

St. Joseph's-Alexander McKay Elementary

School Steering Team (SST) Meeting

Meeting Minutes #3

Date: October 6 2021

Time: 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm

Location: Microsoft Teams Meeting

Attendees:

Name	Organization
Peter Wicha	Facilitator, HRCE
Amy Hunt	Acting Principal, St. Joseph's-Alexander McKay Elementary
John Moshett	School Guidance Counsellor,
Suzy Hansen	Parent & SAC Member, St. Joseph's-Alexander McKay Elementary
Creighton Barrett	Parent & SAC Member, St. Joseph's-Alexander McKay Elementary
Matt Neville	Parent, Urban Planner & SAC Member, St. Joseph's-Alexander McKay Elementary
Vince Vandenbrink	Parent & Architect
Peter Howitt	Regional Director, EECD
Darrell MacDonald	Director of Education Facilities Project Services, DPW
Pedro Martinez	Design Team Leader, DPW
Robyn Parsons	Project Manager, DPW
Tulk Roger	Project Manager, Stantec
Leif Fuchs	Lead Designer/CA, Stantec
Kavita Khanna	Director Operations, HRCE
Geoff Olsson	Coordinator Operations, HRCE
Maryann Mason	Manager Capital, HRCE
Cheyenne Tolliver	Vice Principal
Margaret Firlotte	Early Literacy Support / Reading Recovery, St. Joseph's-Alexander McKay Elementary
Katie Mott	Classroom Teacher, St. Joseph's-Alexander McKay Elementary

Regrets:

Name	Organization
Paul Lenarczyk	Parent, Educator & SAC Member, St. Joseph's-Alexander McKay Elementary
Joe MacEachern	Director of Finance, EECD

Kerry Gosse	Stantec
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Call to Order: Peter Wicha

Welcome back from Peter Wicha. Round table of welcomes to new guests such as the Director of Operations for the HRCE Kavita Khanna and the Coordinator of Operations for HRCE, Geoff Olsson, the VP of SJAM Cheyenne Tolliver and others.

Update on Demolition

Demolition Tender awarded to Starfish on Oct 5. Start up meeting is October 7. Contractor will be on site early November to begin the abatement and demolition will follow. SP date for demolition is February 2022. The abatement duration is unknown but will follow. Good information to keep the neighbours updated.

Security from the HRCE has remained on site until into the evenings. There was also a request about driving rodents into neighbouring properties. The Tender for the demolition included a requirement for rodent control.

KK. What is the impact to the overall schedule given the delay on the issuance of the demolition tender.

RP. DPW is striving to meet the established SP date.

KK. Do you develop the schedule or was it developed by the Consultant and is the schedule updated as work progresses.

RP. Yes the schedule is updated.

Schematic Design Update - Leif Fuchs

Leif reviewed Space Program Summary, New School Site Planning and New School Building. A plan and 3D views were shared.

Space Program Summary

A central design theme was story telling. There are design features in the building which express story telling through the central canvas 'wall' and gathering areas.

The classroom total is 19 which is 2 more than the original program. To provide additional classrooms future consideration may be for a fourth floor to be added.

In addition to the classrooms, there are the Learning Center, Music Room, Visual Arts and more.

LEED. Slated to meet LEED Silver Certification and at this time are well within the range of the required points. Stantec has worked hard to make this building energy efficient and the LEED Scorecard Summary was provided. The targets include aspects *such as* location and transportation, sustainable sites, water efficiency, energy and atmosphere, materials and resources, indoor environmental quality, innovation and regional priority.

PH. This will be a durable building in addition to the LEED qualities. For further information there are extensive resources on line for LEED.

LF. Leif advised that they will describe in a narrative form the basic elements of LEED as it applies to this building.

Site Planning

A colour coded site plan was presented that illustrated the various sections of the site.

