

**Report to Committee of the Whole or Board**  
**March 23, 2015**



**Waterloo Region  
District School Board**

*Inspired Learners – Tomorrow's Leaders*

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**SUBJECT:**           **Chicopee Hills Public School Planning Approvals Update**

**ORIGINATOR:**   This report was prepared by Marilyn Allen, Executive Superintendent of Business and Financial Services, Ian Gaudet, Controller of Facility Services, Dennis Cuomo, Manager of Planning, in consultation with Executive Committee.

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**PURPOSE/STRATEGIC PLAN:**

To update Trustees on the progress of Planning approvals for the new Chicopee Hills Public School and the impact on the scheduled opening date for the school. This report relates to the Waterloo Region District School Board's (Board's) strategic direction of promoting forward-thinking.

**BACKGROUND:**

On December 8, 2014 the Planning and Strategic Initiatives Committee of the City of Kitchener held a public meeting to receive a City Staff report on an application to re-zone the lands owned by the Board and proposed for the new Chicopee Hills Public School. Delegations, including Trustee Martin (as past-chair of the Board) presented in favour of the timely approval of the Board's application, advising of the importance and urgency of opening the new school to serve the needs of the Chicopee Hills community.

City Staff advised the Committee that pending the receipt of some additional information, and sign-offs by other external approval bodies, a final report with recommendations would be prepared for their consideration. The information report was received and considered by the Committee of Council which requested a final report with recommendations from City Planning Staff no later than March 9, 2015.

**STATUS:**

City Staff presented their final report with recommendations at the March 9th meeting of the Planning and Strategic Initiatives Committee. The staff report recommended approval of the zone change application with a number of conditions to be satisfied through the subsequent site plan approval process. At a Special City Council meeting held immediately after the Committee meeting, City Council gave final approval for the zone change with the conditions recommended in the City Staff report.

Though a lengthy and complicated process, the coordinated efforts of City and Board staff, and our consultants resulted in the City of Kitchener agreeing to the inclusion of an elementary school on the Fairway and Lackner site. Through the process, and the application of some innovative approaches, both City and Board goals can be met and City staff concluded that "not only can the site achieve the required density targets, but perhaps more importantly, can also achieve an active, lively and socially-dynamic place."

Approval by City Council of the Zone Change application clears the way for the construction of the planned Chicopee Hills Public School. There are a number of conditions that will be linked to site plan approval that will impact the construction schedule for the new school.

**Timelines for Construction of Chicopee Hills Public School:**

Appendix A is a revised schedule for the construction of the new Chicopee Hills Public School based on the recent zone change approval and the meeting of conditions of site plan approval. Following the approval of the Zone Change for the property by City Council there is a 20 day appeal period which will expire on March 29. At that point the zone change is official and the City can then begin to process a Site Plan application for the school.

In this case, the site plan will include not only the design of the school site but elements related to the internal private road, pedestrian safety, infrastructure requirements along Lackner Blvd and Fairway Rd, and stormwater management facilities for the entire development. Although a pre-submission site plan meeting has

been held with City staff, a second pre-submission meeting will be requested in April such that all of the conditions of site plan approval included in the zone change approval can be properly itemized and confirmed. Following that meeting, it is expected that the site plan application package can be finalized and submitted to the City in May.

The review and approval period for site plans typically ranges from 4 to 6 months. However, there is the opportunity to receive Site Plan Approval-in-Principle which may allow the start of some site alteration activities like the stripping of topsoil and clearing of some vegetation. In this case, we are required to undertake the amphibian and reptile survey in the Spring of 2015 as a condition of site plan approval-in-principle. This has a direct impact on the start of any site alteration activities before June of 2015.

Our consultants will evaluate the impact of site alteration activities with respect to breeding birds under the Migratory Birds Conservation Act, in an effort to clear that condition and expedite site grading work to proceed in the summer of 2015. If possible, site clearing and tree cutting could occur late summer and fall of 2015 with road and servicing construction before the end of the 2015 construction season.

Under the revised schedule, construction of the pad for the school is to occur in early Spring 2016 with tendering in April and the start of school construction in May. Based on a typical build timeframe of 12-15 months, the school should be completed for cleaning and furnishing in July and August in time for the opening of the school in September 2017.

The revised schedule clearly demonstrates that an opening date of September 2016 is no longer possible. An opening date of September 2017 can be met given all of the remaining conditions of site plan approval and the construction timeline.

**COMMUNICATIONS:**

Upon approval, a school community meeting will be held to update parents and the public on the timing of construction and the opening of the school. Notification will be provided through the Board web-site and individual notices sent home to parents in the future Chicopee Hills PS attendance area.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

The costs for consulting fees associated with the planning and site plan approvals (beyond the school site) are fully EDC eligible. The approved funding for the construction of the Chicopee Hills Public school remains available and the Ministry will be contacted, at the time of tendering, to determine whether any additional benchmark funding will be available as it is anticipated that construction costs will have increased since our original receipt of the allocation for the school.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended:

**That the Waterloo Region District School Board reschedule the opening date for the new Chicopee Hills Public School to September 2017.**

**That the Waterloo Region District School Board revise the timing of the boundary changes and grandfathering provisions for Lackner Woods, Sheppard, Sunnyside and Stanley Park Public Schools, originally approved on May 9, 2011, as part of the Grand River South/Sunnyside Elementary Schools Pupil Accommodation Review, and subsequently amended on May 12, 2014, to coincide with the opening of Chicopee Hills Public School scheduled for September 2017.**

 **Director of Education**

# Chicopee Hills PS Revised Schedule

[illegible]

\* Site Plan approval period ranges from 4-6 months potentially impacting site clearing and grading schedule.

+++ Following Site Plan Approval in Principle it may be possible to get a Site Alteration Permit so long as

Migratory Bird concerns can be mitigated by our consultants - moving the schedule ahead by a month or 2.