



Memorandum

vancouver school board



DATE: 2010 January 08

ITEM 3

TO: Committee II – Planning & Facilities

FROM: NCLD Steering Committee

RE: General Gordon Elementary NCLD Space Program Report

BACKGROUND

The Neighbourhood Centre for Learning and Development (NCLD) consultation process was announced by the Ministry of Education in September 2008 for Queen Mary Elementary, General Gordon Elementary and Lord Strathcona Elementary. NCLD programming areas are intended to be supplemental to core school programming needs and create opportunities for greater community access when school programs do not require the facilities.

The aim is to enhance the delivery of kindergarten to grade-seven instruction by providing additional spaces that support student music, art, performance and Late French Immersion programs. The enhanced school will also support the delivery of community services such as early learning programs, out-of-school child-care programs, meeting rooms for non-profit organizations, literacy programs, family resource and immigration services, and multi-purpose space for community arts and sports programs.

An NCLD Steering Committee, co-chaired by the Assistant Deputy Minister and the Superintendent was established in December 2008. The Steering Committee includes ministry and district staff and was entrusted with overseeing and providing direction to the consulting team.

In January 2009, Brook and Associates Inc. were contracted to develop the work plan and manage the NCLD consultation process. In addition to administering various phases of the consultation process, the final deliverable was to develop a draft conceptual program and operational model for each school site that would be suitable for establishing terms of reference for future architectural project definition and optimal design solution studies.

Brook and Associates have prepared a summary report titled General Gordon NCLD Space Program Report that outlines a proposed conceptual program and provides recommendations for the Gordon Elementary NCLD study (Attachment A). The delivery of this report signifies the end of the consultation process undertaken by Brook and Associates for this school site.

CONSULTATION PROCESS

The Gordon Elementary Representative Team (RT) was established that included parent, community resident, school staff and school administrative representatives. The RT was instrumental in providing direct feedback and direction in coordinating each step of the consultation process.

A key step in the process involved a day long visioning workshop held in March 2009 with a larger group of student, parent, school staff and interested partner agency participants. The outcomes of this event were compiled in a report on the school community vision and served as the basis for developing a proposed conceptual area program for the Gordon Elementary NCLD school facility. The Gordon RT provided input into the preparation of this report.

Over the summer period, The Colborne Architectural Group assessed the visioning outcomes and, working with Brook and Associates, developed conceptual area allocations for each NCLD school function. This base information was used in a preliminary analysis of the overall building footprint in relation to existing site conditions and seismic mitigation concepts involving full upgrade of existing buildings, partial replacement / partial upgrade and full replacement of existing buildings.

Overall, the proposed program required to deliver the array of core school and community based programming envisioned for Gordon Elementary represents a combined area allocation of 4,263 m² (Core School 3,600 m² + 663 m² NCLD area top-up). The NCLD area allocation represents a top-up of approximately 18% above Ministry standards for school design.

This conceptual design work formed a key component of the material that was presented at a public open house held at Gordon Elementary on November 19th, 2009. Invitations to surrounding households were mailed out. The open house display boards were also posted on the VSB website. Details of the proposed space program are described in the Brook report.

Brook and Associates compiled and assessed the feedback received from the open house consultation process, as documented in Attachment A.

It should be noted that parent and community resident participants on the Gordon RT were concerned about some of the recommendations contained in the Brook report regarding the proposed conceptual building area required to deliver the proposed core school and NCLD programming and issues related to future processes for determining the design solution related to building heritage value and sustainability issues.

At the Gordon RT meetings, it was explained that the proposed NCLD conceptual building area is comparable to other projects approved by the Ministry. In addition, the issues of heritage retention and sustainability would be addressed in the next stage of the process when the proposed space program is utilized as a “template” to investigate seismic mitigation options (full upgrade, partial replacement / partial upgrade, full replacement).

The NCLD Steering Committee has considered the feedback from the Gordon RT and the open house consultation process. The Steering Committee is confident that the proposed conceptual area allocation would deliver an excellent school facility (whatever design solution is ultimately determined) with facilities that meet or exceed elementary school projects that are currently in design or construction within the district. The NCLD Steering Committee is supportive of the recommendations provided by Brook and Associates in the General Gordon NCLD Space Program Report and believes that this project should advance to the next phase of planning - Project Definition of an Optimal Design Solution.

In consideration of the concerns expressed by Gordon RT parent and community resident participants, the NCLD Steering Committee also requested that the Committee II meeting be rescheduled so that the Brook report could be posted on the VSB website on January 8th and provide ample time for the school community to review the report prior to Committee II on January 19th, 2010.

NEXT STEPS

The proposed conceptual space program, and the feedback generated through the consultation process, would be utilized by a design team as the “template” to investigate seismic mitigation options (full upgrade, partial replacement / partial upgrade, full replacement). It should also be noted that the optimal design solution will include consideration of 21st century educational school design principles, seismic safety, comprehensive building audit / life cycle analysis, operational costs, heritage and sustainability. Sustainability assessment criteria will include assessment of construction material waste handling, embodied energy in materials, long term energy consumption and green house gas emissions.

If the proposed conceptual space program is endorsed, it would form a key component in issuing a request for architectural design services proposal call. Following the selection of a prime consultant, work would begin on the project definition and assessment process leading to the identification of an optimal design solution. The general intent is to proceed with this work in winter / spring 2010 so that the school district would be in a position to request finalization of a capital project agreement with the Ministry of Education by June 2010.

There will be future opportunities for school and community input during the next phase of assessment, in accordance with the integrated design and consultative process adopted by the Board of Education in March 2009. It should also be noted that the general project timeline outlined in this report is subject to revision and would be confirmed when a prime consultant is selected for this project.

Brook and Associates administered similar NCLD consultation processes for Queen Mary Elementary and Lord Strathcona Elementary. The Queen Mary Elementary NCLD conceptual space program was presented to Committee II on December 8th 2009 and received Board approval. The Lord Strathcona NCLD report is being presented to Committee II on January 19th, 2010.

RECOMMENDATION

The delivery of General Gordon NCLD Space Program Report signifies the end of the consultation process undertaken by Brook and Associates for this school site. The NCLD Steering Committee is recommending endorsement of the proposed conceptual program and recommendations as outlined in the report.

As referenced, the report describes a proposed conceptual program with a combined area allocation of 4,263 m². The conceptual program would form a key component in issuing a request for architectural design services proposal call early in 2010 and permit the General Gordon NCLD seismic mitigation project to advance to the next phase of planning - project definition of an optimal design solution.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT that the Board of Trustees endorse the proposed conceptual program and recommendations presented in the General Gordon NCLD Space Program Report prepared by Brook and Associates and authorize staff to proceed to project definition of an optimal design solution.

Attachment