The path of the sun across the site during the day was illustrated. The play area was kept open and preserved. The main entrance is from Russell Street and there is a dedicated main entrance that leads to the Pre Primary. There is a secondary entrance on Kaye street that leads to the gymnasium. There is a teachers entrance on the West side of the building near the parking lot. With the green spaces strategically situated in the sunny areas, the Staff parking is immediately adjacent to the existing Condo tower that is in shade most of the day. There is green space along with the play space areas, to be found along the sidewalks and along Kaye Street. There is a mix of hardscape play areas and play structures with safety surfaces below them. There are some trees that are strategically positioned for shade during high sunlight hours. The enlargement of the Site Plan illustrates that it is a sloped site with the lowest at the bottom East side. The lower Playground is to the East, center area is sloped with Upper Playground to the West. There is a fenced in play area near the Pre-Primary. There is paved area with markings and part of the slope is occupied by a natural playground. A nominal amount of green space was able to be located by the main entrance as well.

There is a new play structure by the upper playground. There is also a basketball area at the hardscape play area to the West.

AH. Many inquiries about the play structure. Do all of the existing play structures not meet certification? What age group will the play structures address?

LF. Yes that is correct. New multi aged play structures will be installed. The Pre Primary do not have a dedicated play structure. Given their age, for them it is an open space where they can run around freely and explore. The Pre-primary is fenced in within it's own dedicated area for safety and control.

AH. Asks because the smaller children are not allowed to use the 5 to 6 year old play structures. This comes up frequently. Q. 2. Basketball court, where is this now located?

LF. Leif identified the location of the 3 free standing basketball hoops, paved area and painted keys.

CB. What is the size of the basketball area to the existing bb area?

LF. The existing basketball court has 4 hoops. The new area has 3 hoops but the new area is identical to the existing.

CT. Did the size of the school size change?

LF. Yes. It is a much larger school but the site did not get any larger.

DM. In your existing building, it was not necessarily the most efficient plan for example, the ramped area off the entrance. The new plan is not only much larger but is much more efficient.

LF. The play areas will be developed very similarly to the old play areas but the natural playground is a new feature. The existing slope is ideal for a natural play area. A slide could be built into the slope or stepping logs/stones. Images of how this might look were shared.

Site Plan Modelling Images for a sense of space/size and scale

The view from Russell street was shown to illustrate the play area in front of Primary and Pre-primary closer to the sidewalk.

The center portion of the playground is where the main pathway to the main entrance is situated. There is a Playground on either side of this with the Lower playground situated to the East.

An image of the basketball hoop area was shown to provide a sense of scale.

AH. This is exciting. The 3D images are very helpful and help to describe design intent.

LF. Next Slides

Building Floor Plan overview

Main or Middle Level

The Main entrance is located here from Russell street. Main circulation axis leading to parking. A colour coded plan was shown with Blue being the learning spaces, yellow common areas and rose coloured is administration. The Gymnasium, change rooms, Administration, Learning Center, Cafeteria and the Classrooms are on this level in addition to other spaces.

Lower Level (Level 1) overview plan shown

Top Level (Level 3) overview plan shown

Future Upper Level 4 potential future expansion for more classrooms and common space.

AH. If the 4th level was added, could students remain in the building.

DM. There should be a way to do this. Consider the second level currently being added to the Emergency Dept at the Dartmouth Hospital for example.

PH. The Summer could be used to construct steel for example so that does present opportunities.

Daylight Analysis

In a colour coded plan, red, deep orange, orange and yellow indicate the level of daylight penetration to the floorplate. The Level 2 Cafeteria, Learning Center, Main entrance and Classroom receive significant daylight.

The Upper level is very well penetrated by daylight throughout the space. The daylight quality is important for LEED and for the wellbeing of the occupants.

Daylight and Views

Views assist learners to maintain the connection to the outdoors to orient themselves, consider time of day etc., as a fundamental health aspect. Daylight and views analysis was completed for all 3 levels. The main floor and top floor have very good window and view areas. This analysis is updated throughout the design.

Level 2 Entrance, Lobby, Admin Area

Level 2 includes the main entrance with main reception, VP, Principal, Sick Room, Staff WR and Staff Room to the immediate East of the entrance. Across the hall is Resource, 3 Itinerant Offices, School Custodial and the Assistive care WR has access from the hallway and the learning center. There are Universal (gender neutral) washrooms along the West wall across from the Gym. There is a Seminar room flanking the main entrance to the East.

