

Minutes – Meeting with the FACE School Oversight Committee (FSOC)

November 11, 2019

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1) Presentation of attendees

Present at the FSOC meeting on November 11, 2019 were:

- Frederico de Medina, CSDM parent, FSOC
- France Arcand, CSDM teacher, FSOC
- Simon Laroche, Chair of the FACE Governing Board, FSOC
- Anne-Karine Tremblay, CSDM parent, FSOC
- Julie St-Pierre, CSDM teacher, FSOC
- Marie-Eve Arseneau, EMSB teacher, FSOC
- Genevieve Dodin, CSDM parent, FSOC
- Allison Hanes, EMSB parent, FSOC
- Theodora Stathopoulos, EMSB teacher, FSOC
- Lise Leblanc, CSDM Child Care Technician, FSOC
- Stéphanie Bellenger-Heng, School Commissioner, Ville-Marie School District, CSDM
- Annie Lamarre, Principal, FACE School, CSDM
- Jennifer Harriet, Vice-Principal, FACE School, CSDM
- Evelyne Alfonsi, Assistant Director General, EMSB
- Nathalie Lacroix-Maillette, Regional Director, EMSB
- Julie Bédard, Architect, Project Manager, Material Resources Department, CSDM
- Martin Ménard, Architect, Coordinator, Material Resources Department, CSDM
- Mathieu Desjardins, Director, School Organization Department, CSDM
- Joëlle Simard, Analyst, School Organization Department, CSDM
- Quentin Parisi, Communications Advisor, Office of Communications and Citizen Participation, CSDM
- Julien Archambault, Communications Advisor, Office of Communications and Citizen Participation, CSDM



- Patrice Bonneau, Analyst, Office of the Unit Directors, CSDM
- Benoît Lefebvre, Engineer, Executive Project Director, Société québécoise des infrastructures

2) Meeting goals

The Commission scolaire de Montréal (CSDM) specified the goals of the meeting:

- Review the October 22 meeting held before the filing of the report with the Council of Commissioners on October 23.
- Update the Oversight Committee on progress in the relocation project.
- Include the Oversight Committee in the ongoing and future consultation process about the relocation.
- Create a relationship of trust between the Oversight Committee and the Project Team.

To begin, the CSDM stated that the Project Team took a step back after the October 22 meeting to better understand the FSOC members' reactions as well as their concerns about what was presented. The Project Team realized that the amount of information presented at the October 22 meeting was perhaps too dense for the time available, which could have contributed to the FSOC not being reassured. The Project Team also stated that the FSOC may have had more serious concerns after this meeting because the presentation included some preliminary technical data that was still being validated at the time and that may have suggested that not all needs were being taken into account for the relocation. For the November 11 meeting, the CSDM wished to lay a more solid foundation for a harmonious relationship that it wants to build and maintain with the FSOC and the community.

3) Review of stakeholders' roles

Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur (MEES)

The MEES's role is to study and analyze the Opportunity and Business Files for the FACE School rehabilitation and relocation project in order to authorize funding for the project's implementation.

Société québécoise des infrastructures (SQI)

The SQI has a project management role.

Commission scolaire de Montréal (CSDM) and English Montreal School Board (EMSB)

The CSDM has a role as the public body initiating the project (or OPIP, as per the SQI's terminology). It must define its needs and establish ties with the community to develop

the related Opportunity and Business Files. The FSOC asked us to clarify the role of the EMSB in this project and to involve it in looking for relocation solutions. The CSDM will provide more details about this at a later date.

FACE School Oversight Committee (FSOC)

Comprised of parents and teachers from the CSDM and the EMSB, the FSOC's role is to identify the FACE School's specific concerns and needs and share them with the CSDM. The FSOC will help analyze the relocation scenarios. It acts as an intermediary to communicate progress in the project with the FACE School community. At this stage of the project, it was agreed that the CSDM would issue communications about how the project is progressing and post updates on the school's website.

4) Context of the FACE School project implementation

Development of the Business File (BF) and Opportunity File (OF) – New mandate for the Secrétariat du Conseil du trésor (SCT)

The CSDM and the SQI explained that the relocation component of the project is currently being accelerated to respond to the urgency of the FACE School's situation. However, considering that the cost of a temporary relocation is an estimated \$90 million, the SCT required a detailed analysis of all possible options and a full cost/benefit analysis for each option.

