

New Westminster Secondary School Replacement Project
Memorialization Advisory Committee Meeting

OCTOBER 27, 2021

TIME: 4:00 PM TO 5:30 PM **LOCATION:** Via Zoom

ATTENDING MEMBERS	<p>Karim Hachlaf, Superintendent of Schools/CEO, New Westminster Schools Bill Chu, Canadians for Reconciliation Society Richard Geoffrey Leggett, Holy Trinity Anglican Cathedral Jessica Schneider, Massey Theatre Society Mark Gifford, Trustee, Board of Education, NW Schools Nadine Nakagawa, Councillor, City of New Westminster Robert McCullough, City of New Westminster Jamie McEvoy, Councillor, City of New Westminster Nolan Charles, Councillor, Musqueam Indian Band Erika Mashig, City of New Westminster Jim Pound, Union-Solomon Lodge No.9 Jag Sall, Sukh Sagar Gurdwara Karah Goshinmon Foster, Nikkei Place Daana Gilpin, Education Asst., Tsilhqot'in Ntnl. Gov. Sherry Stump, Community Ed Liaison, Tsilhqot'in Ntnl. Gov. Rhonda Larrabee, Chief, Qayqayt First Nation Carleen Thomas, Intergovernment Relations, Tsleil-Waututh Nation</p>
PROJECT TEAM	<p>Dave Crowe, New Westminster Schools Grant Charles Moore, Sr. Archaeologist, Golder Assoc.</p>
CHAIR	<p>Maya Russell, Board Chair, Board of Education, NW Schools</p>
GUESTS	<p>Kelty Mckinnon, Principal, PFS Studio</p>
MEETING RECORDER	<p>Leanne Sojka, New Westminster Schools</p>
WELCOME AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Chair Russell greeted the attendees and acknowledged traditional territories. Participants individually introduced themselves</i> • <i>Chair Russell made introductory comments marking the start of Phase Two of the committee's engagement, now that the old NWSS building is vacant. Invitations have been re-issued to the full list of organizations with a historical claim to the site. She welcomed renewed participation from Musqueam Indian Band, Tsleil-Waututh Nation, Sukh Sagar Gurdwara, Anglican Church and</i> 	

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Union-Solomon Lodge. Chair Russell has also reached out to the Canadian Institute for Inclusion and Citizenship; they were unable to attend this meeting but hope to join in February and May, 2022. Chair Russell asked members to think about and comment on how they want to be engaged as New Westminster Schools moves into the next phase of deconstructing the old school and planning the memorial park.

- *Richard Leggett said while the Anglican diocese is in receipt of report –the cathedral was established in 1959 and burials were part of that work. He is glad the process will be reported on*

PHASE TWO ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

- *Chair Russell asks how people want to be involved and each individual’s capacity to engage?*
- *Installations will be put up in the site once deconstruction has concluded – to tell stories, enrich the much more diverse essence of the true community which has been lost*
- *Funding applications will be required to fund this work and design plans to integrate individual memorialization projects with the greater site. How do people want to be consulted on that?*
- *Richard Leggett shared that he read the archaeological report. There appear to be graves on the site and is concerned how the school will be deconstructed? Superintendent Hachlaf, shared that Charles from Golder Associates will highlight as will Director-Capital Projects, Crowe, later in the agenda and solicit questions at that time*

GOLDER PRESENTATION – CHARLES MOORE

- *Charles shared a slide presentation with the group, beginning with an aerial view of the site. He confirmed that Golder has been involved since 2007 and Charles has been involved when the project kicked up again around 2014/15*
- *Charles used aerial images to demonstrate former and current site boundaries, discussed the archeological history of the different burial sites and clearings, including an Old Chinese Cemetery, a New Chinese Cemetery and a Potters Field, institutional burials from hospitals and explained there are mixed reports on how many people may have been buried at the site and where the boundaries were. He noted that one section is covered by the Cremation Internment and Funeral Services Act and another by the Provincial Heritage Register under the Heritage Conversation Act.*
- *8th Street was Douglas Road*
- *The original 0.6 acre “Old Cemetery” started in 1861 expanded to 2 acres and closed in 1907. There were early complaints about burial practices not familiar to the settler community such as funeral pyres and shallow burials.*
- *In the 1890’s a series of groups moved their use from this cemetery; 1869 the Anglicans to the cemetery in Sapperton and six other groups up to 1892. Catholics also moved to Sapperton. Separate plots were set up in Sapperton*

