

Blessed Sacrament Catholic School
Construction Renovation Working Committee Meeting
Tuesday, October 18, 2011

MINUTES

ATTENDEES:

School Representatives:

Vernon Sweeney (Principal)
Robert Juarez (Teacher)
Allison Dunn (Teacher)

School Board Representatives:

Wilfred Wong (Facilities Services)

Parent Representatives:

Lynn Lancefield (CSAC Executive)
Theresa Stephen (CSAC Executive)
Lisa Carroll (CSAC Executive)
Tara O'Hagan (CSAC Executive)
Nadia Vattovaz (CSAC Executive)
Pina Sorbara
Carmela Caramico
Fiona Spizzirri
Margaret Correia
Tina Drysdale
Julie Avesnik
Cidalia Gardiner
Cathy Kassenaar
Linda Wren
Lisa Schrenk Forrestell

Meeting Objective

Collaboratively determine the construction plan, and associated plan of action, that best addresses the learning needs of our students and meets budget and renovation project criteria.

Options:

- 1) Delay all construction until July 2012.
 - Move the Grade 5/6 English class to Room 109, and the Grade 5 French class to Room 110, as soon as possible.
 - The Grade 7 French class remains in the library for the duration of the school year.

- 2) Start the renovation of Room 102 as soon as possible.

-Move the Grade 5/6 English class to Room 109, and the Grade 5 French class to Room 110 as soon as possible. Grade 5/6 and Grade 5 would be in the lower floor classes during the renovation.

- The Grade 7 French class remains in the library until the renovation to Room 102 is complete.

3) Start the renovation of Room 102 as soon as possible.

-Move the Grade 5/6 English, Grade 5 French, and Grade 7 French classes to the lower floor when the renovation to Room 102 is complete.

Welcome, Opening Prayer and Introductions

Principal Vernon Sweeney

Mr. Sweeney began by outlining the plan agreed to at the September 19th Construction Committee meeting, noting that conversion of the staff room was a key interdependency.

Unfortunately, due to lack of mechanical ventilation system, this option has now been removed which leaves the school one classroom shy.

Mr. Sweeney then continued with a visual tour of the lower floor Room(s) 102, 109 and 110. The tour was designed to give attendees—many of whom had never been inside the aforementioned classrooms—an opportunity to better appreciate the scope of the work up for discussion.

From this tour, attendees learned several key facts:

- The small renovation project proposed for Room 102 mainly involves the removal of a single, non-load bearing wall that divides the existing classroom space from a large storage closet. Annexing this large, walk-in closet will convert the room to a full size space that could accommodate up to 26 students.
- Room 102 is located in the northwest corner of the building. It is essentially at the opposite end of the floor relative to rooms 109 and 110.
- The room currently has one complete wall lined with windows. Annexing the closet space will result in two additional windows on the northern wall (on either side of where the blackboard will reside).

A tour of Room 110 (better known as the music room) revealed that a certain amount of prep work needs to be undertaken before students could move in there. In particular:

- Some ceiling tiles would need to be fixed
- Parts of the wall would require some patching (to address chipped paint)
- The entire room could use a coat of paint—preferably in a neutral color such as white

As the Facilities representative, Mr. Wong was hesitant to offer a timeframe for the completion of the work in Room 110 without having the opportunity to assess and prioritize the request relative to the other 900 outstanding work orders currently on his plate. Having said that, Mr. Wong conceded that he would do his best to complete the work as soon as possible—and that it would not entail a prolonged, multi-week effort. Mr. Wong noted that he does not have the budget to fund weekend work, but he could accommodate an evening shift. The group collectively discussed whether students could occupy this room in advance of such work being completed and determined that this was not desirable.

Mr. Sweeney noted that we are very fortunate to be given preferential consideration, in light of all the other outstanding work orders on Mr. Wong's list. Mr. Sweeney also pointed out that by undertaking some of the work now, we would not only regain the use of our library, but improve the chances that the remainder of the construction could be fully completed over the summer.

Ms. Sorbana inquired whether the gym ceiling repair will be part of the contemplated renovation and the timeline for completion. Mr. Sweeney indicated that the gym ceiling repair is part of a separate work order and noted that because scaffolding is required, it will likely take place over Christmas break.

Ms. Kassenaar asked why the gym was closed at the end of last year and whether the sealant was supposed to have been fixed at that juncture. Ms. Stephen suggested that it was closed with the intention of undertaking this work, but that the work was never done. Ms. Lancefield reminded the group that although the dust falling from the ceiling is at best an extreme annoyance, it is not a harmful environmental toxin such as asbestos. Regardless, Ms. Gardiner pointed out that she viewed this as a safety hazard for her child who is presently being taught in the gym. In her opinion, safety concerns dictate that the children in the gym be relocated as soon as possible.

Ms. Avesnik asked whether at least one class could be moved from the gym into Room 109 while the work on Room 110 progresses. Mr. Sweeney acknowledged this as a viable option.

Ms. Caramico asked why Room 109 was presently empty and Mr. Sweeney explained that until the mould in Storage Room 105A was completely abated, he did not feel comfortable moving children into that area. Ms. Caramico asked whether the mould was a recent phenomenon and Mr. Sweeney explained that it was not: a leak discovered early in the school year prompted the testing for mould. Ms. Stephen explained that the mould test and subsequent abatement was a long timeline because it takes approximately two weeks to grow the spores in the lab. Once the mould was abated, the lab then had to re-grow the spores to confirm acceptable air quality—which took another two week period.

