

## Henry Hudson Elementary PAC

### Minutes of Meeting: 15 April 2015

1. Introductions. Several guests in attendance, including parents of children not yet in kindergarten, and Chris Atkinson, the VSB District Principal.
2. Chris Atkinson, VSB District Principal. Chris has two kids at VSB schools. Chris attended for a special information session to give information and answer questions about school expansion and seismic upgrading.

#### School expansion:

Overall VSB enrollment is going down, because some large cohorts of seniors are graduating. But Hudson enrollment is growing. We need another English Kindergarten to get enough space for in catchment students. Architects have come in to look at space. Ideas they came up with:

- a. Put staff room into current large entranceway, make staffroom back into a classroom. But fire department panel is right there, and that door to the outside has to be accessible at all times for fire department.
- b. Basement, lunchrooms are three spaces that could be used differently.
- c. Portables? It is a pretty cramped site and they cost \$300,000
- d. The outbuilding is a possibility, but it is an important community asset
- e. Part of the library could become a classroom; library physical collections are shrinking.

They are still exploring options and eliciting feedback, then they will present best options to trustees to make a decision. They realize that a 17<sup>th</sup> division means more stress on everything in the building.

The field is a problem, but it will not be replaced before seismic upgrading, and even improving drainage is a lot of money. Chris reported that the VSB policy does not let PACs pay for grounds improvements. VSB has applied for Hudson to get an annual facilities grant, usually used for major improvements like boilers. We are, however, allowed to buy picnic tables.

Indoor facilities like washrooms will be replaced in seismic upgrade, not now, although there might be ways to improve the kindergarten bathroom. The kitchen could be improved as well, with understanding that we only offer a lunch fundraising activity there.

#### Seismic upgrading

- a. The first phase has been done: seismic report was done by structural engineer, and schools were ranked. Most students in highest risk goes first on the list. We are not in first 20 or 30 projects because we are lower risk and fewer students than other schools.
- b. Six month feasibility study is slated to start in January 2016; architects and consultants come in and put together what it costs to (1) upgrade, (2) replace, or (3) some hybrid of these. We have an old building and a 1950s gym, similar to many other schools. The lowest cost option will be

chosen. This will involve the community. This is a heritage building. If you keep an old school, you get to keep all the square footage. If you get a new school, it will be built smaller. Look at General Gordon project as an example: there has been a big reduction in square footage. New designs de-emphasize hallways which represent a lot of space in old buildings.

- c. Then to Ministry of Education for 3 month approval period; maybe shorter once new project office is created.
- d. Then 1 year design phase, back to community, parents, staff and students.
- e. Then back to Ministry for funding
- f. Construction of 18-24 months
- g. Based on this timeline, a new school would be expected about 4.5 years, from January 2016.

#### Parent Q&A:

Q: This is the first time we've heard a date for start of feasibility study; what are odds the Jan 2016 date gets bumped further:

Chris: Hoping the new pattern with new project office will be that projects will move faster, not slower.

Q: As seismic upgrading priority is partly based on enrollment, will having 17 divisions and over 400 students put us into a higher speed bracket?

Chris: No, these are unrelated.

Q: What is the level of safety?

Chris: Look at the VSB corporate website and look for seismic projects tab. H1, H2, H3, etc.

Q: What about half empty schools vs bursting at the seams schools?

Chris: Number of students at risk is relevant in the ordering of the list for seismic upgrading. We have 60 projects to do, with only two swing site schools, one east and one west. If we only the swing sites to house children during school construction, it would take 50 years to get the projects done. We are going to have to use all the available space in all sorts of creative ways.

Q: How do demographics affect school expansion?

Chris: We have really accurate data from government for at least 4-5 years, but there are still lots of unknowns. International Village school will open Sept 2016 and relieve some of this pressure. Projections only as good as trends hold; as trends change projections get worse.

Q: We need another classroom this September, what about following September and after that and after that?

Chris: We are hopeful that the boom in downtown will be balanced by declining enrollment on the west side, getting to stable enrollment level.

Q: It is also important that we have a sustainable cohort with consistent numbers through the grades.

Chris: agreed.

Q: How is it that the feasibility study starts in Jan 2016, but Hudson still “unsupported” for seismic upgrading?

Chris: That means the Ministry hasn’t said go ahead yet; we have a plan for next 10 years, expect Ministry will support it.

Q: Have other projects followed this timeline?

Chris: Yes, generally the wait is to get started, once it gets going it keeps going.

Q: With 17<sup>th</sup> classrooms, when will we know how school will be modified?

Chris: Construction needs to be done in the summer, so this will have to be decided in April or May. Development permits from City of Vancouver take up to 8 months to get, so this has to stay internal and not need development permit.

Q: There will be impact of a 17th division on lunchroom, custodial, washrooms, etc. Anything we can do to mitigate these issues even before seismic upgrading? It is hard to even keep cleaning staff here because it is so difficult to clean.

