

## New Westminister Secondary School Replacement Project Memorialization Advisory Committee Meeting

DATE: October 12, 2022,

TIME: 3:30 – 5:00pm

LOCATION: Via Zoom

ATTENDING MEMBERS	<p>Karim Hachlaf, Superintendent of Schools/CEO, New Westminister Schools  Mark Gifford Trustee, Board of Education, NW Schools  Daana Gilpin, Education Asst., Tsilhqot'in Ntnl. Gov.  Jim Pound, Union-Solomon Lodge No. 9  Rob McCullough, City of New Westminister  Jessica Schneider, Massey Theatre Society  Kelly McKinnon, PFS Studio  Erika Mashig, City of New Westminister  Chief Rhonda Larrabee, Qayqayt First Nation</p>
PROJECT TEAM	Dave Crowe, New Westminister Schools Grant
CHAIR	Maya Russell, Board Chair, Board of Education, NW Schools
GUESTS	
MEETING RECORDER	Anne-Marie Martin, New Westminister Schools
<b>WELCOME AND REVIEW OF OUR WORK LAST YEAR – MAYA RUSSELL</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chair Russell greeted the attendees and acknowledged traditional territories.</li> <li>• Chair Russell welcomed, Chief Larrabee who welcomed everyone</li> <li>• Chair Russell acknowledged the discussion with Jim Wolf regarding historical records from the last meeting , that will be published, we are looking forward to the results</li> <li>• Chair Russell ask if there were any questions - None</li> </ul>	
<b>MEMORIAL PLAQUE FOR NWSS (GROUP DISCUSSION)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High School will take time to come down, and landscape restored, before Memorial park is brought to life,</li> <li>• For the last several meetings we have discussed what we can do in the meantime and there has been agreement to install a first historical plaque acknowledging how the school got to where we are.</li> <li>• Chair Russell shared a PowerPoint on the 1<sup>st</sup> plaque – memorial, examples provided, looking for guidance on content and form</li> <li>• What important ideas do we want to capture in this 1<sup>st</sup> plaque? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Provided “very draft text” knowing there will be much room for</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

improvement, Chair Russell read the wording out

- Daana to provide correct spelling to Chair Russell of chief and nations name
- Rob would like to take away the “draft text” to think about comments that can be provided later. Will this be inside the school? Chair Russell said that had been the thinking, but options were open; Rob is concerned nobody outside the school will have a chance to see the plaque.
- Karim – input today and further reflections, and points and comments to be taking into consideration.
- Kelty – Plaque for landscape, needs to be outside for people to see
- Jim – this is a very early draft, provided examples of other grounds lessons
- Erika – put into word document so comments can be shared, agrees outdoor plaque is needed; examples are all texts, is there an opportunity for a map, showing distribution of various sites as some people are visual
- Rob – does not like the whole bronze plaque thing, drawing a parallel to the older heritage pieces, would like something more contemporary
- Kelty – provided previous examples and will share again for the consideration for this plaque
- Rhonda Larrabee – history outside on the pathway and walkways to explain about the path, a bit shorter than what is inside the school; it’s important for the younger people to have; she liked the “not valued by city leaders” she questioned who the leaders were? People need to know who, and that they didn’t appreciate who was buried there, it’s still hurtful how their road was so tough
- Chair Russell – agreed felt important to be clear who made decisions; while those in charge of the site did not value burials that isn’t true of everyone
- Kelty - Woodlands sites have parallels with lack of respect, good example to look, how burials were treated was moving about that instillation
- Mark – thank you for getting it started, taking a crack at this, for giving us to respond to a good first step. Good chance to go away and think a little bit more and offer feedback and suggestions to see what’s possible. One general comment is I appreciate the beginning of these attempts to sort of understand the significance of the site and relationship to classism and colonization in the context of New West and the larger colony project, so its ok to be more explicit. Memorial not made to make people feel comfortable, but put the truth out there; defer to Daana and others on the relationship with of the site, to Chief Ahan – murder and unjust hanging and execution would be important, to tie in aspects of the story, part of the challenge is to try and find the way to tell the story, behind the typical plaque, in story sharing, thanked Chair Russell again for starting the discussion
- Chair Russell – that is helpful framing, were all on the same page, this is not to make people feel warm and fuzzy, but to tell the truth
- Jessica – who’s voice is telling this truth, institution or those who are impacted the descendants then maybe that’s the question, then the words will come easier; accessibility, strip it down, more simple, easier to digest for array of people
- Kelty – echo’s what has been said by Mark and Kelty, working on few



memorials, what we talked about is the survivors, we should acknowledged the people buried there, some verbiage around honoring, acknowledging the people who are actually buried here, who maybe were not honored, and who are we focusing on city leaders or individuals and families, all lives that have value; ask Rob is there a way to link to a website or something where people can upload information on the history? Process that allows people to participate and read about the history, that deserve more than just a paragraph.

