

ROCKANDEL&ASSOCIATES

*Building Success Through Process Facilitation,
Community Engagement & Partnership Planning*

MEMORANDUM

To: SD 43 CE Steering Committee

From: Catherine Rockandel, IAF Certified Professional Facilitator, Rockandel & Associates
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Re: School District 43 Parkland Dialogue Summary of Discussions

Date: December 1, 2013

On Thursday, November 28th 2013 SD 43 hosted a public dialogue to share information about what they had heard at the October 29, 2013 Open House and through emails and on line surveys in terms of ideas and opportunities and issues and concerns relating to a portion of school district land at Parkland Elementary.

The dialogue ran from 6:30pm – 8:30pm with a welcome from the chair, followed by a twenty-minute presentation from Melissa Hydes, Chair and Ivano Cecchini. Catherine Rockandel provided an overview of the facilitated dialogue process along with participation guidelines.

A total of twelve (12) people signed in. The following notes summarize questions and comments raised by the public attending the meeting.

Public Dialogue: Questions and Comments (Index: Q: Questions A: Answers C: Comment)

Q: Is there going to be driveway access off Como Lake other than laneway?

A: The City's new direction is not to have any access off Como Lake for any new housing

C: I attended this school, and am still a resident of this neighbourhood. I have almost been hit by cars in the lane on several occasions. The laneway is dark and dangerous. These new houses are going to increase traffic so it will need to be lit. I am opposed to housing on these lots. I think the easy way out is to sell the lots. We hear a lot about money and balancing budgets but my concern is safety. As a kid I was hit twice going to school once while I was riding my bike. I think you could do a number of different things – why don't you raise taxes. I am also concerned that you are not going to make a lot of money but there will be a loss of green space. I agree you should be a trustee of our children this land should be fixed to allow it to be usable

C: Read a statement to trustees: I have been resident in this area for 27 years. It is a sad day when the school district has to sell off land that is essentially park to pay for schools in another area of the city. This green space has value for the community just the way it is. Your projections show that this land will not be needed for educational purposes, similar projections in the past have turned out to be wrong. Yes, I want people in the growing area of the tri-cities to have schools, but much prefer that money from that come from additional funding from the provincial government or elimination of unnecessary expenditures from your budget, although I say that with trepidation after helping myself to a cookie. Your proposal for eight very large, very expensive detached houses is not what we need. We need high density, social housing and rental housing. The land you alienate will leave public hands forever and will never be able to be used for educational civic purposes it could fulfill now. Is the relatively small amount of money you will earn from the sale worth that cost? Thank you for hearing me and making the best decision.

C: This man said exactly what I think. It is a sad day that the schools are being forced to sell off land. As soon as you set a precedent like that the government will be expecting that so they can lessen their subsidies to you. I live across the street from this field and it is used by soccer and lacrosse teams. Why can't parks board develop the land for sport use?

C: This space used to be gravel and we used to use it a lot, but they have let it go. The softball league used to play there

Q: What is the condition of the land and to what degree does that impact its usefulness, and to what degree could it be remediated at what cost? Do school officials know the condition of the land?

A: Yes, we have had some preliminary work done to see what it would cost to bring this area of the field up to a reasonable field for school use. The cost was about a half million dollars

C: I coach a lacrosse team and for a number of years we used that part of the field not because it was a good field but because no one ever used it and it was available. It is not in good shape, it is not a good sports field. The two fields south of it are in good shape and these are the ones we use now.

Q: Do you ever try and get sponsors or go after federal government grants for sports?

A: Yes, we have applied for numerous federal grants in partnership with local sports groups. We have never received a positive response with funding. Last year we approached Kiewitt to invest in fields as they built the bridge but they ended up being very good to us leaving us lots of desks for schools but the large scale donations that we see in other jurisdictions have not been seen here.

Q: I wonder if there are local corporate sponsors for playground fields for kids, community use and sporting use?

A: We have very good corporate sponsors in the tri-city areas in small ways. They support the school meals program and breakfast programs. We also have a company that is supporting Mountain View providing sports equipment, running programs and wanting no credit by name. The adopt-a school programs are also very generous. Field revitalization and artificial fields are initially two million dollars and then every twelve years or so you need the million-dollar rebuild.