



## Ward 6 Forum - Update on the York Memorial C.I. rebuilding project

March 21, 2023

### MEETING NOTES

**Meeting host:** Trustee Liban Hassan (Ward 6/York South-Weston).

**Presenters:** Roni Felsen (Superintendent, Learning Network 06); Denise Humphreys (Superintendent, Learning Network 04); Donald Drummond (Principal, York Memorial C.I.); Maia Puccetti (Executive Officer, Facility Services and Planning, TDSB); Prithula Prosun (Manager, Project Development & Community Consultation, TDSB), Tom Schloessin (Design Coordinator, TDSB); Jill Taylor (Principal THA Architects).

**Also in attendance:** Trustee Dan MacLean (Ward 2/Etobicoke Centre); Uton Robinson (Executive Superintendent, TDSB); Andrew Gowdy (System Planning Officer, TDSB), Wilmar Kortleever (Shared Services Liaison, TDSB Trustee Services)

**Attendees (in person: #10; online: #11):** Parents/Guardians/Caregivers; Community Members; School & TDSB Staff.

**PRESENTATION:** Please refer to associated slideshow presentation for this meeting: ["TDSB Ward 6 Forum - 2023-03-21 - YMCI Community Presentation\\_FINAL.pdf"](#).

#### 1. Welcome & Introductions

Trustee Hassan: After the Land Acknowledgement, Trustee Hassan welcomed everybody. In addition to some updates, the main purpose of the meeting is to provide an update on the (re)construction of York Memorial Collegiate Institute. This to address many questions and inquiries and suggestions from the school community and beyond.

#### 2. Opening Remarks & Updates

Superintendent Roni Felsen: Introduced by Trustee Hassan, Superintendent Felsen (Learning Network 06) welcomed Executive Officer Maia Puccetti, his colleague Denise Humphreys (Learning Network 4), Principal Donald Drummond and others.

Superintendent Humphreys: Two Ward 6 updates in line with the facilities theme of the meeting are: (1) approval of reconstruction at Silverthorn Community School, and (2) start of the construction of an [addition at George Syme Community School](#) that was funded by the Ministry of Education.

Principal Drummond: Introduced by Superintendent Felsen, Principal Drummond provided an update on the school year at York Memorial C.I. Much progress has been made since the start of the school year, with increasing opportunities to have staff as well as students working together. In recent months, opportunities have been provided for professional development and team building among staff, including bringing together staff that before this year taught separately at George Harvey C.I. and York Memorial C.I. There have also been workshops for students, and many people taking advantage of leadership opportunities, including an upcoming leadership

camp. New traditions are being built together. In addition, the school is looking to build a bond with the community, which really embraces the school. This includes an event following Thursday for grade 12s and community members, with performances and a guest speaker from the Toronto Raptors.

The York Memorial C.I. Administration team is stressing stability: the school has seen turnover in the recent past, but they are in it for the long term. Principal Drummond himself is from the York community. Staff has also been brought in who are members of the community and look like the community – not just teachers but also support staff. Semester 2 has started strong with student welcome assemblies, setting expectations and creating new traditions building on the traditions of George Harvey & York Memorial.

### **3. York Memorial Collegiate Institute Reconstruction.**

Executive Officer Maia Puccetti kicked off the update on the very exciting project of rebuilding York Memorial Collegiate. A lot of work has been done in the background over the past couple of years. An amazing team of architects and engineers and specialist is working on the project, including on the TDSB side a great capital team, operations staff, and planning staff. Like Principal Drummond said about York Memorial C.I., the architects are also looking to create new traditions building on the existing ones. Bringing back wonderful things that were in the York Memo building before, but also providing new spaces and new opportunities for student learning.

Architect Jill Taylor (THA Architects) started the presentation speaking about the Project Context & Design (Slide Presentation p.7).

