

PAC Meeting Minutes 20 Feb 2019 6:30 pm

1. Welcome and introductions
2. Approval of minutes from January minutes (John/Cecile)
3. Special guests from the Vancouver projects office on our seismic upgrade: Michael Rossi, Janson Ho, Chung Lee
 - a. Michael Rossi, District Principal of Educational Planning. Consults with Principal and Project Office. Currently 28 projects somewhere in seismic mitigation process. He understands French Immersion program review also happening at the same time, but they are not the experts on that program review.
 - b. Janson Ho (Director of Project Office) distributed the Seismic Mitigation Program Process Flow Chart. Goal is all schools seismically safe by 2030. Hudson will probably be approved this year. Currently, Hudson is at first box on flow chart: Feasibility Report PDR (Project Definition Report). They are coming close to finishing this report. Then it goes to the approval process: submitted to Steering Committee within next month, then Provincial Approval (Ministry of Education and Ministry of Finance) which takes several months, then budget approved through treasury board and then Project Agreement is signed by Minister of Education and Vancouver School Board. Feasibility study is where they look at various options. Province starts by looking at what will it take to make this building safe, and cost that. Then what is cost of building brand new school. Sometimes upgrading is more expensive than building new, in which case its obvious to build new.
 - c. Design phase begins after project agreement, takes about 1.5 years. There can be significant back-log in obtaining City Permit. Then construction tendering stage. Finally enters Construction phase, usually 18-24 months. This is followed by commissioning, occupancy inspection, and FFE (furniture, fixtures, equipment).
 - d. Whole process from project agreement signed off will take 3 to 4 years. Approval process that we are in will take 6 months. Overall, anticipating end of 2022 to be finished. Periodic updates will be provided.
 - e. Once the project is funded, we form Seismic Advisory Group (SAG) with members from PAC, administration, teachers, etc so every stakeholder is informed along the process. Focus of group is to disseminate information.
 - f. Question from PAC chair: we have been advocating for input to PDR since June. The output of the PDR (Project Definition Report) will constrain size and configuration before we get to consult with the SAG. We are really concerned at this stage, because other local schools have found area standards applied too strictly and the PDR is proposing schools that are too small. Answer: school district is aware of the issues with

area standards and need for consultation and there are discussions for where more input can be permitted. This is a current discussion with Ministry of Education.

- g. Memorandum of Understanding: prior to 2014 the Ministry of Education recognized there were too many schools that needed upgrading, and there were not enough personnel in VSB to fast track the mitigation program. At that time, they were only doing 1 or 2 schools per year, now trying to do 5 per year. Ministry agreed, in concert with VSB, to create Vancouver Project Office, under a Memorandum of Understanding. Project Office is not solely run by the VSB or the Ministry; it reports to steering committee of two members from Provincial government and two members from school district. Most parent groups and school districts want new builds, but the Ministry's priority is to make schools safe as fast as possible, so the studies are done first.
- h. Parent: at what point is the City of Vancouver involved? Building schools should be part of City master plan, projecting how many students will be here. Is there anyone who produces a master plan, coordinating plans for schools with re-zoning plans. Answer: the school district does the planning and projections for student increases and decreases. They do meet with City to coordinate on planning.
- i. Parent: How long total will this take from where we are? Answer: About two years for design phase and then about two years usually where students and staff are displaced for construction.
- j. Parent: does city have an existing heritage designation on Henry Hudson building? Answer: we do not believe so.
- k. Parent: Is it correct that the SAG is formed after PDR is approved? Answer: technically we do not discuss the PDR until after the project agreement has been signed, because has not been approved by Ministry yet. We put SAG together after the project agreement. Follow-up question: How will our input matter that late in process? Answer: the seismic upgrading funding is for current capacity only. If the school needs to be expanded, the funds for that expansion come from a different fund than for seismic upgrading, that would be a separate application for funding on top of seismic mitigation. Comment from PAC chair: this is a once in a century opportunity to coordinate the district programs, master planning, curriculum changes, etc.
- l. Hudson has two separate programs, English and French. French is a district choice program. Ministry position is that Vancouver has excess capacity, therefore students in a district program could be moved. Participation rate is number of students in catchment who attend this English program; at the moment it is low and would be likely to increase if the FI program moves. Comment from PAC chair: about 73% FI parents surveyed would be unable to take their children to Strathcona and would stay in English at Hudson, yielding virtually no extra capacity at Hudson. We are challenging the idea that excess space in district is accessible to students.

