

Kitsilano Parent Advisory Council

Kitsilano School Renewal Committee

c/o Kitsilano Secondary School
2550 West Tenth Avenue
Vancouver, B.C.
Canada V6K 2J6

Chair:

James Burton

Members:

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Diane Montgomery
Derek von Essen
Cathy Marr

Contact us:

E-mail: kitspac@hotmail.com

<http://kitsilano.vsb.bc.ca/Parents/>

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Kitsilano Secondary School
2550 West 10th Avenue
Vancouver, B.C.
V6K 2J6

4 April 2008

The Honourable Shirley Bond
Minister of Education and Deputy Premier
PO Box 9045, Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, B.C.
V8W 9E2

Dear Minister Bond:

Re: Kitsilano Secondary School and the Seismic Mitigation Program

The Kitsilano Secondary School PAC School Renewal Committee endorses the Vancouver School Board Trustees' letter of 20 February 2008 to your ministry regarding the due-diligence process for the Ministry of Education's Seismic Mitigation Program. The letter addresses three main areas of concern: firstly, space standards and the comparative cost method used to determine replacement costs versus upgrade costs; secondly, facility area standards as they relate to community uses; and thirdly, heritage value as documented in the City of Vancouver Heritage Registry and the Commonwealth Report on the City of Vancouver Schools.

We applaud the work of all the parent and citizen groups who are advocating for making educational infrastructure a priority. Friends of Charles Dickens, the General Gordon Elementary community, and Families for School Seismic Safety have all asked the government to take an integrated approach to improving educational infrastructure.

We share the belief of these parent and citizen groups that the determination of options for renewed schools must be about genuine building excellence. Our youth deserve the right environment for learning to flourish. We advocate a process that reflects the best practices in preservation, retention, and renewal of our historic resource. Design and architecture should not be an afterthought to educational planning, but rather an integral component of any building renovation or replacement. Developing disaster-resilient and sustainable communities that make use of their heritage assets should be the focus of government policy.

Kitsilano Secondary School is an important centre of education at the secondary and adult levels, as well as a beloved and valued community resource. In addition to the abovementioned issues, the Kitsilano School Renewal Committee, a subcommittee of the Kitsilano PAC, has concerns particular to our site:

- the absence of any value assigned to the existing school building as a community and historic resource
- a lack of concern for the continuation of existing youth and adult education programs
- current inadequacy of space allocations to house what exists now and/or what may be required in the future

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- the lack of funding for Green technologies to ensure an environmentally responsive and responsible building, be it renovated or new.

Funding for LEED Gold schools should be a part of the Provincial funding formula, not carried as a contingency.

Kitsilano Secondary School is a source of pride for the entire neighbourhood; it is a repository for our rich past, for the energy and the hope of the present, and the challenge and optimism of the future. As we investigate 'alternatives', our building can invigorate a movement toward sustainability, and embrace our shared histories and expectations. Through the use of an open, consultative process, the renewal of this most valuable of community resources will be a benefit to the long-term future of our neighborhood, city, and province.

Sincerely,

per
Kitsilano Renewal Committee, chair J. Burton
Kitsilano Parent Advisory Council

cc:
Gordon Campbell, MLA, Vancouver-Point Grey
Clarence Hansen, Chair, Vancouver School Board