- **Site Plan** (Slide p.8). The new Consolidated School is located on a large site with expansive athletic fields on the corner of Threthewey Dr. and Eglinton Avenue. The first school was built in the 1920s, honouring the students who fought in World War I. Over the years, the school was expanded to include many additions, including two administrative buildings. On the map, the school is in blue, and indicates new entrances, including barrier-free ones. The main entrance will be on Eglinton Ave.
- **2019 Fire Damage to 1929 Structure and additions** (Slide p.9). After the 2019, an extraordinary effort was made to remove materials, while saving parts of the building that could be stabilized for reuse.
- **Post-Fire stabilization, dismantle & salvage / 1929 Façade Stabilization, Remediation & Partial Rehabilitation** (Slides p.10-16). Preserving the façade & tower on the outside. Enough of the fragments of the stained glass windows were saved to reconstruct the windows. The John Hall mural will also be reinstated.
- **New Building Design** (Slide p.17). This project is not merely reconstructing from the ashes, but creating a unique, new future for education, combining the old and new.
- **Stacked Plan YMCI** (Slide p.18): Each floor is linked by continuous vertical & horizontal circulation, an includes a new elevator for barrier-free access to all 4 stories.  
**Basement Floor Plan** (Slide p.19). The lowest level has a complete new gym and dance room, connected to the fields at the back by elevator.  
**1<sup>st</sup> Floor Plan** (Slide p.20). The first floor is the main entry floor, with entries at the south, east, and north. It contains the shared gym, offices, the large new cafeteria, and spaces for automotive technology and construction.  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Plan** (Slide p.21). The second floor has the reconstruction of the historic 1929 building, including

its corridors. It also has the new, rebuilt auditorium, a linked learning commons, and space for electrical and robotics.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Plan** (Slide p.22). The top floor of the old school is science-themed. The annex-part on this level contains multimedia and computer education.

**4<sup>th</sup> Floor Plan** (Slide p.23).

- **Auditorium old (foto Slide p.24) and new (drawing Slide p.25)**. The auditorium combines details of the old commemorative site with modern state of the art systems for performances of all types. It will be unique among all schools in Toronto. It will be suitable for a wide range of performances and activities.
- Among the exciting new additions to the school are a **Transportation Workshop (Slide p.26)** and a **Construction Technology Workshop (Slide p.27)**.

Prithula Prosun (Manager, Project Development & Community Consultation) and Tom Schloessin (Design Coordinator) continued the presentation with a Project update (Slide Presentation p. 29).

- **Project Timeline** (Slide p.30). The red line indicates where the construction and design are. Phase one construction is underway with stabilization and restoration, and working towards phase 2 and 3 construction. The next major milestone would be Ministry of Education approval of the ATP process, anticipated in May of this year. The project will then go for Tender. Pending the need for potential further approvals of the Ministry or the Board, phase 2 & 3 construction will then begin in early 2024 until the Summer of 2026, so the school can move in and get ready for school to start in September 2026. We are on track and schedule.
- **Project Progress** (Slide p.31). Much of what thus far has been described is what is being done in the yellow area of the site, the main reconstruction and heritage area. The violet area of the site represent the active area of standard building reconstruction.  
Other pieces of the work undertaken is bringing the large gymnasium back online, which is currently being used as a recreational facility by the City of Toronto. An effort is underway to similarly bring the pool back online. In the interim, we have also brought back administrative functions to the Threthewey building.

### **3a Presentation Questions & Answers**

Moderated by Trustee Hassan

- Q: Does the number of Science rooms reflect the number required?  
A (Design Coordinator Tom Schloessin): Yes, the science lab allocations has been reviewed, and continues to be reviewed with the Teaching and Learning teams.
- Q: Will the Auditorium meet the needs of the schools, has input been incorporated and will we see concrete examples of the design?  
(Design Coordinator Schloessin): The current design includes linked seating with roughly the same capacity as pre-fire, but with full AODA Accessibility and full code compliance, which was not the case before the fire. Issues continue to be addressed, and moving forward, further representations of the plans will be presented.

- Q: Has input from staff been incorporated?

A (Design Coordinator Schoessling, Manager Prithula Prosun): Yes, and it continues to be incorporated. In the next few weeks meetings are being held with teaching and learning academic leads, as well as Superintendent Felsen, Principal Drummond, and others. The Superintendent and Principal will keep school staff further updated.

Superintendent Felsen: parallel processes for feedback are being held with central staff and school staff.

- Q: Will the Community Centre come back with the Pool

A (Design Coordinator Schloessin): Yes. The Board is working with the city. The Community Centre is intended to operate the same as previously, as a City facility.

- Q: What is the projected capacity of the Auditorum?