- m. Question from PAC chair: Wolfe retrofit vs Tennyson rebuild: they are about the same age. Why the difference? Answer: many factors are important in the feasibility study, e.g. asbestos and other materials, quality of original design and construction.
- n. Parent question: How many schools have been done, and how many have been new build versus refit? Answer: we are about halfway through; of those completed in past 5 to 10 years have been about 50/50 upgrade vs rebuild.
- o. Parent question: Is this government only (city and province) or is there any work with developers to be involved. E.g. before 2010 Olympics, Hillcrest was a curling rink, now it is a major community development. Developers are required to provide daycare space, those kids grow, where is their school?
- p. Parent question: What input does facilities planning have into the development of the PDR? Answer: they do work closely together, even before PDR is started.
- q. Parent question: Why are there clear indications for expansion, but these opportunities are missed? Answer: Project Office mandate is to make kids safe in school. To make larger, facility planning applies to different department at Ministry of Education, under school enhancement program, and Vancouver is not only school district in BC for these funds. Ideally would be able to get seismic and facility expansion funding together, this is sound and logical. Comment from PAC chair: we don't even hear from planning and facilities that there is a real need to apply for more capacity. Can we try to advocate properly for space?
- r. Parent: is there a precedent for building excess capacity and using it for something else? Answer: students have to be there for us to get funds from Ministry. There are some projects in district where we partner with City of Vancouver for childcare, but that will not become usable for enrolling space. Seismic funds for new school and city might put in money for preschool, but then City owns that space.
- s. Does PDR allow for existing out of school care and currently existing 0 to 4 care? Answer: we do not reduce number of out of school care seats available. Follow-up question: But our out of school care spaces are already too small, kids age out at 8.5 years old. Can we capitalize on funds for childcare space, is there a possibility of a third pot of money? Answer: VSB has applied for these funds to increase childcare spaces in schools, but highly competitive process.
- t. Parent: It sounds like current number of students is important for budgeting, or is the PDR based on number of classrooms or spaces. And can you comment on English Catchment changes proposed last year. Answer: the Ministry asks what is capacity of school (NOT current enrollment) and the PDR is based on that. Answer re boundary reviews: last year was first attempt at boundary review in a long time, may happen more often in order to alleviate pressures at some of the full schools by changing

boundaries. Community consultation raised issues about siblings, and these will need to be taken into account for next iteration of boundary review.

- u. Parent question: PDR makes a recommendation for which of three options (upgrade, part upgrade part rebuild, all rebuild), is this based only on cost, and how often does ministry reject the recommendation? Answer: Ministry wants to do it as fast and economically as possible, even if rebuild is a better long term value. So usually the lowest cost option is chosen, but sometimes the school district can really argue for the second lowest cost option and supplement what the Ministry will pay for. Ministry usually approves project office recommendation.
- v. Parent question: do the rebuilds tend to have more cost over-runs? Answer: Upgrading an old school will have more contingencies built into budget for unforeseen complications.
- w. Seismic mitigation project is to make sure everyone in the building can exit the building safely in a major earthquake, not guaranteeing anyone can use building afterwards; this is true for rebuilds and upgrades alike.

4. Principal's report

- a. Measles report sent out by VSB. No outbreaks in any VSB schools. We do not have immunization rate data, but Vancouver Coastal Health does have the data with mapping. This neighbourhood is about 78% for kindergarten for MMR immunization.
- b. Snow closure: first snow closure day in years last week. On a snow day, the principal has to come to school in case any children get dropped off. Two students were dropped off, and both were sent home safely. The building engineer is also always here to protect from freezing. There was an email sent out, local radio and TV stations advertise it, as does VSB.
- c. Kindergarten registration. The English and French draws have been done. Parents have 48 hours to accept the position, then they get called, and then we work down the waitlist. In English, out of 40 spots, 17 were filled by siblings. Many students waitlisted. Once FI students get into French they come off English list. Lots of pressure at kindergarten for neighbourhood kids to get in.
- d. New staff: Mme Perrella off on maternity leave. **Mme Frenrich** [name needs confirming] has come to replace her, she has previously taught 6/7 FI in Kamloops. Also Mme Anna [name needs confirming] is taking Mme Fleming's role in English prep and English resource.

5. Events report:

- a. Spring "Let it Glow" dance is free, Friday March 1st. Please RSVP so we know how many kids to expect. Two dads are DJs, dance off at 3:45 pm. Prizes for disco costume and best dancing. Volunteers are needed.

6. All other agenda items are put off to next PAC meeting in April.

7. French Immersion: on March 6th, Josh and Rob are presenting to VSB planning and facilities committee about parent response to proposal to move FI track. PAC executive and new committee formed have collected a lot of opinions and data, most of which suggests moving FI to Strathcona is a problem because of how far that is. From Kitsilano it is much too far, it's even too far for most West End and Yaletown families. Fourth option: right size the seismic upgrade for Hudson. Meeting yesterday was just about FI. The VSB position is that the teacher shortage causes difficulties, they want to balance FI program so that it is equally available across the city, and because it's a choice parents make, we may choose to go further from neighbourhood.
8. Laura MacDougall and Josh Peterson are new PAC exec at-large members for Seismic and FI.
9. Meeting adjourned at 8:40 pm.