

Harry Ainlay High School
School Council
Minutes

November 27, 2006

IN ATTENDANCE: Purva Kapur, Helen Rusich, Deb Olmstead, Doug Hill, Linda Grisley, Pat Sawatzky, Mark Liguori, Joanne Jette, Brian Nolan, George Hoyt, Mike Pankiw, Barb Greenlaw, Elizabeth Mustard, Heather Tansem.

STUDENTS UNION: Purva Kapur brought the parents up-do-date on Students Union activities:

- ❖ Public Relations
 - The SU section of the website is being developed by a volunteer student. It will have an area for people to ask questions or make comments.
 - Students will decorate the school for Christmas with reindeer, trees, snowflakes, frosted windows and wrapped pillars.

- ❖ Titan Life
 - The Dodgeball tournament for teachers is complete and now the student teams are playing.
 - In the last week of December classes there will be Holiday bingo on Monday, cookie decorating on Tuesday and an obstacle course on Wednesday.

- ❖ Internal
 - The Food Bank and Turkey Drive is December 11 through 14th
 - Staff Appreciation is being finalized for the last week of classes before the holidays.

- ❖ External
 - Afternoon activities were conducted by students who visited McKee Elementary

- ❖ Athletics
 - Decision is imminent on the November athlete of the month who will be the focus of the display case.

- ❖ Admin
 - Holiday activities for those who have paid their SU fee will include a draw for Kinder Surprise and an opportunity to have a picture with Santa for the price of a can of food for the Food Bank

- ❖ Other
 - Aloha Ainlay will see student basking under palm trees and coconut huts and enjoying a slush machine

- The Class Executive Council Meeting for student representatives from each classroom is Wednesday, November 29th.

SOUTH LRT EXTENSION: Mike Pankiw briefed council on the Wednesday, November 22nd meeting of stakeholders such as Lendrum, Malmo, Pleasantview, Harry Ainlay, the SW Community Federation, City Transit representatives and City Councillor, Bryan Anderson.

Attendees received an update of the City Council discussions on options for the Park and Ride issue. A number of scenarios were ruled out and it was decided that improvements to the bus system would allow commuters the required access to LRT. The paper highlighting the Park and Ride options is available at <http://www.edmontonslrt.com/PDFs/ParkandRidepaper.pdf>

Further consultation activities and the next steps were outlined to attendees. City representatives thought that previous consultation with stakeholders had gone well until they were reminded of this Council's concern over the crossing proposed for 43rd Avenue at 111 St. Following is an excerpt from our March 20, 2006 minutes outlining this concern.

Brad Smid, Senior High Speed Transit Specialist for the City of Edmonton then focused on the intersection of 111 Street and 43rd Avenue, where the busses drop students and they must cross 111 Street to the school. He showed a slide of the pedestrian crossing protection features which resemble the train crossing barricades for cars. The plan is to widen 111 Street to the east. There will also be a fence along either side of the LRT tracks to prevent pedestrians from crossing anywhere but at the corner.

Parents questioned the ability of students to safely cross 111 Street in light of

- ❖ **the widening of the road,**
- ❖ **the time allowed by the lights to cross,**
- ❖ **the need to cross the LRT tracks in the middle**
- ❖ **when there are timed barricades coming down**
- ❖ **and nowhere to go because of the fences, AND**
- ❖ **trains will be coming every 3 minutes in each direction at peak**

With 2400+ students trying to get to school on time, parents asked why the plan did not include an overpass or underpass option.

Brad said that an overpass had the issue of height, aesthetics and neighbour's visibility. There was the issue of ramps and accessibility, low usage versus high cost and a question if pedestrians would use it.

An underground passage had the issues of security and safety, the traffic impact during construction, ramps and accessibility, low usage versus high cost.

The City had determined that the surface crossing option would work with an improved bus bay, the channeling of pedestrians to cross at crosswalks, a waiting area on the east side of 111 Street, barriers to deter jay-walking and traffic modeling. Should this solution prove unviable after some years of use, the City would consider going to over or underpass after appropriate study and budget planning.

Parents were not pleased with this response. Other points brought up in the discussion:

- ❖ McKernan has been approved for an LRT stop and underpass under 114th Street. That school has ¼ of the student population of Harry Ainlay. Why is our school not given the same consideration?
- ❖ There has been no consultation with students to discuss their needs.
- ❖ Students do not benefit from the LRT when it does not fit their schedules or access. For example, those who work at Century Place or South Edmonton Common must walk to Southgate to catch an indirect access bus to work.
- ❖ There has been no coordination with bus schedules. The bus system will be doing their own study of schedules as impacted by the LRT
- ❖ The City has a budget surplus. Surely they can afford to make the LRT at Harry Ainlay safe at the outset.

