

# COMMITTEE MEETING

## COMMITTEE II – PLANNING & FACILITIES

TUESDAY, 2011 October 04

### Committee Report to the Board, 2011 October 17

#### 1. Delegation – L’Ecole Bilingue Seismic Upgrade Committee

C. Shizgal and Q. Brock, L’Ecole Bilingue Seismic Upgrade Committee, spoke on the following points:

- The community and PAC are pleased with the progress on their seismic upgrade.
- It is important that portables be ready for school occupation by September 2013 to minimize the disruption to the school year.

#### 2. Delegation – Strathcona Community Centre Association (SCCA)

W. Uyeyama, Strathcona Community Centre Association, was unable to attend the meeting but supplied a written submission indicating that the SCCA fully endorses the renewal option.

This item was received for information.

#### 3. Delegation – Strathcona PAC

A. Ellis, Strathcona PAC, referred to the August 30, 2011 letter from T. Wilcox, PAC Treasurer. She stated that at their June 2011 PAC AGM there was a unanimous vote in support of the renewal option for their seismic upgrade project.

#### 4. Delegation – Strathcona Principal

M. Jorgensen, Strathcona Principal, spoke on the support of staff and many parents for the preferred Renewal Option for the school’s seismic upgrade and the need for students to be in a seismically safe school.

**5. Delegation – Queen Mary PAC**

J. Puddifoot, Queen Mary PAC, spoke in support of Option 3 for the seismic mitigation project at Queen Mary Elementary. A written submission highlighted the following points:

- Parents on Queen Mary PAC have been involved with this project since 2002;
- The key areas identified through the 2005/2006 consultation process are:
  - Safety of children and staff in the buildings
  - Speedy completion of the upgrade
  - Preservation of the 1914 red building
  - Environmental issues such as LEED Gold construction
  - Sufficient space and facilities to maintain current programs and Neighbourhood Learning Centre enhancements
- Concern about the time this has taken; and
- Option 3 makes children safe, preserves the red building and provides community space for the school and community to share - rejection of Option 3 creates further delays and puts children at risk.

**6. Delegation – Queen Mary Principal**

M. Sanft, Queen Mary Principal, voiced support of the school educational community for Option 3 of the Queen Mary renewal project. She indicated that students, staff and parents are looking for trustees' decision to support and move this project forward.

**7. Delegation – Gordon Resident**

L. Summers, Kitsilano resident, was unable to attend the meeting but supplied a written submission indicating her concerns regarding traffic congestion on West 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

This was provided for information only.

**8. Delegation – Gordon Community Member and Gordon Building Renewal Committee**

B. Uhrich, Co-chair of the General Gordon Building Renewal Committee, distributed a hand-out which outlined their Committee's support for Option 1.

R. Sharp, Gordon community member, spoke on community and parent support for Option 1 for the Gordon seismic upgrade project. He called for the development of a funding strategy to respond to the community's wishes to retain school heritage buildings.

**9. Delegation – Gordon Safety and Preparedness Committee**

T. Wallace and R. Hartman, Parent Representatives - Gordon Safety and Preparedness Committee, distributed a handout and spoke on the need to focus on the children and school staff rather than the envelope of the school. She indicated that the Committee supports Option 4B which will yield a safe, functional and enjoyable building for the people who use it.

In response to a trustee query, it was stated that the Gordon Safety and Preparedness Committee is affiliated with the Gordon PAC.

**10. Delegation – Gordon School Advisory Committee and West Kitsilano Residents Assoc.**

L. Light, Gordon School Advisory Committee, and J. Pierce, West Kitsilano Residents Association, spoke on their support for Option 1 and the need to seismically upgrade Vancouver schools but also retain the heritage buildings. In their hand-out they highlighted the following:

- Ask that General Gordon's Commonwealth Report heritage rating be reviewed before any decision is made regarding the seismic upgrading project;
- The importance of retaining the heritage façade of the building; and
- Support an innovative funding strategy with the Province, to be developed to support the retention of heritage schools.

**11. Delegation – Gordon Community Member**

L. Benge, Gordon community member, supported the retention of Gordon. He stated that the community opposes the demolition of Gordon and Vancouver's other historic schools and he has a petition with 1200 signatures supporting the retention of Gordon Elementary.