The Kitchen and Servery is on the other side of the Seminar room adjacent to the Cafeteria which is directly across from the Gymnasium. There is a Classroom on the far East beside the Cafeteria.

At the East end of the gym, there is a Music Room with storage.

GO. The Gymnasium, what is the square footage?

LF. The Gym is the standard size for an Elementary school and much larger than the existing school.

GO. Custodial Room. Is there a Custodial office that is on another floor? We will need one.

AH. In terms of Admin offices and support spaces. We spread ourselves out to be present and amongst where the students are...are there spaces that could be multi use or used for that purpose on the other floors? We would like to decentralize student support if possible.

LF. Yes, on Level 3 we have an office undesignated. There is also a staff/teachers area there as well. There is no office like that on the lower level.

LF. As discussed earlier, the cafeteria can be multi useful. Image was shared of what might take place in the cafeteria. The furniture could be flexible in its use, with wall space to use for display or learning and perhaps opportunities for live plants or outdoor plants as a learning option.

LF. The lowest level has a main corridor down the middle with elevators located at the West end of the hall. You can also use the open stairs to descend from level above.

There are 2 Pre-primary and 3 Primary Classrooms on this level. There is a door to connect the 2 Pre-primary classes together. The Pre-primary spaces have direct access to the exterior. They utilize the South exits to the lower play area which is fenced for safety.

AH. As long as the upper floors have offices to be used flexibly to decentralize student support.

GO. In the boiler and mechanical space is there an exterior door for access?

LF. Yes, there is access to the outside via a Vestibule.

GO. Consideration for equipment change outs. A clear easy path through would be nice to see if changing out hot water tanks etc. Appreciate it is a sloped site but general recommendation, if achievable. As long as the doors are wide enough that is appreciated.

LF. There was a lot of discussion on this with Mechanical Engineer. There could be a ramp but when larger equipment moves are necessary a temporary ramp could be used. There is a clear path. Designers are looking closer at air handling units to confirm how large an opening is required for equipment change out.

RT. The Boiler Room side of the building is also a sub grade area so exiting was a challenge.

KK. Would we ever replace the boilers, to plan for a design in place where the size might increase if equipment got larger and could move in and out of the boiler room.

GO. Boiler room is sized for the expansion down the road.

KK. Depending on the size of the boiler, in and out of the building if it ever needs to be replaced. Will the doors be wide enough.

LF. Doors will be sized accordingly but they are double checking that the size of the air handlers will fit out the doors.

LF. The equipment comes out at the East side of the building. The double doors are sized for the big equipment replacement. There is a minimum of 10' at the East exit to allow space to maneuver.

AH. The existing door on the East side of the existing school was never used. Her priority is designing a school to meet the needs of the students. Neighbours in the condos have reached out to the MLA's, there is sensitivity from them regarding the new design.

LF. Top Floor (Level 3). Circulation space runs on the West to East access and around the central stair and collaboration area.

Within the large East wing to the North of the Atrium is a large collaboration area. On the South side there is a Library and Discovery/Visual Arts center. An Extended classroom area is positioned in the enlarged corridor in the East wing.

There are 6 Classrooms to the West and another 7 Classrooms to the East for a total of 13 on this level.

The Itinerant office on this level is positioned on the South wall between the Library and the suite of classrooms on the East end.

The Library will have low millwork shelving to hold books, that is easily positioned throughout the area. There is an Atrium space open to below that is located in the center of the East wing. A full glazed railing and the main open stair is just beyond this which connects the three levels. The stair is sized as an experience rather than simply moving from one level to the next. The story telling wall is a constant along the North side of the stair on all levels.

The Collaborative Areas and Commons

Images of examples of these were shared. Accessible spaces using flexible furniture, writing surfaces, views and openness with space for learning and teaching etc. This is a space where students can share information, share their work and be proud of their accomplishments. Informal gathering, empathy and helping or close discussion are all possible within these spaces.

An example was provided depicting a discovery classroom with flexible furniture (tables shaped to be used individually or shaped into hexagon or circles), millwork shelving on the wall with boxes to store their work. Sink areas are provided for easy clean up or to support learning.