Secretary's Note: After this meeting I went to the www.edmontonslrt.com web site to see if there were notes of this meeting. Since it was not a public forum, there is no recognition of our input. However, I did find a copy of the presentation made to our School Council and an evaluation form used in the public forums that was not offered to us. I am copying the evaluation form for your use at the end of these minutes.

Parents are urged to express their concern with these plans by contacting our City Councillors

Mike Nickel at 496-8132, email Mike.Nickel@edmonton.ca or Bryan Anderson at 496-8130, email Bryan.Anderson@edmonton.ca

Or write an email to the Edmonton Journal: letters@thejournal.canwest.com or fax 780-498-5677

Or write to Edmonton Journal, Letters to the Editor, P.O. Box 2421, Edmonton, AB, T5J 2S6

Mike spoke with Councillor Anderson who said that he would support an underpass of 111 Street, but reminded Mike that he is only one voice on City Council. He would also be willing to attend a meeting of the Harry Ainlay School Council to discuss the LRT extension project. Our Council agreed that we will invite Mr. Anderson for our January or February meeting and that a briefing summary of our concerns would be prepared for him. Mike suggested we also make sure this information gets out to our feeder schools for the safety of future Ainlay students. **Pat Sawatzky** will extend the invitation and **Mike Pankiw** will prepare the briefing.

There are 3 Open Houses for public input to the LRT Extension: December 5 and 6 at Harry Ainlay – presentations at 5:00, 6:00 and 7:00 p.m. and the third is December 15th at the Delta South.

Mike was asked if this stakeholders' meeting considered a station at Ainlay as well as at Southgate. Mike informed us that a station requires 4,000 to 6,000 riders per day and Ainlay is unable to demonstrate that level of need.

Another question was if the Park and Ride at Southgate is truly gone. Mike replied that it definitely is no longer considered. For every parking stall, the City could buy 2 busses and the new Transportation Manager will focus on encouraging the bus system.

The next meeting of the stakeholders group is scheduled for Wednesday, November 29th. Pat Sawatzky will attend in Mike Pankiw's absence.

PARENTS AT AINLAY: Deb Olmstead and Helen Rusich outlined the newsletter article for December and circulated a questionnaire for discussion of the Adolescent Brain. Lively discussion of adolescent thinking led to further discussion of innovative teaching methods, like web based learning and modified teaching schedules, to better reach teen minds.

CHAIR REPORT: Pat Sawatzky received a letter from Catherine Ripley announcing her intent to run for trustee. She has offered to attend our Council meeting and asked if she can ask questions on our education concerns and use our answers in reports she compiles. Our Council representatives were pleased with the suggestions and welcome Catherine's attendance.

Teacher Appreciation is scheduled for June 8th and will be announced in the next school newsletter.

PARENTS AS PARTNERS: Brian Nolan attended discussions on transportation issues for students in Edmonton. There are 80,000 students in the EPS District and 25,000 of them are bus riders. More than one-half do not attend their designated school. In the last 2 years, there has been a deficit for student transportation and the school board is looking for feedback on priorities for service and fees.

HAMPA: No report

ADVOCACY: Little activity until new Premier is elected. No report.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT: Mark Liguori advised parents on the following items.

- ❖ The Lockdown went very well.
- ❖ Interim reports will be issued through School Zone December 11 – 14
- ❖ Last day of school before Christmas is December 22nd
- ❖ Come watch Christmas Carol from December 12 – 14
- ❖ The Volleyball teams won the City Championship, but were unable to win the Provincials in Red Deer.
- ❖ Some phone calls have been received voicing concern over teen violence as a result of the stabbing of a Ross Shepherd student. Mark reminded parents that the teen charged with this murder is a known offender. There is very little random violence among teens and although this case is tragic, it is unusual.
- ❖ Last day before exams is January 19th and semester change is end January 2007.

DRUG INFORMATION NIGHT: Vernon Barford's Drug Information Night went very well with 100+ attendees. Doug Green would be pleased to offer this program at Harry Ainlay.

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting of the Harry Ainlay School Council is January 29, 2007 at 7:00 p.m. in the Library

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.