A (Design Coordinator Schloessin, Superintendent Felsen): 420, which has been determined by designing to adhere to various rules and codes, including accessibility and safety, movement, acoustics and other considerations, plus the obvious limitations by the size of the space within the existing walls and floor plan.

- Q: What are the expected student numbers, will it hold more than before, and are there plans to expand the programs on offer?

A (Superintendent Felsen): The Ministry funding is based on a capacity of 1300. Current student number is 1250. The George Harvey site had technological education programs that York Memorial did not have. Anticipated offerings are construction technology and transportation technology. There will be cosmetology. It is being finalized whether a culinary program will be delivered through a technology delivery or through a family studies, or even both, which is an important decision. There is currently a large, robust family studies program, and it can be difficult to find technology teachers with the required qualifications. This also affects room design.

- Q: Will there be enough daylight in the buildings?

A (Manager Prosun): The intent is to look within the funding model to provide more windows to make it a more comfortable learning environment, especially in spaces what were previously not used for instruction.

- Q: is the project on schedule?

A (Manager Prosun): With the disclaimer that there's always a risk with any construction project, in this particular project as many risks as possibly have been considered. TDSB is very comfortable with the opening date of September 2026. Please note that some aspects (e.g. Ministry approval) are not in the Board's control, and it is a complex project with many acting parties, including for example the insurers.

- Q: Is the project affected by the LRT construction?

A (Design Coordinator Schloessin): No.

- Q: What lessons are going to be learned from the rocky start of this school year, to provide a smoother transition, especially as moving over the summer is not much time?

A (Executive Officer Puccetti, Superintendent Felsen): Lessons were definitely learned, not only from the past summer moving into the former George Harvey building, but also from previous moves into new school buildings, like David & Mary Thomson C.I. Clear critical path plans will be created including accountability pieces of who and when and what. The goal is obviously to provide as smooth a transition as possible.

- Q: What will happen with the current site?

A (Executive Officer Puccetti): Various options can be considered. It is still some time away, but one option is to keep it as a forehold site – buildings that can be used if major renovations are held at schools. Vaughn Road school is an example of that – used during the building of the new Davisville Public School, and soon to be used by Hodgson Middle School during their renovation and expansion.

- Q: Will the catchment for the school change?

A (Superintendent Felsen, system planning officer Gowdy): The current catchment for York Memorial C.I. combines the for George Harvey and York Memorial schools. Separately, a board wide Secondary School Review is currently underway, which is expected to consolidate the old distinctions between secondary schools, including the technical and commercial streams which no longer exist as such.

- Q: What will happen with Lumenus and the Childcare that are currently in the building?

A (Superintendent Felsen, Planning Offer Gowdy): That has not been determined yet. If groups currently in the building will not move into the new building, discussion will need to be held to find them suitable new locations. TDSB has a lot of surplus space across the system – as much as 70,000 pupil places. Importance to the local community is one of the important criteria in finding alternative locations – which may be different for the daycare as compared to the Education & Community Partnership Program.

- Q: Will additional funding be searched to make changes to the Threthewey buildings

A (Executive Officer Puccetti): That is yet to be determined. The renovations to those buildings are not part of the fire-rebuilding project as such.

Superintendent Felsen: We embarking on the consultation with central teaching and learning staff on a subject by subject basis. We will see the same process at school level.

Capital Projects Manager Prosun: Please note that a public project website is being created that will provide updates on the current status, renderings, and other information. It is expected to launch in the coming weeks, check here: [Capital Projects \(tdsb.on.ca\)](https://www.tdsb.on.ca) - <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/About-Us/Facility-Services/Capital-Projects>.

#### **4. Closing and Thanks**

Trustee Hassan thanked everybody for attending, and thanked all the staff and presenters. A lot of time, effort, and energy is going into this project, and it is much appreciated. Learning about the project website going up is very exciting. More meetings will be held in the future to provide more updates and get more feedback.

**For more information, questions, ideas and concerns - always feel free to contact Trustee Liban Hassan ([Liban.Hassan@tdsb.on.ca](mailto:Liban.Hassan@tdsb.on.ca)). His Ward web page is at [www.tdsb.on.ca/ward6](http://www.tdsb.on.ca/ward6).**