Storytelling Canvas and Gathering Spots

The large, long, flat wall surface connects the levels of the school both vertically and horizontally. The wall can be used to tell stories and could be a permanent home for art or murals? Perhaps projections of videos etc. This connects the stairs, library, cafeteria, gym, all the important areas. A spot for community gathering, listening, sharing. There are Story Spots on the Main Level by the Cafeteria and one on the Upper Level.

Shared an image of the Storytelling wall which illustrates how it connects through all the floors as a unifying element. Referred to as a 'canvas' because it can be used over time to tell a story. The stairs shoulder the wall as do the story telling spots. The story telling areas function almost as a 'birds nest' idea in shape and form.

New School Interior 3D views

From the bottom of the Atrium looking up. With Pre Primary below, Story telling nest in the distance and a bridge between the neighbourhood collaborative areas.

Second image is standing in the Cafeteria. From here, you can look upward to view the bridge and upper Story telling area in the distance.

AH. Emphasis placed on the story telling concept is a beautiful and unique to SJAM piece. Very excited about what we are seeing. Enrollment facts – quite an influx of registration this year gone up to 353. Interesting is that when the numbers are broken down, 10 of the 17 classes are Pre primary to Grade 2. That is 200 in that age group which underscores the rapid growth of this area. Now would be an opportunity to add the 4th floor instead of waiting.

KM. The plans look phenomenal, echo the concerns about enrollment.

CB. Echo's the comments on the great plans. Circle back to the 4th floor and the likelihood that space will be needed. Whether in a few years or 10 remains to be seen. It is very disruptive to relocate a school but the possibility of doing that twice within a relatively short period of time warrants consideration to add it now. A note about the projections and think about new developments. It is not only growing due to new construction but it is due to families moving into the area. What has happened with regard to the budget? Is it impossible to consider the fourth floor?

DM. DPW was ensuring that the estimates were aligning with the building design and they are now there.

AH. A lot of daily questions on the Demo timeline. Some people want to do a tour and some are just interested in timelines. What is the status on the items to incorporate into the new building such as the library doors or the exterior engraving to incorporate into the new building.

LF. Tender asked for door panels and engraving to be retained. Leif 100% intends to incorporate into the new design and he will collaborate on that as decisions on where to locate it are made.

DM. Have you taken a look at the stained glass panels that were incorporated into Le Marchant from the old building. Amy Hunt could be included in the options and/or the SST group.

LF. One idea is glass blocks that could contain momento's.

AH. It is an alternative time capsule idea that she likes. What is the Demo timeline

KK. What is the milestone we are at. When do you anticipate 99%.

RT. Pushing toward 66% in the Middle of November.

RT. 99% is early Feb. IFT mid to end of March.

KK. Are the timelines above posing a threat to the completion date.

RT. Demo. There was early discussion. Demo is awarded. Kick off meeting Oct 7. SP Feb 2022. Demo finishes in February. Contractor presence on site by October 18.

GO. On each floor is there a Janitors closet?

LF. Yes there is a closet on every floor. Much larger one near the elevator on the lowest level.

Presentation ended.

Peter Wicha. Took a round table for questions. Please think about things and send questions through for written responses. The SST is an advisory body to the process. How many meetings will unfold moving forward remains to be determined. The input from Amy and others emphasized the capacity of the new school and the potential to complete the fourth level now.

Thank you to Leif and Stantec for the amazing changes and process that has occurred. Thank you to everyone for your input and questions. Once things are processed we will be back with another meeting to be scheduled soon.

Do we want to set a time for the next meeting or contemplate this before sending it out. Please avoid Wednesday evenings as Amy Hunt teaches.

DM. DPW will have a discussion with Leif (Stantec) on when might be a strategic time to schedule the next meeting. Roger Tulk feels it would be helpful to include furnishings in the next presentation to enliven and illustrate the collaborative spaces.

Peter Wicha adjourned the meeting. Next Meeting - TBD

Minutes prepared by: M. Mason

Minutes approved by: EECD, DPW and HRCE. Minutes will be posted on the HRCE web site.

End of SJAM SST #3 Minutes