Chris: Health and safety is top priority. Custodial time is awarded based on square metres under the collective agreement, and probably impossible to change. Bruce and staff coming up with ideas re lunch space. VSB has their own health & safety who will check problems such as hot water supply in washrooms; contact them, not Vancouver Coastal Health.

Q: If we keep this building can we get an elevator? Some kids can’t come here because it is not accessible.

Chris: Seismic upgrading is not a school improvement program, it’s ONLY seismic upgrading. But City of Vancouver insists that all new buildings are accessible.

Q: Has anyone sued school board because school isn’t accessible?

Chris: Don’t know, most schools are accessible.

Q: do we get a vice principal?

Chris: don’t know yet.

3. Minutes of last meeting approved: Rob/John

4. PAC Chair report:

- a. Lice outbreak, please stay on top of it. Stay vigilant checking your kids. Vancouver Coastal Health won’t come in to do checks and children are not supposed to stay home; this isn’t a disease.

- b. School board budget public input next Monday is next opportunity. Go to VSB or DPAC website if you're interested. Reduced projected shortfall to \$8Million.

5. Principal's report:

- a. Track & Field program going well. Starting in May will have two meets for Gr 4&5, two meets for Gr 6&7, then a big meet.
- b. Badminton program final tournament is tomorrow after school; top 11 students will go to city finals at Tupper.
- c. Earth rangers came to talk and brought animals, and talked to kids about how to get involved. Kids wanting to have fundraisers.
- d. Pro-D day April 27<sup>th</sup> is school planning day.

6. Teachers' Committee:

No report

7. SPC Report:

- One more meeting this year. Bill 11 is likely to eliminate SPCs going forward.

8. PAC Secretary report:

- Please volunteer to be a secretary or a treasurer!
- Next meeting is budget planning and visioning, maybe up to 3 hours.
- New calendar circulated with a blend of school activities and PAC activities, should be circulated every month. Also updated on Google calendar on the PAC webpage. For anything school-wide.

9. Committees

- a. Hot lunch: Sports day coming up, will need volunteers! Sports day this year is on a Thursday, on a traditional hot lunch day, so will run hot dogs as regular lunch from lunch room, but for everyone. PAC will take over ice cream station. Need extra people for these stations.
- b. Spirit committee: Another spirit day in May and in June. Looking at budget for big banner or tent for sports teams, coming from money we've made from sales of spirit wear.
- c. Safety and Social responsibility working group: Nothing to report
- d. Technology Committee: Thinking of a computing club for the kids; looking at something for next year.
- e. Communications committee: Need front-end Web people to bring more visuals to Website. Rob does back-end Web stuff. We need some talent with Wordpress experience please! Rob can facilitate the IT part, he hosts on his own server.
- f. Greening committee: What can we do over next few years to add gardens, picnic areas, outdoor classrooms? Visioning stages for now. We made about \$250 on tulip bulbs. Gardening committee is different: more education-focused. They want to build a shed, will cost about the same as raised in tulip sale.

10. Activities & events:

- a. Hudson school dances May 1 (K-Gr4), May 8 (Gr5-7). Junior dance will have games, Friday afternoon during school time. Renata organizing decorations and lights; need volunteers to put up lights at lunchtime. Contact Renata to volunteer.
- b. Right now kids are doing a dance activity, won't be a performance this year.
- c. Sports Day May 14
- d. Child run: school team event is May 31<sup>st</sup>, funds go to child cancer. Hoping to raise \$1000. Hope to get an ice cream sale in May. Today is last day for early bird registration to join team. Maybe a child run mascot will come to school. Hope all participants wear spirit wear or something red to represent the school. [www.childrun.com](http://www.childrun.com) and click registration tab, look for Team Hudson and join team by registering. Registration carries on until late May.
- e. Choir has started, second rehearsal today. 30 kids Jr choir, 12 kids Sr choir. Maybe Seniors go out to sing at a retirement home or similar. And hope a little concert at end of school year.
- f. Volunteer tea this year? Nice spot for choir to sing. Bruce will make a note of it.
- g. Gr 7 graduation activities. Three main events:
  - i. Gr 6&7 going to camp for 2 nights, mostly funded by the grant
  - ii. Gr 7 grad ceremony funded by PAC. 25 Gr 7 grads this year.
  - iii. Gr 7 grad event to be decided and planned by parents; PAC has a budget for that (\$600) as well but not organizing it. E.g. last year took kids to Capilano suspension bridge.
- h. End of year BBQ
- i. Composting and recycling program coming to the school! Won't be in every classroom, but wherever there is a garbage can it will be replaced by three bins.
- j. Bike to school week organized by Chantal. VPD community road and safety team doing bike safety assembly on May 12. Please stop parking in no stopping zone. New bike lane really makes the school more safely accessible by bike.
- k. Babysitting club in development.

11. Meeting adjourned: Jerry/Mitch