



Vancouver School Board

School District No. 39 (Vancouver)

PLANNING & FACILITIES

1580 West Broadway

Vancouver, B.C. V6J 5K8

Telephone: 604-713-5254

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February 21, 2008

Ingrid Sulston, PAC Chair
Z Smith, Seismic Sub-Committee Chair
c/o Gordon Elementary

Dear Ms. Sulston and Mr. Smith,

Re: General Gordon Elementary Seismic Upgrade

Further to the Committee II meeting held on February 5th, 2008, we attach the Trustees' letter to the Ministry of Education regarding issues raised by your delegation and during subsequent discussions. Any further developments with respect to Gordon Elementary are now pending subject to a Ministry response.

As per the meeting minutes and discussion which followed your presentation, we would appreciate receiving a copy of the corresponding letter from the delegation to the Ministry once it has been sent.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Mark Dale'.

Mark Dale, MAIBC
Assistant Secretary-Treasurer

Enclosure

cc Clarence Hansen, Board Chairperson
Dan Marriott, Associate Superintendent
Brenda Ng, Secretary-Treasurer
Margaret Davidson, Principal, Gordon Elementary
Alex Grant, Principal, Kitsilano Secondary



Vancouver Board of Education

School District No. 39

BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES

1580 West Broadway

Vancouver, B.C. V6J 5K8

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2008 February 20

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

Dear Minister Bond:

I am writing to request consideration to issues raised by the Parent Advisory Council for the General Gordon Elementary School. The issues relate to the proposed replacement of this facility as recommended during the due-diligence review within the project's seismic remediation process.

Many of the issues raised in this case are also relevant to other proposed and current projects within the district. The Board recognizes the Ministry's policy on such issues but is asking herein for clarification and consideration for change to the current facility area and funding standards.

The first of these is in respect to the space standards and the comparative method used by the Ministry to determine replacement costs versus upgrade costs. It is felt that because many of the schools in the Vancouver District were designed under different guidelines in which larger amenities were allowed, that such a school area should be considered when the cost of a replacement facility is determined. These areas include covered play areas, cloak rooms, storage areas, wide corridors and multi-purpose space. Conversely, it is also believed that the life-cycle renewal costs of the facility upgrade should be taken into account during this same comparative study and if the upgrade cost is deemed as the least expensive alternative then those same life cycle renewal costs should be funded as part of the seismic upgrade.

Further clarification is also requested regarding facility area standards in light of the Ministry's policy with respect to community use. Many of the schools in Vancouver utilize the space they have in the existing school to accommodate before and after school care. The removal of this space due to a reduced replacement size will not allow us to maintain the existing service within the school. In this respect, we also request clarification regarding the issue of capacity calculations in reference to the policy to provide for such community services and the recent information provided in the throne speech in consideration of full school-day Kindergarten for the three to five year olds.

Board of School Trustees:

.../2

Clarence Hansen - Chairperson

Carol Gibson - Vice-Chairperson

Allen Blakely Ken Denike Eleanor Gregory

Sharon Gregson Don Lee Allan Wong

Shirley M. Wong

Minister Shirley Bond
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In addition to the issues raised above regarding area standards, the Board also requests consideration to an increased unit rate for construction to address the sustainability agenda of the provincial government. The current school construction rates do not currently recognize the mandated requirement to achieve LEED gold. We believe an appropriate adjustment needs to be made in the base rate and not as a contingency determined after the final design of the project is complete.

Finally, I would like to bring to your attention the issue of the City of Vancouver Heritage Registry and Commission. Many of the existing facilities in the School Board inventory are listed in the registry and have been evaluated as having considerable heritage significance. Consequently, many interest groups would rather the buildings be retained rather than replaced. The current seismic mediation program does not recognize the heritage aspects of buildings when comparing the costs to replace or upgrade. Consequently, the contradictory results of a due-diligence review may determine the most cost effective approach is to demolish the existing heritage building. We ask that consideration be given to fund the additional costs to retain buildings of significant historical value rather than to replace them. Staff is currently working with the City and Commission to establish acceptable standards of retention.

This item is on the Board Standing Committee agenda for March 4th, 2008 and it would be useful to us to receive your response prior to that time.

Yours truly,



Mr. Clarence Hansen
Chairperson
On Behalf of the Board of Education of
School District No. 39 (Vancouver)