The SCT therefore now requires an OF to be filed before the BF, which is currently being drafted. The SQI and CSDM are now working on a strategy to meet these new requirements.

The SQI may launch a call for interest to search for real estate solutions to the relocation that are outside the CSDM's real estate portfolio. An evaluation committee will analyze these solutions as well as the buildings included on the FSOC's list. The FSOC members raised the possibility of putting back on the list some buildings that had previously been excluded for various reasons. However, the SQI said that it is unlikely any space in its real estate portfolio will be available to accommodate the FACE School. The SQI is required to maintain 2% vacancy in the spaces that it manages. The SQI also mentioned that similar steps taken not too long ago did not help find space on the market, and that spaces with the characteristics of a school probably do not exist on the market.

The OF may have to include an update on the following scenarios:

- work done while students are at the school
- work done while some students are at the school and some are relocated
- work done while students are at a rented relocation space
- work done while students are relocated in different places (rental building and CSDM building)

- work done while all students have been relocated to CSDM buildings

The CSDM pointed out that it is still in discussions with the MEES to find a solution that will not have an impact on the project's timetable.

The CSDM's mandates for the relocation project

The CSDM explained that, after the report was filed with the Council of Commissioners on October 23, 2019, an amendment put forward by Commissioner Stéphanie Bellenger-Heng requested that the organization provide an analysis of all buildings studied for the FACE School relocation, including available rental buildings and buildings that were suggested by the FSOC.

The CSDM went over its mandates for the relocation project:

Give the Office of the Director General, in collaboration with the School Organization Department and the Material Resources Department, **the mandate** to submit to the SQI and the MEES as part of the Business File development:

- The CSDM's preferred option for the relocation of the primary school, or Building A, for evaluation purposes.
- The request for funding for major rehabilitation to Building A.

Continue evaluating non-CSDM buildings proposed by the FSOC and also consider Scenarios 4 and 5 in the Business File to proceed with the relocation, with the goal of having as little negative impact as possible on the FACE School's particular vocation. *It should be noted that this mandate was added after an amendment was tabled by School Commissioner Stéphanie Bellenger-Heng at the Council of Commissioners meeting on October 23, 2019.*

Give the Office of the Director General, in collaboration with the School Organization Department and the Material Resources Department, **the mandate** to continue analyzing buildings B, C and D to more fully validate the hypotheses and report on these at a later date for filing with the SQI and the MEES.

For the analysis of all possible scenarios, the Project Team reassured the FSOC that they are looking at how to use the relocation sites to their full potential in order to continue the FACE School's program while maintaining the current number of groups and levels.

5) Status update for the FACE School rehabilitation project

Functional program

At the FSOC meeting, the CSDM briefly presented its analysis of the required space to deploy the FACE program as part of the development of the functional program that will be implemented for a potential relocation.

In the event of a relocation, the CSDM mentioned the possibility of combining spaces for different uses in order to optimize the use of art rooms in the relocation space(s). This means that the same room could be used, for example, for both music and drama classes. This option requires the CSDM to consult with teachers as soon as possible to determine the feasibility of proposals for combined uses.

Building profile and real estate analysis

The CSDM stated that the SQI is responsible for this component and that a call for tenders from professionals was issued on Friday, November 8. The SQI explained that the building profile consists of analyzing the condition of the building to clearly identify the technical issues that will have to be addressed and to get an overview of the situation. As for the real estate analysis, this examines different options and then recommends the best one, taking into account both the stated needs (functional program) and the building profile.

6) Potential sites for the relocation

The CSDM reviewed the analysis of the target buildings in its real estate portfolio along with the evaluation sheets produced for this analysis. The same type of analysis will be produced for the buildings on the FSOC's list.

An evaluation committee will be formed to analyze the target sites that do not belong to the CSDM's real estate portfolio. This committee will have members from the CSDM, the SQI and one or two members of the Oversight Committee and/or 2 parents from the FACE School. The Project Team will leave it to the members of the Oversight Committee and the school administration to determine whether members of the FSOC or parents will sit on the building evaluation committee.