**12. Delegation – Gordon Community Member\Gordon Parent**

N. Nastic, Kitsilano resident, spoke on behalf of the 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue residents. He indicated that the current traffic conditions are unbearable. He supports a replacement school as he feels that Gordon's heritage is not very beautiful. He supports concept 4 as presented in the open house and does not support the relocation of the Montessori Preschool, as concept 4B would significantly impact residents on West 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

**13. Delegation – Gordon Principal and Vice Principal**

M. Davidson, Principal, and N. Morrisette, Vice Principal, spoke on behalf of the staff, students and parents at General Gordon. They stated support of the preferred Option 4B and are ready to begin the design phase and the start of construction.

In response to a query it was determined, in a conversation between the Chairperson and DPAC representative, that the PAC has divergent opinions on the options and does not have an official position of support of any option for the Gordon seismic upgrade. Parents can raise their concerns to DPAC.

**14. Delegation – Gordon Parent**

The Chairperson read highlights from a submission from J. Bonvillain, Gordon parent, who is in full support of preferred Option 4B for the following reasons:

- Addresses the need for the complete seismic renewal with the least disruption to student learning and teaching;
- The most effective use of funding best ensures the viability of Provincial acceptance;
- Provides students with a modern school that will serve the interests of students now and for the future; and
- Is the preferred option of the VBE team which, after public consultation, has been revised to address some of the key issues raised by the school and community.

**14b. Delegation – North West Point Grey Home Owners Association (NWPGHOA)**

L. Botman and E. Murphy, North West Point Grey Home Owners Association, distributed a letter dated 2011 September 30 outlining their opposition to Concept 3 for Queen Mary.

NWPGHOA's strong support for full heritage retention; Their 2011 May request on costing for the full range of proposed alternatives was not received as requested; and Concern that their alternative Option 1B (full heritage retention and seismic upgrading) was rejected.

J. Meschino responded that Option 1B was reviewed and a letter was sent back that this option did not meet the program requirements and NCLD community spaces, therefore could not be evaluated against the other options. He also noted that the cost estimates were available on the website and that all Freedom of Information requests were provided in a timely manner.

**15. Comprehensive Assessment for VSB School Buildings with Significant Seismic Risk**

J. Meschino, Director of Facilities, and J. Wollenberg, Principal - Coriolis Consulting, referred to the report and Attachment 1 entitled "*Comprehensive Assessment for VSB School Buildings with Significant Seismic Risk*". They highlighted the following:

- Important to note that this draft report is for discussion purposes only and has not been accepted by the VSB or Ministry of Education (MOE);
- In 2004 the Province of BC Seismic Assessment Program conducted a preliminary seismic screening of all schools in BC where 60 district schools were identified as having significant risk of severe damage in a major seismic event;
- Significant challenges identified in the 2004 report led to an agreement by the VSB and MOE to compile a comprehensive assessment of schools with the greatest seismic risk;
- The assessment required the completion of a large amount of technical analysis for each school. Coriolis Consulting Corp. was engaged to integrate the technical studies into a comprehensive evaluation and to help formulate a strategic plan;
- The draft report summarizes the work to date including the seismic risk analysis, building condition analysis, heritage ratings, educational adequacy and capital cost estimates for upgrade and replacement options. It also summarizes the main advantages and disadvantages of alternative approaches to addressing the seismic challenge; and
- The next step will be to meet with the MOE to develop a strategic plan for review.

In response to queries it was confirmed that:

- This report addresses only the 48 schools with one or more H1 or H2 blocks; and that many sites have multiple blocks with different ratings;
- A seismic retrofitted school would be designed to an "L" (least vulnerable) rating which would reduce the risks to occupants in a "design level" seismic event but may not make the building immediately usable. New schools are required to be designed to exceed basic code requirements by 30% with regard to seismic performance and have the objective of being functional for post earthquake reuse; and
- There is a need to look at providing centres and re-establishing normal delivery of educational services after an event. This could be addressed through the VSB Sectoral Review.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT the BOARD direct staff to identify a process for developing a strategic plan with the Ministry of Education and local stakeholders to complete the remaining seismic upgrades to our schools in a timely manner.

**16. Strathcona Project Definition Report**

J. Meschino, Director of Facilities, A. Lee, Acting Manager of Facilities – Planning, A. Hepburn, Principal – Colborne Architectural Group, and J. Sherstobitoff, Director – Sandwell Engineering, spoke on the Strathcona Project Definition Report.

