

Ward 16 Council Meeting – November 3, 2011

Meeting Notes

Present (as per Sign-In sheets): Bowmore: Lilian Hanson (P); Bowmore: Ellen Braganca; Bowmore: Kyle Duncan; Duke of Connaught: Katy Dockrill; Earl Haig: Michael Hershoran; Earl Haig: Barb Fine; Earl Haig & PIAC Rep: Kate Wallis; GA Brown & Selwyn: Melanie Locke; George Webster: Mandy Brow; Gledhill: Joel Krentz; Kew Beach: Sarah Nauman (P); Kew Beach: Shannon Morrison; Kew Beach: Emilee Holt; Norway: Miriam Snell; Parkside: Sharon Smith; Secord: Katherine Gray; Victoria Park: Marnie Peacock; Williamson Road: Andrea Hesse; TDSB: Roula Anastasakos (S); TDSB: Anne Kerr (S); TDSB: Beth Butcher (S); TDSB: Richard Christie; TDSB: Catherine Dorton; TDSB: Cathy MacKenzie; TDSB: Sheila Cary-Meagher

(P) Principal; (VP) Vice Principal; (S) Superintendent

Meeting called to order at 7:03 p.m.

1. Welcome: Shannon Morrison, Kew Beach Junior PS – Ward Representative
2. Overview of Host School: Sarah Nauman, Principal Kew Beach Junior PS
 - TDSB Gold Eco Certified School; Kew Beach student video: *Why We are a Gold Eco School* ..
 - Kew Beach Eco Team members lead school recycling programs, actively participate in school energy and waste audits, and promote student ecological awareness
 - each Grade 1-6 class has two student “light monitors”; these students are responsible for assessing the need for classroom lighting and for turning lights out when classroom is vacant
 - all classroom teachers use window curtains to keep warm air in, in Autumn/Fall and hot air out, in Spring/Summer
 - Kew Beach Grade 1-6 teaching staff use EcoWiki to get and give lesson plans and environmental resources to supplement and/or enhance student learning; nearby Ashbridges Bay provides additional opportunities for students to learn even more about local ecosystems, water, erosion, habitats, etc.
 - Pack it In, Pack it Out lunch program requires that students take home all garbage, organic and/or recyclable lunch waste each day
 - a “school of fish”, painted by students and mounted on fences bordering Kew Beach school property, not only reminds students but the school community that all water going down City drains/sewers ends up in streams, rivers and lakes, untreated, where it can harm many different ecosystems
 - Walk & Wheel Wednesday program not only encourages children to be more mindful of the environment, but to be more physically active; all student participants are eligible to win monthly prize donated by local merchant
 - Coffee Café hosted by Kew Beach Parent Council every Wednesday between 8:15 a.m. and 9:15 a.m. in school lobby; parents welcome to enjoy a cup of fair trade tea/coffee, donated by The Remarkable Bean (2242 Queen St. E.), and/or a fresh baked good, donated by Cobs Bread (1975 Queen St. E.); NB* all Coffee Café proceeds have been earmarked for Kew Beach playground improvements
 - Kiss and Ride Program run by Kew Beach Parent Council Monday thru Friday between 8:30 a.m. and 9:00 a.m.; parent volunteers see children safely from parent’s car to school’s main entrance
 - Kew Beach Jr PS school community has partnered with the University of Toronto’s Engineering Program and the Inner City Angels to create an outdoor classroom in the Kew Beach Jr PS courtyard; to date, landscape rocks and reclaimed wooden benches have been installed for seating; new trees have also been planted to provide shade and to prevent soil erosion
3. Special Presentation – TDSB School Greening Programs: Catherine Dorton, Ward 16 Environmental Coordinator

Re TDSB school “greening”:

- TDSB Environmental Advisory Committee: Co-Chairs are Sheila Cary-Meagher and David Percival, Manager – Standards Compliance and Environment

- TDSB Environmental Advisory Committee Work Groups: (1) Energy & Finance; (2) Food & Gardens; (3) Teaching & Learning; (4) Transportation
- since 2000, TDSB has invested more than \$38 million in energy reduction projects that have produced an 18% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions; emission credits were sold through Greening Canada Fund; revenues were reinvested in TDSB Environmental Legacy Reserve Fund; Environmental Legacy Reserve funds will, in turn, be used to support future energy reduction projects

Re Energy & Finance:

