

Office of the Superintendent

Deb Whitten – Interim Superintendent

July 16, 2021

South Jubilee Neighbourhood Association

BY EMAIL: w.mattdell@gmail.com

Dear Mr. Dell,

RE: Future of Bank Street School

Thank you for South Jubilee Neighbourhood Association's letter dated July 15, 2021.

The District last communicated with SJNA on December 8, 2020 when the Chair wrote to advise the City was awaiting its determination of cost to remediate Bank Street School for future viability, and whether or not the City would designate the building heritage status. The Chair indicated once the City concluded its work, discussions between the City and the District could resume. The Chair also indicated in her December 2020 letter, that the District would be in touch with SJNA once the City had determined its next steps.

At its June 21, 2021 Regular Open Board meeting, the Board received the City's June 7, 2021 letter (copy attached), advising the Board of City Council's May 10, 2021 motion:

Bank Street School Building - Proposed Partnership

That Council requests that staff engage School District 61, to propose a partnership and offer municipal financial assistance to restore the Bank Street School building (1623-1625 Bank Street) for educational and community use.

Also at its June 21, 2021 Regular Open Board meeting, the Board carried the following resolution:

That the Board of Education of School District 61 (Greater Victoria) direct Staff to meet with City of Victoria Staff to explore potential options as requested by Mayor Helps in the City of Victoria's June 7, 2021 letter to the Board;

AND FURTHER

That any meetings occur after School District No. 61 receives its Class C cost estimate of Bank Street School.

At this point the Board is awaiting its cost estimate of the remediation of Bank Street School in order to meet with the City to discuss the City's May 10th motion. The Board expects its report to be ready near the end of July at which time, staff will meet with the City, then report back to the Board in September.

In the meantime, the District has submitted a permit application to the City for the demolition of Bank Street School. The permit has yet to be approved, presumably pending the outcome of the discussions stemming from the City's motion.

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The Greater Victoria School District wishes to recognize and acknowledge the Esquimalt and Songhees Nations, on whose traditional territories, we live, we learn, and we do our work.

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Relative to the fencing currently surrounding Bank Street School for safety purposes, the fencing will remain in place until the building is remediated or it is demolished. School District No. 61 students and staff will be occupying Sundance Elementary School in September 2021, and the fencing is necessary to limit access to the possible perimeter of debris should the building collapse in a seismic event.

SD61 is available to meet with SJNA during the week of August 9th if, after receipt of this letter, the Association thinks a meeting at this time will further update the Association. Alternatively, given the information in this letter, the Association may wish to wait until October to meet with the District, at which time the District expects it will have received its cost estimate, met with the City and reported back to the Board.

Regardless of the Association's choice of August or October, please request a meeting date and time through my Executive Assistant Caroline Manders at cmanders@sd61.bc.ca so that a meeting can be scheduled.

Yours truly,

SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 61 (GREATER VICTORIA)



Deb Whitten
Interim Superintendent

Attach.

cc: Board of Education, SD61
Kim Morris, Secretary-Treasurer
Chuck Morris, Director of Facilities Services

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June 7, 2021

Jordan Watters, Chair
Greater Victoria School District No. 61
Board of Education
Via email: jwatters@sd61.bc.ca

Dear Chair Watters,

At our Council Meeting on May 20, 2021, Victoria City Council ratified the following motion:

Bank Street School Building - Proposed Partnership

That Council requests that staff engage School District 61, to propose a partnership and offer municipal financial assistance to restore the Bank Street School building (1623-1625 Bank Street) for educational and community use.

The resolution arose from public and neighbourhood feedback that did not support the demolition of this school, and from recent building condition assessments that concluded a better-than-anticipated condition given the age of the school building.

By way of this letter, we are formally requesting the Greater Victoria School District Board of Education give direction to SD61 staff to work directly with the City of Victoria to explore potential solutions that would permit the restoration of the Bank Street School building.

The City staff member in charge of this file is Peter Rantucci, Head of Strategic Real Estate, who can be contacted at prantucci@victoria.ca or 250.634.4158. We look forward to the possibility of collaborating on this project.

Sincerely,

Lisa Helps
Victoria Mayor

The City of Victoria recognizes the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations in whose traditional territories we live and work "Hay s wx qa"