



Speaking Points for Presentation to Committee II January 21, 2015 at 5pm

For background information purposes only we have attached the letters sent to the VBE Trustees and the Minister for Education in December by the Queen Mary PAC along with the response we received from Chair of Committee II and the letter sent to the Ministry by the VSB in December.

To follow are our speaking points as requested in advance:

1. The PAC would like a report detailing the overall original budget for our project compared with the current costs. We find it difficult to understand why additional funding cannot be secured from the Ministry if the original budget prepared was so grossly understated compared with the reality of the current construction costs.
2. It is our understanding that the Vancouver Seismic Mitigation Project Office was established on or about August 24, 2014 and until this was established the funds required to provide project management to the various seismic projects was not available to the VSB. We would like to know from which budget the costs associated with Seismic Mitigation came from and whether those budgets will now be replenished with the recently released funds.
3. We would like to know how much of the cost of the portables and temporary gym were charged to the Queen Mary Seismic Project? We would expect that the cost of these building would be amortized over their lifetime and that only a fraction of the cost would be allocated to Queen Mary as I would expect once we are done with them that they will be moved to another project.
4. We have both asked the ministry about the tax change impacts and can only hope that the Ministry will do the right thing and not penalize any seismic budget for a change in tax systems. Thank you for quantifying our amount at \$512,687. How soon do you anticipate a response from the Ministry on this point?
5. We are very concerned that the windows in the red building are not being replaced. We were very surprised and a bit shocked of the fact that replacing the windows in the red building was not part of this project. As it is, at least 50% of these windows have been broken and will have to be replaced anyways. The glass in these windows is treacherous. It is extremely thin and when broken very sharp and in an earthquake it would definitely be a safety hazard as they would break and potentially fall on children. As well, the windows do not open (although we have noticed work being done to improve this recently) which is also a safety concern for parents and we are certain that the paint that is on the window frames, which are in poor shape and flaking off from all the disruption, contain lead and putty in the window frames, asbestos. Can the VSB and the VBE Trustees confirm without a doubt that there will be no health ill effects due to the above given the current poor, flaking condition of the windows and the frames which children will have access to.

What is the impact of not doing the windows over the next 20 -30 years on the energy costs? In the case of Shaughnessy, it is our understanding that they have to replace the heating system due to stress put on the system due to the imbalance of heating required in the old versus the new part of their building. They old part was energy inefficient with the same single pane, old windows. Given that experience alone, would you not want to mitigate having to replace Queen Mary's heating system down the road by making the whole building more energy efficient and safer now?

6. Many years of planning goes into getting ready for a Seismic project. There are many parties consulted and it takes years. Why after investing so much time into coming up with a plan that everyone is in agreement with do we so lightly reduce the foot print without a larger appeal for additional funding. Moving a music room which was a prominent feature for our school and one that had so many different educational uses to a storage room in the basement, originally deemed as not suitable for a classroom seems unsuitable. Where will the fire exit be for this basement room?
7. Elimination of neighbourhood (early) learning space mean that any growth in the Queen Mary catchment at all cannot be accommodated with the current school size. In light of the recently proposed development of the properties east of Queen Mary, within our catchment we are very concerned that reducing our school footprint will make the school too small for any future growth in the area due to this development.
8. Our schools require storage to ensure that the teachers can organize both themselves and the classroom materials appropriately. Originally there were window seats in our red building that doubled as storage spaces for the classroom. These have all been removed which is leaving very little space for the teachers to store classroom supplies. Teaching our children to be organized and working in an organized environment is much more suitable for learning and I would hope that we would do what we can to ensure as much multipurpose storage spaces as possible can be included.
9. Thank you for confirming that our balcony will remain on our project. It is a very important piece for teachers, parents and students. We would also like some consistency with respect to what can and cannot be done with funds raised by PACs for one off projects like a Seismic upgrade. As parents we want to do what we can to make this newly improved and safer school the best it can be for our children and our teachers. We understand there are so many constraints on what can and cannot be done and we want to help.
10. At our PAC meeting on April 8th all of the parents that were there were extremely shocked and disappointed with what had been reported to us with respect to changes to our project. At that time myself, as chair specifically asked the team what we as a PAC could do to try to get additional funding. We asked about writing letters to the Ministry etc. We were told not to do this because they were advocating on our behalf. We were not told about Committee II. We assumed incorrectly that the budget issues with our project were common knowledge to the VBE Trustees. Due to inexperience on the part of our PAC executive we naively believed everyone was working hard to come up with ways to ask the Ministry for more money. We found out in December that this was not the case and it was very disappointing to say the least. No prepared update was presented at our PAC meeting on September 30th. Only confirmation (of information we received from other sources) that our entire contingency had been spent or allocated to the budget without improvements to the project. We have not had a detailed update on our project since April 8, 2014
11. Inconsistent communication with all stake holders of changes being made during the project.