7) The FSOC's concerns and how the Project Team intends to address them

The CSDM identified the five main concerns of the FSOC:

- a) the transparency of the process
- b) the FSOC's actual involvement
- c) the FACE program
- d) a possible analysis (or not) of potential sites
- e) the proximity of host sites for its clientele, including EMSB students

First, the CSDM said that various factors may have given the FSOC the impression that the organization was not transparent and was not rightfully involving them in the FACE School project.

It was explained that the complexity and scope of the project, the fact that it is new for the organization to involve the community so early on in this type of project, along with information confidentiality issues, may have given this impression. The CSDM is committed to continuing to involve the FSOC and to improve communications about the project to the community.

Maintaining the FACE program during the relocation is a crucial issue that is being considered by the architects who are developing the functional program for this relocation. The CSDM reiterated that the program is not at risk because of the relocation. Every effort is being made to keep it going.

Finally, potential locations that are not in the CSDM's real estate portfolio will be analyzed.

8) Communications

The CSDM's Office of Communications and Citizen Participation is committed to improving communications about the FACE School project. For example, an email address for the project, projetface@csgm.qc.ca, has been created. Questions and comments sent to this email address will be used for periodic project updates on the FACE School website. Some CSDM employees have access to this email for the moment. It was proposed that a member of the FSOC have access to this email. When new information becomes available, an email will be sent to all parents and to the CSDM and EMSB school teams.

The CSDM encouraged the FSOC members to listen to what the community has to say about the project. The CSDM invited the FSOC to ask the community to contact the CSDM at the email address set up if they have any questions or concerns.

The CSDM is also committed to simultaneously providing bilingual communications.

9) Question period

Note that the translations of these questions represent as closely as possible what was submitted by the FSOC members in French.

- **What is the EMSB's role in the FACE School project?**

The CSDM explained that the role of the EMSB will be better defined. It was stated that the EMSB will provide an overview of the buildings that could be analyzed for the relocation, a study of the locations of its students to evaluate school transportation, and a more accurate profile of the geographic locations of all FACE students. The CSDM will therefore provide the EMSB with its needs in terms of surface area and space for the FACE School.

- **How long will the project last?**

The SCT's new mandate regarding the requirement to develop an OF will automatically impact the timeline, as this requires additional time for approval after the filing of the OF and before the drafting of the BF can continue. The choice of the relocation site(s) could be approved around March 2021.

- **Where are the scoring sheets that we were supposed to get before the meeting on the 11th? Receiving them by no later than Friday, November 8 would give members time to review them before the meeting and therefore maximize our time... and this would be in line with what the CSDM said at the last meeting.**

The sheets were sent to the school administration on November 7, 2019.

- **Why did the SQI decide that there would be no external call for interest as discussed in April (see minutes), whereas all analyses to date show that there is no adequate building for all of FACE's needs, even when dividing up the community, in the CSDM's entire real estate portfolio?**

The CSDM has focused on the Council of Commissioners' mandate, which is to study potential locations within its real estate portfolio. A further assessment of space requirements could lead to one or more optimal solutions for a relocation to CSDM buildings. With the new mandates of the Council of Commissioners and the SCT, options outside the CSDM's real estate portfolio will be studied.

- **Where is the SQI in its call for interest for firms that could offer us rental space? Were there any takers?**

Currently, no call for interest has been launched. However, this call may be issued in the near future.

- **Why wasn't the SQI at the meeting on October 22?**

The CSDM did not invite the SQI to the October 22 meeting because the items of business discussed at this meeting, namely the content of the report to be tabled at the Council of Commissioners meeting on October 23, were more within the scope of the CSDM's internal organization.

- **What about potential spaces at the EMSB? Has a formal request been made to the EMSB to determine whether they have surplus buildings that could accommodate us? (And what is the EMSB's contribution to the collaborative effort to find a suitable site?) Do they not have surplus buildings available (for one of the scenarios?) that are closer than the buildings proposed by the CSDM?**

At the time, the CSDM had asked the EMSB to look into its real estate portfolio to identify potential host sites to accommodate all FACE clients. No solutions came out of this process. However, as the relocation scenario now implies that the primary and secondary schools will be separated, the EMSB will resume its search for potential locations in its real estate portfolio. The CSDM is committed to providing the EMSB with the space and rooms it needs for primary and secondary education to support the EMSB in this process.