- May 2011, TDSB and AMP Solar Limited Partnership announced 450 school roofs to go solar
- Hillcrest Community School (44 Hilton Avenue) was site of TDSB pilot project; see video: *The Solar Inventors* (http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=dNbOAmyUynk#!)
- Hillcrest teacher has revamped Grade 6 science curriculum to include solar instruction; classroom solar science kits, to be launched January 2012, will be available through TDSB science website
- TDSB examining possible interactive learning opportunities for students/school community members of schools equipped with solar panels
- Kew Beach Jr PS installation expected to be completed by January 2012; NB* flocks of Chimney Swifts, identified as a species at risk, have nested in Kew Beach Jr PS chimneys creating a special challenge for solar panel installers
- Kew Beach Community Power Association is hoping to fund the installation of additional solar panels at Kew Beach Jr PS through the sale of community bonds; more info to follow

Re Food & Grounds:

- possible areas of focus: identify and promote nature study areas located on school grounds; increase focus on food production, water/water management, trees/trees interference with solar installations; use/underuse of school greenhouses; curriculum tie-ins
- school ground greening bus tour held June 2011; see www.environmentaladvisorycommittee.wordpress.com for more info; of special note, (1) at Warden Avenue PS, TDSB staff created a natural woodland study area by leaving a section of schoolyard untouched for 6 years; this “natural” woodland is expected to yield 90 good, replant-able trees over a 16 year period; NB* similar opportunities believed to exist at 70 more TDSB schools; (2) at Forest Manor PS, TDSB staff built a French drain that effectively redirects surface and/or groundwater in order to sustain onsite tree orchard
- for more info re Food & Grounds Work Group meetings contact Richard Christie at richard.christie@tdsb.on.ca
- Norway Jr PS recently installed garden boxes alongside rebuilt staircase in schoolyard; hope to use for winter gardening and/or food production; pictures to follow
- questions received:
 - (1) Why doesn't City of Toronto pick up green bins from schools?
 - City has been promising green bin pick up program since 2007; now not expected until September 2012
 - suggestion: Ward 16 strike a committee to meet with Councillor Mary-Margaret McMahon to advance this issue; if you are interested, please contact Catherine at catherine.dorton@tdsb.on.ca
 - (2) What do Ward 16 schools do with their compost?
 - composting on school sites extremely challenging; not a caretaking responsibility; dedicated team of non-staff personnel required to ensure program success
 - many schools have litterless or boomerang lunch programs; students take all garbage/compostables home daily
 - suggestion: Catherine to investigate/share Ward 16 schools lunch initiative successes/failures
- other suggestions:
 - (1) schools promote Meatless Monday meals; benefits – improved personal health, reduced environmental impact; additional sources of info – Environmental Working Group: Meat Eaters Guide (<http://www.ewg.org/meateatersguide/eat-smart/>); Ted Talks (<http://www.ted.com/talks>); FoodShare Toronto; possible tie-in to new TDSB Food & Beverage Policy???
 - (2) regular watering of gardens/garden boxes can be a problem – suggest that students be challenged to design an efficient but inexpensive means for watering garden boxes; NB* City of Toronto uses canvas watering bags in some downtown locations; see Sheila for more info
 - (3) school “garbage bins” be labeled “landfill bins” to help children better understand environmental impact

Re Teaching & Learning:

- area of focus: to develop successful strategies, resources and tools to guide eco literacy in schools

Re Transportation:

- possible areas of focus: TTC incentives for students and staff; installation of bike racks at schools/admin centres; safe bike riding/repair workshops; design/use/cost of school/admin centre parking lots; health benefits of walking/wheeling to school/work; curriculum tie-ins
- TDSB recently purchased 14 green vehicles for use by TDSB trades and security staff (includes 1 plug-in van, 3 hybrid vehicles); data loggers also installed in 5 more vehicles to collect performance info
- TDSB investigating installation of AutoShare plug-ins in school/admin centre parking lots; would generate \$\$ for TDSB
- walking school bus, a group of children walking to school with one or more adults – can be as informal as 2 families taking turns walking their children to school, or as structured as a pre-established “bus” route with meeting points, a timetable and a regularly rotated schedule of trained volunteers; kids say walking to school is healthy, fun and good for the environment; see video: *Stepping it Up*; www.youtube.com/watch?v=r59_rzKuAMA; NB* whole school traffic plans available through Metrolinx; see Catherine for more info
- cycling program – school makes bicycle skills training available to interested students; possible tie-in to annual bicycle rallies held at most TDSB schools; NB* would require installation of bike racks at many school locations
- suggestion: Catherine to investigate/share Ward 16 schools transportation initiative successes/failures (i.e. Kew Beach Walk/Wheel to School Wednesdays Program); perhaps, encourage friendly competition between all Ward 16 schools re sustainable transportation initiatives