A. Hepburn referred to a PowerPoint presentation on the Strathcona project that referenced the planning context and building assessment and highlighted the following:

- Strathcona currently has a very large catchment area and the assumption in this report is that a new school will be built at International Village. The recommended design capacity of the renewed school is based on 450 Grades 1 - 7 student spaces, 60 Full Day Kindergarten spaces plus 3 Early Learning classrooms; and
- The Renewal Option is the preferred option as it provides the most beneficial facility for both school and Neighbourhood of Learning uses and retains three core buildings. The Renewal Option:
  - Optimizes the seismic upgrade level of each of the three buildings; auditorium can be used as a post-disaster assembly centre; higher protection for the Class A heritage Junior Building.
  - Provides full accessibility to all floors of the school and to community functions in the auditorium.
  - Provides indoor connection to all three school buildings.
  - Reorganizes educational functions in line with current teaching needs.
  - Upgrades building systems to allow more efficient operations and reduce future maintenance costs.
- The phasing strategy was also presented.

J. Sherstobitoff reported on the construction methods recommended for the renewal of the three blocks:

- Block A Senior Building – would be upgraded to Ministry Technical guidelines with the installation of concrete shear walls
- Block B Auditorium – would be upgraded to a post-disaster level
- Block C Junior Building – would be upgraded close to a post-disaster level using a base isolation technique. This building has the highest heritage designation.

J. Meschino reported that City of Vancouver staff generally support the proposed concept and have provided additional commentary in their letter attached to the VBE staff report.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT the Vancouver Board of Education confirm the Renewal Concept is the preferred development option for Strathcona Elementary School and authorize staff to complete a Project Definition Report requesting Ministry of Education finalization of a capital funding agreement.

**17. Queen Mary Project Definition Report**

J. Meschino, Director of Facilities, M. Cowin, VBE Planner, and A. Leonoff, Architect and Associate Director – IBI Group, presented the Queen Mary Project Definition Report.

A. Leonoff highlighted the following:

- The planning issues of this project included:
  - Lack of connectivity and a resulting isolation of students and teachers between the 1914 and 1926 structures
  - Lack of an identifiable main entrance
  - Undersized gymnasium
  - Library located underneath the gym resulting in noise and vibration
  - Library has minimal natural light
  - No accessibility for persons with physical disabilities
  - Disjointed multiple playground areas which are difficult to supervise
  - No parking on site
  - Difficult sloping site to the north and extensive retaining walls surrounding the playfield which is at a different level from the remaining play areas and school
- The renewal project has a reduced capacity to match the enrolment projections for the catchment area once the new Acadia Road school has been constructed;
- Four options ranging from full retention to full replacement were assessed according to project planning principles established by the Queen Mary Advisory Council (QMAC). Most groups advised the project team of their preference for Option 3 (upgrade of the 1914 red brick building and replacement of the remaining buildings with new construction);
- The key advantages of Option 3 are:
  - Improved learning and teaching environment: close proximity of learning communities
  - Visible main entrance: for school and community use
  - Safety and security: effective playground supervision
  - Outdoor spaces: maximizes play space
  - Connectivity: effective circulation and building relationships
  - Sustainability: partial reuse of existing building and improved building envelope

- Heritage: retention of the iconic 1914 red brick building
- Viability: cost effective at \$19.3 million / supported by City and Ministry staff

J. Meschino reported that City of Vancouver staff generally support the proposed concept and have provided additional commentary in their letter attached to the VBE staff report.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT the Vancouver Board of Education confirm Concept 3 - upgrade of the 1914 building and replacement of the remaining buildings – as the preferred development option and authorize staff to complete a project definition report requesting Ministry of Education finalization of a capital project funding agreement.

#### **18. Gordon Project Definition Report**

J. Meschino, Director of Facilities, C. Fung, VBE Planner, and M. Ehman, Architect and Partner - DA Architects + Planners, spoke on the General Gordon Project Definition Report.

M. Ehman reported that there were challenges associated with this project in the following areas:

- Site Assessments
  - Site is half the size for capacity based on Ministry standards
  - Little area for temporary accommodation and adequate area for outdoor play
  - Amenities arranged in an adhoc manner
- Various play areas are difficult to supervise and no on-site parking
- Structural Assessment
  - Very high seismic hazard and overall structure in very poor condition
  - Tested concrete strength: adequate to very poor and extensive clay tile partitions require removal
  - Floors and facades require major reinforcing
- Heritage Assessment
  - Original brickwork replaced throughout façade and modified gables
  - Blocked up windows and doors and original windows replaced
  - Little heritage value in interior and overall heritage value diminished
- Accessibility & Educational Quality
  - Accessibility to school as main entrances are above grade
  - Low headroom in basement/poor educational space
  - Little classroom connection with outdoor open space; potential windows would be 5' above grade for the youngest learning communities

