwood Secondary School in Cambridge but Trustees did not approve. He advised that other Boards have varying grade structure schools including JK-12 schools.
- Q: Would the Riverside PS community would prefer 2 years at John Mahood PS over 3 years at Park Manor PS.
- C: T. Williams commented that Option 3 involves more change (student transitions) than Option 4.
- C: L. Robinson commented that Option 2 may be the best option because the Lunor Subdivision does not have any student population so if we can directed everyone from there to John Mahood PS until the new school is built and notify the builders of this; potential buyers will know before they buy what school they will have to attend.
- Q: Can we expect students from this new subdivision by September 2014 and if so can they be directed to John Mahood PS?
- R: Mr. Hercanuck responded that there could be students coming as soon as September 2014 and if we can get the boundary change approved by the Trustees, they can go directly to John Mahood PS. He advised that this boundary change can be done as an Administrative Boundary Change (a boundary change that does not affect anyone – if done before anyone moves in) and advised that we can request this to be done in the next few months.
- Q: R. Playford asked if there might be a chance that the Woolwich & Wellesley Townships Accommodation Review could be completed in time so that Floradale PS could be back on the table as an option.
- R: Mr. Hercanuck responded that it might be possible to have a decision as early as October or November but cautioned that this accommodation review is politically sensitive and it could take longer to get a decision.
- C: S. Windatt commented that if we wait for that decision it could affect our chances of getting capital funding from the Ministry.
- C: Mr. Hercanuck advised that the Ministry will not fund any items under an Accommodation Review that do not have Board (Trustee) approval; however, they will consider items requested through a Boundary Study.

The Working Group further discussed the pros and cons of each option, including the impact on Riverside PS families and the potential to have siblings in primary grades attending different schools and how that might affect pick up and drop off times for families. They agreed that neither of the options are ideal but decided to carry forward the options with the least amount of change.

**The Working Group Agreed to further consider Options 2 and 4.**

**The Working Group Agreed to remove Options 1 and 3 from further consideration.**

**ii. Boundary Change Transitions:**

Mr. Hercanuck advised that he had attempted to develop the transitions for each Scenario (1, 8 and 9) based on Options 1-4 but there were too many variables to consider and noted that he would provide transitions once the Working Group has settled on the Scenario(s) and Option(s) to bring to Public Meeting #2.



## 7. Roundtable:

### **Feedback Received via Boundaryfeedback email (Discussion)**

The Working Group had been provided with feedback in advance of today's meeting (received from June – September 10, 2013) via the Boundaryfeedback email and inter-office mail, for their review. Mr. Hercanuck noted that the majority of the feedback was likely the result of the Park Manor PS display of the Boundary Study Scenarios at the September 2013 Parent Teacher Night.

Mr. Hercanuck noted that the majority of the feedback was:

- Supportive of Scenarios 1 and 8
- In favour of middle school concept on the basis of:
  - Community
  - Opportunities for students
  - Less change
  - Opportunity for more daily physical activity time and access to other specialized resources for students)
- Wanting better community engagement in the Boundary Study Process

Q: In response to the feedback received, Mr. Hercanuck asked Principal Bond if Senior School students get more gym time than junior elementary schools.

R: Principal Bond responded that he could not say that senior elementary schools would get more gym time across the board; some may get additional gym time depending on the number of classes per grade and whether the school has a double gym.

C: Mr. Hercanuck clarified that additional gym time is likely a function based on the size of a school and whether or not it has a double gym and not because it is a senior elementary school.

Q: Mr. Hercanuck also noted the feedback requested better community engagement in the process and asked the working group if they had any ideas how we could better achieved this, noting that The Board values and actively seeks feedback from the community. Currently we have a [webpage dedicated to the boundary study](#) which is updated regularly with the agendas, minutes and presentations of our meetings, we have sent out flyers to every student at each of the schools involved informing them of the Public Meeting and advertised the meeting in the local newspapers.

C: Principal Bond commented that once transition plans are developed and families can see if/how they will be affected - we will likely receive more community feedback.

C: Mr. Hercanuck advised that Planning staff would be happy to attend a school council meeting at any of the schools involved to discuss the boundary study and are available to answer any questions either by telephone at (519)570-0003 ext. 4459 or via email at [boundaryfeedback@wrdsb.on.ca](mailto:boundaryfeedback@wrdsb.on.ca)

### **Public Meeting #2:**

The Working Group discussed the information to be brought forward for community feedback at Public Meeting #2 and based on the feedback received decided to reduce the number of Scenarios for further consideration. The Working Group did a show of hands on whether to eliminate Scenario 9 based on the amount of change required and because it does not meet [Board Policy 3002 Elementary School Size and Configuration](#), with regard to the preferred number of classes per grade.

C: R. Playford reminded the Working Group that Scenario 9 had received positive feedback from the community at Public Meeting #1.

C: T. Williams asked if there is enough support for Scenario 9 to justify keeping it.

**Result of Scenario 9 vote:**

The majority of the voting members agreed to eliminate [Scenario 9](#) from further consideration based on the amount of change required and that it does not meet Board Policy 3002 in regard to the preferred number of classes per grade for Park Manor PS primary/junior classes.

Q: S. Windatt asked if she could let the Park Manor PS community know that their school would not be impacted now that Scenario 9 has been removed from further consideration.

R: Mr. Hercanuck responded that Scenario 9 is set aside for now, but it could resurface.

Mr. Hercanuck advised that he will be in touch with Principals to determine the best date for Public Meeting #2; aiming for a late October date.

**Working Group Meeting #7:**

- **Working Group #7 – Tuesday, September 24, 2013; from 1:00-2:30 PM at John Mahood PS.**

Mr. Hercanuck thanked the Working Group for attending and adjourned the meeting at 2:55 PM.

**Action Items:**

- **Mr. Hercanuck to attend September 16, 2013, Parent Council Meeting at John Mahood PS;**
- **Mr. Hercanuck to look into an accommodation option that would have portables attached to the current Riverside PS, that can include washrooms;**
- **Mr. Hercanuck to develop transitions for Options 2 and 4 for Scenarios 1 and 8;**
- **Mr. Hercanuck to finalize a date for Public Meeting #2;**
- **Mr. Hercanuck to look into an Administrative Boundary Change for the Lunor Subdivision.**

---

**Future Meetings:**

**Working Group Meetings:**

- **Working Group #8: September 24, 2013 from 1:00-2:30 PM at John Mahood PS**

**Public Meetings:**

- **Public Meeting #2: TBD**