4. Environmental Coordinator Report: Catherine Dorton

- One Plant per Classroom initiative (proposed by Ursula Franklin Academy student); scientific studies confirm that plants not only purify the air but create a more healthy environment, increase productivity, improve morale and, reduce absenteeism
- initiative adopted by Sheila/Catherine on behalf of Ward 16; plants recommended by Catherine for classroom use include: Peace Lily, Philodendron, Rubber Plant and Spider Plant; description and care instruction sheets have been prepared for teacher/student use; plant donations are currently being sought (see attached)
- to date, 4 Ward 16 schools have confirmed their participation; NB* teaching staff must be on board

5. Superintendent Report: Roula Anastasakos, Anne Kerr, Beth Butcher

Re student/parent census

- survey/census goals: (1) identify and remove systemic barriers to student success; (2) allocate resources where most needed; (3) develop more effective programs; (4) assess effectiveness of programs and services; and, (5) advocate for funding and resources for students, families and communities
- survey conducted every 5 years; students in Grades 7-12 to complete survey November 21-25, 2011; parents of students in Grades JK-6 to complete survey February 10-28, 2012; survey available in all languages; survey available in hard copy only
- very important that all students and/or students’ families complete this survey; NB* all survey responses confidential
- census results/reports available on TDSB website
- for more info see http://www.tdsb.on.ca/wwwdocuments/programs/student_census/docs/Focus_Group_Consultation_Apr2011_b.pdf

Re French Immersion in Ward 16

- FI feasibility study has been approved; study will examine FI program delivery in Ward 16
- study goals: (1) reduce need/length of wait lists; (2) reduce need/cost of student bussing/transportation
- study expected to identify need for 3 additional FI programs in Ward 16
- Superintendent/Trustee goal: maintain 50:50 balance between FI and English streams in all FI schools

Re Full Day Kindergarten in Ward 16

- Program Area Review process currently underway; this 2 year process includes: 1 year to plan and 1 year to build

- the Program Area Review Team (PART), a working group that engages community representatives and TDSB staff, held a public meeting on November 1, 2011 at Crescent Town ES to discuss possible changes to school programming at Crescent Town ES; for more info, see <http://www.tdsb.on.ca/site/ViewItem.asp?siteid=10118&menuid=36576&pageid=30901>
 - FYI – implementation dates for Full Day Kindergarten (FDK) in Ward 16 as determined by Ontario Ministry of Education:
 - September 2012 – Crescent Town ES; Earl Beatty Jr/Sr PS; Parkside ES; Presteign Heights ES
 - September 2013 – Balmy Beach CC; Earl Haig PS; Gledhill Jr PS; Kew Beach Jr PS; Victoria Park ES
 - September 2014 – Adam Beck Jr PS; Beaches Alternative Jr PS; Bowmore Road Jr/Sr PS; Duke of Connaught Jr/Sr PS; George Webster ES; Kimberley Jr PS; Norway Jr PS; Secord ES; Selwyn ES; William J McCordic PS; Williamson Road Jr PS
6. PIAC Report: Kate Wallis, Ward 16 PIAC Rep
- PIAC Annual Parent Conference – Saturday, November 12, 2011, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. at Earl Haig SS, 100 Princess Avenue, child minding available; please register at www.tdsb.on.ca/parentconference; wonderful opportunity to meet and mingle with parents across the GTA; flyers available in school offices
7. New Business:
- Miriam Snell, Parent at Norway Jr PS shared the following info:
 - Grow TO: Urban Agriculture Speaker Series features local and international urban agriculture experts and discussion about what we can do to increase the amount of food produced in our City.
 - NB* only one session remaining – *Why should we grow? Making the case for urban agriculture*; Tuesday, November 15, 2011, 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m., Ryerson University, Architecture Building, 325 Church Street, “The Pit”; for more info please visit www.livegreentoronto.ca or email teo@toronto.ca

The next Ward 16 Council Meeting will be held at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, December 8th at Williamson Road Junior Public School, 24 Williamson Road. The "theme" for this meeting will be *French Immersion Programming at the TDSB*.

Please forward all questions/concerns raised by your respective school communities on this issue to Cathy at cathy.mackenzie@tdsb.on.ca no later than Thursday, December 1st so that they may be shared with our speakers/special guests in advance of the meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 8:56 p.m.