- **Institut des Sourdes-Muettes: Is it really as old as Miséricorde or Hôtel-Dieu? Reminder: In the City's last communiqué (Mr. Dorais, fall 2018), the City did not yet own the building. What is the situation now?**

This building is probably not as run down as the former Hôpital de la Miséricorde, but this must be validated.

- **Who owns the Royal Vic? What are the goals for this building? Why not dig deeper to find places that aren't as run down? Not everything is 150 years old...**

The SQI owns part of this building. No projects are planned for this building at the moment. However, the state of disrepair and extent of the work that needs to be done to accommodate FACE's clientele mean that it would become a major project that would take longer than rehabilitating the FACE School. However, the Royal Victoria will be analyzed just as other potential host sites outside the CSDM's real estate portfolio. Regarding the Royal Victoria buildings owned by McGill University, a partnership was mentioned by a member of the FSOC, but the SQI is firm that no

partnership is possible, as these buildings will be used to meet McGill University's needs.

- **What will happen to the analysis/decision-making process when the school boards are abolished in the coming months?**

The Project Team does not have any information about this yet.

- **Can we review a number of scenarios that had been ruled out in the past? Even if they were not ideal at the time, they may be better than the proposals on the table. Example: the City is looking for temporary occupants for the Hôtel-Dieu site. It's very large and I know that parts of the building are outdated, but in my opinion, it's something to look into. Combined with the Sun Youth/Saint-Urbain proposal, perhaps we can come up with an innovative agreement that we were looking for at the start? If the City eventually wants to create social/affordable housing on the site, maybe it would be interested in collaborating on a mixed project with an integrated school?**

The Project Team stated that this could be a good idea, but that the Hôtel-Dieu site would be a major project involving a very long timeframe, and longer than that for the FACE School. For the FACE School project, the timetable remains an issue. The Hôtel-Dieu idea is therefore not feasible.

- **What about the former DSP site? It is central, and certainly outdated, but big enough to renovate/build a school for everyone on this site.**

This building is still occupied. This option will be analyzed, as this building is on the FSOC list.

- **If FACE students go to other schools (Jeanne-Mance or Georges-Vanier), how will school life be organized since FACE students have shorter periods, end later, start earlier...**

Different scenarios are possible, i.e., separate or integrated. For this project, we are considering full separation, i.e., each school will occupy its own spaces, have its own bells, its own schedules, etc. However, students would share some spaces such as the gymnasiums, cafeterias or science labs.

- **Does the deed of establishment need to be amended for this temporary relocation?**

Yes, but this will have no impact on the program. Regardless of the amendment to the deed of establishment, the CSDM will do the work needed to adapt the building to the FACE School's functions.

- **Would it be possible to reorganize services by keeping Grades 5 to 6 with the secondary school? (i.e., 28 "extended" secondary classes instead of 20, but 24**

primary classes instead of 32!) so that instrumental teachers do not have two schools?

This scenario was considered by the Project Team. It has not been definitively ruled out for the moment, but we have not pursued the analysis of this option. In this scenario, the issue of the required surface area would be transferred to the secondary school. This scenario could come up again if, once the study of potential buildings for secondary education is more advanced, we find that one of these buildings could accommodate these students (Grade 5 and 6 elementary + all secondary).

- **What is the plan for teachers who teach for both school boards and in 2-3 levels of education? And other staff members? How will this be managed? And if we do that, how can we uphold the ideology and spirit of FACE if the teachers (and administration) are separated?**

This indeed adds constraints to the school organization, but these are not insurmountable. Relocating the FACE School's clientele to two locations is not ideal, but the CSDM is doing its best to limit the inconveniences caused by this necessary situation, which is intended to be temporary.