- Rob backend work required but an option would be a QR code linked to a website that can grow with information, keep in mind the page exists and to update stories and research as it becomes available, or even just online resources – anything is possible
- Kelty - provided example of a friend who shared a memorial that you can engage and research personal history and information, short but meaningful text, African memorial in NY – has great meaningful way of expressing these difficult issues
- Karim – thank you all for the comments, just picking up on the thread and appreciating the feedback so far, certainly what’s resonating with me from the comments are this challenge before us that we want to do an acknowledgement that moves away from any kind of colonial plaque itself, and that’s what resonating with me and the comments that were made, in addition to no matter the words we put on the plaque there is that challenge or fact of possibility to do just with the truth, and the history that’s involved, so I appreciate the comments about whether a QR Code or another medium that provides a form for storytelling and that was the other acknowledgment that was surfacing for me which the plaque installation right now is part of our boarder project with the memorial park, it’s not the end only the beginning, and maybe there’s a space that needs to acknowledge that plaque will note that some kind of future with memorial park, and also non be known this committee has been immersed in it for a number of years the public should know that when they read this plaque this is not the sole artifact that will be installed, and leave this impression with our broader community.
- Chair Russell – this has been so helpful, one thing that is standing out for me now is I’m wondering about removing the last positive statement “” not sure we need this; if people have any thoughts on that now or later that would be great. I will pop this into a word document right away, we are not on a particular timeline to get this finalized, but just want to keep in moving
- Rob – thank you again second thing – re what Kelty said, this space has bodies there, it may need to be an entry point into the boarder conversation about all the communities that are a part of this but regardless of that they all became buried there and they are still there
- Chair Russell – I think I’m going to stop the sharing (screen share) thank you so much this has been very helpful this is not a final text but intended on getting us thinking about what do we want to accomplish with this, the pieces about who’s voice, centering, people are actually buried, those are really resonating with me, so we will regroup, but don’t hesitate to take another look when you get the word format



- Mark – I have thoughts, we all have thoughts, I just wondered and that's great that you're going to send this, but Chair Russell or Karim I know it's another piece of work but I'm wondering if maybe a little survey or some place, because there are a number of ideas here, a lot of ideas, questions to go out to people to send back comments, ideas, suggestions, and other projects to look at for example, things we might want to consider in the development in the shared statement, for the plaque, the school site and memorialization site, just a way to capture some of the ideas as people have contributed
- Chair Russell – if we sent out 2 questions 1 – what's missing 2 - what could be removed? From this, that would work for discussion and get additional references that people can look at
- Karim – Thanks Chair Russell, just to jump in to we can in conjunction with that, they can be for us, we do have Anne-Marie taking minutes so will capture the feedback so we can put that back out to the team the entire group to hear what was said and to reply or comment
- Rhonda – not about this memorialization – I have ancestor that are buried at St. Peters cemetery , and the graves were unmarked because when they passed away in the 1920 or 30's I guess our families could not afford headstones, and with the help of the Rotary Club headstones have been made and upright with a description of who they were, there's 5 people all buried there my Grandfather, Great Grandfather and Great Grandmother and another relative I'm not sure who he is because I can't find any information but next week were having the unveiling at St. Peters cemetery next Thursday at noon, and if anyone would like to come you are more than welcome, we are very happy this is going to happen finally we been working towards this for a long time.
- Chair Russell – that is such wonderful news, thank you for that, maybe we can include that in our notes as well that's happening October 20<sup>th</sup>, 12:00pm

#### DECONSTRUCTION OF OLD NWSS (DAVE CROWE)

- The last time I report that we just completed putting up the fence around the old school, in preparation for starting the deconstruction process, it's well under way progressing well, all the work up until now is inside the building, so you're not seeing anything on the outside, hazardous material abatement that's going on, up until a few weeks ago we were on track with the schedule for completing the work, but found a tremendous amount of additional abatement particularly in the Pearson wing, that mainly asbestos, were still not clear on the total extent of it, but we do know that been a lot more abatement to be done than anticipated, this was all material that were hidden behind the walls, which we weren't aware it was there, all behind the walls, ceilings, spray foam used in 50's & 60's delaying us a few months of additional work, before we can do physical deconstruction which is what everybody will see on the outside, we positive on the extent of the additional work but as soon we have more information info we will update schedule,  
Work is going well, some areas slightly ahead of schedule, working closely with massy not to disrupt, safety of workers and people around the building, move fence so more parking is available during key events, working well, we understand we can't accommodate everyone all the time, stakeholder meeting once a week to discuss what's



coming up ahead, and try to accommodate those with parking issues

- Questions? No comments

#### NEXT STEPS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS (MAYA RUSSELL)

- Recap – Chair Russel will send draft text to gain further feedback; minutes to be sent and will include discussion questions for the whole committee, 2 or 3 more meetings for the school year, Karim suggested sending date options out for the meetings, these will come out in the same communication.
- Chair Russell thanked Mark Gifford longstanding and fierce advocate for truth telling, that he is not on the ballot this forthcoming time, and this will be his last meeting,
- Mark hopes and will stay connected to the work, privilege of learning through the high school approval and building process, makes it sacred work, and hopes everyone can find a good path to the learning journey, and thanked everyone for all their wisdom.

#### CLOSING

- Meeting ended at 4:25 pm.
- Next meeting will take place on TBD from 3:30pm-5:00pm via Zoom, accessible by **this link (to be added)**  
Questions or comments should be directed to Karim Hachlaf ([khachlaf@sd40.bc.ca](mailto:khachlaf@sd40.bc.ca)) and copied to Anne-Marie Martin ([ammartin@sd40.bc.ca](mailto:ammartin@sd40.bc.ca))



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