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- *In 1892 the Chinese cemetery was established which we call "Old Chinese Cemetery"; there is no survey info and it is assumed to be adjacent*
- *At the same time a Potter's Field was established for public burials; use for those from institutions, the Provincial Hospital for the Insane and two Isolation Hospitals treating Smallpox patients.*
- *Between 1907 and 1909 these became full and a new cemetery was established at the NW corner of the site. The New Westminster Chinese Benevolent Association asked for this site because their old site was filled; there had been active community use.*
- *In 1892 the Isolation Hospital burned down and was replaced.*
- *Chair Russell asked to pause the presentation in order to answer questions*
- *Jaimie McEvoy asked about a Chinese altar at the site, and if we know where that was located, and Charles said records point to the SW corner of the map in the Old Chinese Cemetery - information from archaeological reports and Jim Wolfe in 2007.*
- *Bill Chu asked a question about which communities cemeteries received designation and Charles said there was an exodus in 1869 and 1892 from several communities and there are some areas where the boundaries were not clear but the protection was equal on the designation (both designated as a Heritage site) Charles said from an archaeological perspective both protected under the Heritage Act although Chair Russell stated she understood there were differences in legal protections*
- *Councillor Charles said that we are sharing information right now, not in a position to make decisions now. Be mindful of the magnitude of what is at this site. Having said that, we as a collective have to be mindful of the deconstruction of buildings. He was not in a position to make decisions today. Chair Russell said it was helpful guidance, must proceed step by step*
- *Councillor Jaimie McEvoy asked about the language around Potters Field and the area that is "likely not used" - are we definitive that any part was not used? Charles replied that you could never be entirely certain*
- *Kelty McKinnon mentioned that Jim Wolfe came across a gravestone that was used to build a house after anti-Asian riots. Found out yesterday that a child's gravestone may have been used on someone's property for landscaping purposes. She asked Charles if he is aware. Charles said he did not have further info, outside of Jim Wolfe's article.*
- *During WWII the government bulldozed the NW zone to build the barracks, not clear if gravestones were from this area or another area.*
- *Rob McCullough asked for confirmation that an organization wanting to do something on-site would need to consult with various groups. Charles confirmed the process under the Heritage Conservation Act requires permits from the Archaeology Branch and consultation with all other interested groups. It is complicated, the former cemetery is covered under different legislation, the Cremation, Internment & Funeral Services Act under the Consumer Protection Branch and Heritage Branch.*

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- *Charles went over the archaeological work that had been done related to the school construction. Series of investigations, geological, utilities, all results were negative for any archaeological material. In the process, a single burial was uncovered, shown on the maps as a blue dot. Ground penetrating radar (GPR) was done in 2010 and 2014 - where there were potential anomalies, those were identified on the map. No excavation was completed in those areas*
- *Chair Russell asked why if at one point the cemetery was full, what is his understanding of why the records are so sparse? Gradually the burials were institutional with the exception of the Chinese community, so his interpretation is that they were overlooked by the mainstream community. Charles confirmed there will still be burials there*
- *Charles shared some images and findings from the Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) and electro-magnetic imaging and mechanical tests done at the site. Shared that all excavation work was done with oversight from First Nations community representatives. They conducted 32 mechanical tests and looked at 62 geo-physical anomalies and monitored 147 bore holes through that process.*
- *In the “New Chinese Cemetery” several anomalies were found that look like possible burials. They also found an old stream channel and barracks material below the pavement.*
- *The suggestion is very strong that there are no burials in the areas they examined on the east side of the school. However, did find an extensive layer of historical material (the “historical fill layer”) so does recognize that despite not finding any there is some likelihood of human remains. Have recommended the SD40 not build in that area as much as possible and if any work went ahead that it be conducted under permits and any sub-surface work be monitored.*
- *Golder & Associated did take out another permit – a site alteration permit and an Investigation permit required by the archaeological branch for monitoring of the current construction work*
- *In all, 22,000 cubic meters of material was covered with no indication of artifacts, human remains or ancestry*
- *Next stage is careful deconstruction of the old high school. Noted the District’s plan to go down to above the school foundation, there will be no sub-surface disturbance. They propose extending their permits to monitor. Permit will be amended to include exposing a drain that was paved over.*
- *He showed the commemorative aspect that was moved over the Chinese cemetery area. There is one area now, without protection. The Archaeology branch is aware of it, the Heritage branch didn’t consult with the archaeology branch. Once wrap up the permit report, will be putting forward a recommendation that they include the entire area and once again provide proper protection.*

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MASSEY THEATRE UPDATE – DAVE CROWE

- *Transfer of Property: Key points of decommissioning no intention to do any sub-surface excavation, taking buildings down strictly to the foundation. Building into the demolition contract. Overwhelming response on demolition, 14 applications – will start the evaluation shortly. Will move forward with some with a request for proposals*
- *This is a careful deconstruction – emphasized this in the qualification request. Will have a very robust process with dictated protocols if for some reason something does get uncovered*
- *Will be able to start some of the work prior to the permit – hazard materials need to be removed – give them time to ensure the appropriate permits are in place when start the physical removal of walls*
- *Chair Russell solicited questions and there were none, she noted they remain committed to protecting the whole site and memorializing the whole site*
- *Dave spoke to the historic transfer of the Massey Theatre from School District to City of New Westminister for nominal price of \$1.: Not finished with utility connections; stand-alone completion is January 31, 2022 and they are very much on schedule, if not ahead*
- *Rob McCullough said that will provide some great opportunity for ongoing arts. Worth noting along with the transfer agreement, there was a new covenant registered with Land Titles outlining community uses, largely around passive green space, considers and recognizes the historical connections, an important element as well as the memorialization.*

SUMMARY INFORMATION

- *Chair Russell summarized there was an awful lot of content, a big and interesting site, the District will slowly, carefully take down old school and we can begin thinking about telling the variety of stories that need to be told*
- *Kelty and PFS hope to have a package/work plan for the February meeting – would love to be looking at the language to commemorate the site inside the high school and get something on the historical record at the new school while all this other work is happening*
- *Chief Larrabee said thank you and is sure the deconstruction will be done in a respectful way.*

CLOSING

- *Meeting ended at 5:33 pm.*
- *Next meeting will take place on **Tuesday, February 2, 2022 from 4pm-5:30pm via Zoom, accessible by [this link](#)***
- *Questions or comments should be directed to Karim Hachlaf (khachlaf@sd40.bc.ca) and copied to Kaeleigh Evans (kevans@sd40.bc.ca).*

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