Ms. Wren shared the views of the Gr 5 EF parents she polled. The majority preferred Option 1—to delay all construction to the summer, while their second choice was Option 3. Ms. Wren noted that some families would prefer to leave the school if this is not resolved imminently. Parents

also mentioned wanting the gym and library back and expressed concerns over exposure to noise and dust if construction proceeds.

Ms. Sorbana expressed disappointment that a meeting with all parents of displaced students did not take place to facilitate broader dissemination of this insightful information. Mr. Sweeney acknowledged that it is regrettable, but indicated that the timing of such a meeting might have further delayed decision-making.

Ms. Forrestell shared the views of the Gr. 5/6 class (Juarez). They also overwhelmingly preferred to delay the construction. However, their primary concern was to remove kids from the gym immediately.

Ms. Forrestell also represented the Gr. 7 class that currently occupies the library. They are happy in the library setting with two permanent teachers and thus leaned towards Option 1. If construction is deferred, Ms. Forrestell asked to consider a smaller class for the library, such as the Gr. 8 class which only has 18 students. Mr. Sweeney and Ms. Lancefield both voiced objections—noting that this merely brings in more affected students, who in this case are in their final “graduation” year at the school.

Mr. Wong estimated that the smaller renovation project in Room 102 would take approximately 5-7 weeks. He has two shifts: morning (7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.) and evening (3:30 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.) The evening shift consists of three people. He indicated that any work that would result in significant noise (such as during the demolition phase) could all be done in the evening. He also conceded that all work could take place after school hours, if the parent community so desires.

There was overwhelming consensus that having all work undertaken in the evening is preferable, even if it impacts the timeline. Mr. Wong noted that a 3:30 p.m. start does not take into account packing of materials and travelling time. Therefore, actual construction time might start after this; however, Mr. Wong remained optimistic that the work could still be completed in a 5 to 7 week window. Mr. Wong also added the caveat that his team is responsible for Maintenance. Therefore, if a sudden, unexpected emergency (such as a flood) were to arise, his crew would need to be redeployed immediately, which could impact the timeline.

Mr. Wong also explained the heightened level of care that his crew would undertake—Type 3 asbestos containment—despite the fact that **abatement testing has confirmed that there is no asbestos**. Mr. Wong outlined how these types of procedures would significantly reduce potential airborne dust particles. Ms. Vattovaz confirmed that she has personal experience with Type 3 procedures and can testify that the dust levels are dramatically reduced.

Ms. Vattovaz also noted that as a representative of CSAC, she has received feedback from many parents whose children are not in directly affected, displaced classes. The views of these parents—who tend to favor proceeding with construction in order to reclaim use of the library—must also be taken into account.

Ms. Wren and Ms. Forrestell asked whether portables are an option. Mr. Sweeney responded that portables have been eliminated as a possibility in part because they are cost-prohibitive. Representatives from Facilities have also determined that there would be significant accessibility issues with respect to delivering and setting up the portable(s) in our space-constrained play yard.

Ms. Stephen asked whether attendees felt parents' opinions re: pursuing construction might change if they were privy to the detailed information shared tonight. In particular:

- Renovation project in Room 102 is discrete, relatively self-contained and far away from the other lower floor classrooms
- All work would be undertaken in the evenings, when children are not in school
- Abatement testing confirmed no potential environmental hazards
- Type 3 abatement procedures would nevertheless be adopted to minimize dust

Ms. Correia indicated that it would not change her opinion; however, the remaining parents who were initially opposed did change theirs.

Ms. Gardiner suggested we agree to move the displaced classes in the gym, but defer the construction decision in Room 102 until such time that the other parents could take a tour. Ms. Stephen suggested that such an approach would further delay the decision, when the group collectively agreed that most parents would change their mind given this new information. Ms. Vattovaz agreed. Mr. Sweeney offered to conduct an open house for the parents who wished to visually inspect Room 102, after-the-fact.

Ms. Stephen summarized the decision:

Since the information shared this evening has allayed the concerns of the parents in attendance, we should pursue Option 2 with the following stipulations:

Start the renovation of Room 102 as soon as possible. Grade 5/6 and Grade 5 would be in the lower floor classes during the renovation, given the high priority placed on moving them out of the gym. The fact that the renovation of Room 102—which is located at the opposite end of the floor—would take place during the evening hours with Type 3 containment procedures to minimize dust factored strongly into the decision. Mr. Sweeney will offer tours for interested parents not in attendance.

-Move the Grade 5/6 English class to Room 109 upon physical receipt by Mr. Sweeney of the letter confirming no ACM (asbestos containing materials) present in Room 102. The move is also dependent upon Facilities personnel on Mr. Wong's team helping move the

desks, which is a union requirement. *(Note: Mr. Sweeney has received electronic notification of no ACM, but wants the physical hard copy in hand before proceeding.)*

- Move the Grade 5 French class to Room 110 as soon as aforementioned repairs can be completed.

- The Grade 7 French class remains in the library until the renovation to Room 102 is completed, which is targeted for the end of the December at the latest.

- Ensure gym ceiling repair is also on a work order.

Meeting adjourned.