

Hintonburg Community Association and the West Wellington Community Association
Proposal for a Joint Schools Committee

Agenda

Thursday, November 15, 2007

Fisher Park School

7:30 to 9:00 pm

1. Introduction of Participants

Rob Bowman introduced Jennifer McKenzie (OCDSB Trustee, Zone 10 Kitchissippi and Somerset Wards), representatives from the Hintonburg Community Association and representatives from the Fisher Park Reunion Committee.

2. Review of Agenda

Rob reviewed the agenda.

3. Presentation by Fisher Park School Reunion Committee to WWCA

Tim Welch presented a cheque in the amount of \$4,500 to WWCA to "help support the community they come from." The donation is the profit from their Fisher Park School Reunion. On behalf of the WWCA, Rob Bowman thanked the Fisher Park School Reunion Committee for their donation. Pictures of the presentation will be posted on the WWCA website.

4. Background on reasons behind formation of the HCA/WWCA Joint Schools Committee

WWCA contacted Hintonburg Community Association to work together to form a schools committee as OCDSB staff in a school board meeting held on 18 Oct indicated that Elmdale, Devonshire, as well as some other downtown schools may be listed as prohibitive to repair.

Jennifer McKenzie, District School Board Trustee for Kitchissippi and Somerset Ward, thanked the WWCA for its interest in this important issue. She explained that she is concerned about urban schools such as Elmdale, and Fisher Park. She would welcome a Schools Committee for feedback and advice. As well, it is very important that community associations with schools in older established neighbourhoods work together to ensure the future of these schools.

5. Jennifer McKenzie, OCDSB Trustee, Zone 10 Kitchissippi and Somerset Wards provided the attendees with an update re: additional information obtained since the June 18th OCDSB meeting re: Prohibitive Repair Status of Schools in Kitchissippi. She stated the following:

School Board gets 95% funding from the Province. There are 4 pots:

- 1) renewal pot - 11 million over 150 schools
- 2) good places to learn project - for things such as roofs, boiler, windows

- 3) primary class reduction - for portable additions
- 4) prohibitive to repair status - if school is beyond economic sense to repair, would tear down and build a new one on the existing site, or combine some schools into one school and relocate the students creating a vacant property that may then be declared surplus.

Prohibitive to repair raises a lot of issues/concerns such as could this be used to consolidate schools by tearing down old ones and putting the money into expanding neighbourhood schools?

The school Board staff declaration that Elmdale should be prohibitive to repair did not appear to be consistent with the policy established for making this declaration. Answers were sought from the Board but the answers to date have been unsatisfactory.

Expected announcement soon of \$325 Million across province for schools designated as prohibitive to repair. These funds are unlikely to be earmarked for Kitchissippi schools in any beneficial way.

Questions and Answers:

Q: Is Nepean and Elmdale on the list?

A: Not on the list, but maybe that isn't a good thing if they need repairs. Devonshire is already on the prohibitive to repair list. Jennifer position is that inner city schools should get a good portion of the funding and not just outlying area schools.

Q: How do Community Associations position themselves to help?

A: We can help out with assessments to ensure they are accurate and provide a broader community perspective on issues relating to the future of schools within their community.

Q: What is the commitment to urban schools?

A: This has been a slow educational process as to what the urban issues are. She is worried about the future of urban schools. She has begun to see members of the Board beginning to understand the problem but still a long way to go. The proposed Schools Committee would support that education.

7. Roundtable:

Setting up the Schools Committee:

- should be autonomous group separate from school parent council groups
- community voices are needed
- meeting at least every 2 months
- should link with other urban community associations who have aged, underenrolled or otherwise vulnerable schools for closure within their areas

WWCA is seeking volunteers to serve on the Committee and invited people in attendance to put their names forward. Anne Marie Laurin has agreed to be the WWCA representative on the Schools Committee.

8. Next Meeting

An email will be sent out with the next date (tentatively January or February 2008) and the joint committee reports and meeting dates will periodically be placed on the WWCA website.