D.A. Architects and Planners explored and developed 18 different concept options and are recommending Concept 4B for the following reasons:

- Design Response
  - Greatest planning flexibility and no classrooms in basement
  - Strong relationship with outdoor open space
  - Accessible main entrance and building location similar to existing
- Heritage Consideration
  - Existing building in very poor condition and existing facades significantly altered
  - Cost to retain is too great for quality of facade
  - Re-use or recall heritage elements in new building or in the landscape
- Environmental Consideration
  - Based on LCA, Concept 4b has least environmental impact
- Traffic Management Response
  - Relocation of Montessori Preschool to NE corner of site to alleviate traffic
  - Limited on-site parking minimizes impact on site
- Temporary Accommodation
  - Requires no temporary classroom portables, only temporary gym
- Cost Consideration
  - Lowest project cost
  - Least number of construction risks

J. Meschino reported that City of Vancouver staff generally support the proposed concept and have provided additional commentary in their letter attached to the DA Architect & Planners report.

In response to queries, it was confirmed that:

- The project is not yet at the design stage and the exterior shown in the presentation is not the final design;
- The project estimates for all three Project Definition Reports were done by the same surveyor who also did the Laura Secord Elementary estimating;
- District heating is not being considered for this project but VBE will be exploring geothermal exchange at Gordon during the next phase of the project; and
- Emphasis will be made to recycle all material generated by the demolition wherever possible.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT the Vancouver Board of Education confirm General Gordon Elementary Renewal Concept 4b as the preferred development option and authorize staff to complete a Project Definition Report and request Ministry of Education finalize a Capital Funding Agreement.

**19. Ministry \$8M Playground Funding**

D. McClary, Manager of Maintenance & Construction, reported that the Ministry recently announced \$8 million funding for 44 new playgrounds and playground updates. There are 29 district schools which may qualify for upgrading or replacement funding of existing playground structures in the remaining Priority 2 funding.

In response to a query it was confirmed that staff are waiting for further information from the Ministry regarding the process to apply for funding; and that staff will confirm why Laura Secord Elementary was not included in the list of schools potentially eligible for Ministry funding.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT the Board approach the province for priority funding for playgrounds that have been or will be closed for safety reasons.

Trustees questioned why Secord Elementary had not been included in the attachment provided regarding playground replacement.

**20. New Business**

## a) Kitsilano Secondary School

Trustees agreed that the Board formally request a response from the Ministry on the status of the Kitsilano Secondary School Renewal project.

This item was received for information.

**21. Date and Time of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of this Committee is scheduled for Tuesday, 2011 November 01 at 1730 hours.

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Allan Wong, Chairperson

Committee II Members Present:

Carol Gibson, Ken Clement

Trustees Present:

Patti Bacchus, Allen Blakey, Mike Lombardi,  
Jane Bouey, Ken Denike

Senior Management Present:

Steve Cardwell, Jordan Tinney,  
Rick Krowchuk, Jim Meschino

Association Representatives Present:

Alex MacInnes, VASSA  
Bruce Murton, VEPVPA  
Colin Redfern, DPAC

October 14, 2011

Honourable George Abbott  
Minister of Education  
PO Box 9045, STN PROV GOVT  
Victoria, BC  
V8W 9E2

Dear Minister Abbott,

**Re: Kitsilano Secondary Project Agreement Approval**

In October, 2010, the Vancouver School Board submitted a Project Definition Report (PDR) for Kitsilano Secondary School Seismic Upgrade to the Ministry of Education. To date we have not received any official reply. We would appreciate any information you may be able to provide us regarding possible Project Agreement (PA) approval so that the Vancouver School Board may proceed with necessary seismic improvements to the school.

There were indications in June and September of this year that there was to have been a Ministry announcement scheduled to occur at Kitsilano Secondary school. However, on both instances the dates passed without an announcement. In addition, we have had several meetings with Ministry staff and Partnerships BC regarding the proposed procurement methods for the project.

The school community is anxious to see the start of construction of a new school in the near future. Any news in this regard would be appreciated.

Sincerely,

Patti Bacchus  
Chairperson

c: VBE Trustees  
Steve Cardwell, Superintendent  
Rick Krowchuk, Secretary-Treasurer