- **School transportation: Will both school boards provide transportation for elementary students so that all young people in our community can continue their education at FACE? This is an issue of diversity for FACE, which will otherwise quickly become a neighbourhood school.**

The CSDM has released data on the location of its students: primary students mainly come from the Plateau-Mont-Royal and Ville-Marie, while secondary students come from the Plateau-Mont-Royal, Ville-Marie and the Sud-Ouest in fairly equal proportions. The FSOC members pointed out that this data does not take into account the locations of EMSB students and asked that this be corrected to provide a more accurate profile. They added that, at the first meeting at the CSDM in June 2017, CSDM representatives said that school transportation could be a measure taken in the case of a relocation to reduce its inherent negative impacts and, on the contrary, they never mentioned that this could not apply to the FACE community.

The CSDM explained that, since FACE is a specialized school, the transportation policy does not apply. However, the CSDM indicated that it would study the feasibility of setting up school transportation for the primary school. The CSDM mentioned that the annual cost of school-bus transportation is an estimated \$180,000 for primary clients in the Sud-Ouest only.

- **We understand that work has to start in the chosen building(s), so we must make a choice very quickly. What is the deadline for choosing the site(s)?**

We cannot yet give deadlines for choosing the host site(s) given all of the constraints explained.

Items to be reviewed

- **Review (agree on) the number of groups and ensure that there is a clear understanding of how room needs are calculated.**

During workshops with the school team, the architects who are developing the functional program gathered the information they need to clearly understand the school's operations. Needs in terms of rooms and surface area will be validated with the school team at the appropriate time. The CSDM stressed once again that all needs of FACE's educational program will be taken into account to adapt or develop the host site(s) for the school.

Comments

- **For all families in the west part of the territory—CDN, NDG, Saint-Henri, Verdun—Jeanne-Mance, Georges-Vanier and Cardinal-Newman are far away! Several are on the EMSB side.**

According to the distribution map of elementary clientele, the majority of students come from the Plateau-Mont-Royal and Ville-Marie. The target buildings in the CSDM's real estate portfolio are either close to a metro station or easily accessible by bus. We do recognize that we need data about the locations of EMSB students. The EMSB has agreed to provide this data to the CSDM.

- **Communications to be reviewed: information received after other schools, no regular information updates, no regular communications...**

The current process is new to the CSDM, and an implementation and adjustment period has been necessary. Channels that have been set up or that need to be set up will be used to regularly communicate with the community.

Specific questions about Building A (Christophe-Colomb):

- **This building is currently being used by Paul-Bruchési! They have said for years that they need it for their expansion. Will they have to vacate the site? Will they share it with the FACE primary school?**

Should this building become the host site for the primary school during the relocation, Paul-Bruchési's students would leave the site and would not have to share it with

FACE's primary students. The Unit Director responsible for this school has been informed of what is coming, as has the community.

- **How many groups could it accommodate in theory?**

The layout currently being developed by the architects for the rehabilitation project for the school on Christophe-Colomb would accommodate a 4-4-24 school (4 kindergartens for 4-year-olds, 4 kindergartens for 5-year-olds, 24 regular groups). However, the CSDM stressed that if FACE primary students are sent to this school, specific arrangements will have to be made so that FACE's educational program can be deployed there. The CSDM believes that the potential lack of space can be fully addressed with the addition of modular buildings. The FSOC members confirmed that it is essential to keep all groups and clients involved in the decision-making process.

- **Does the calculation of the current lack of space take into account the needs of the daycare?**

This calculation accounts for the needs of the daycare.

- **Once the prefabs are added, exactly how many rooms are missing from the Christophe-Colomb building?**

The proposal to add modular buildings is precisely to make up for the lack of space in the existing building to accommodate all primary school students. The CSDM again pointed out that the architects are working with the current student schedule to conduct room occupancy simulations to ensure that space use is optimized.

- **To me, 0.5 km from the metro on a busy street like Saint-Joseph is a long way for children. It's not exactly on the metro line! It is also difficult for families to get there by car. The courtyard, which is already tiny, will be further reduced by the prefabs. No parking for staff.**

The school is 550 m from the Laurier metro, compared to 300 m from the outside exit of the McGill metro for the current school. Elementary students are considered able to walk a distance of 1.6 km between home and school. In this case, the distance from the metro is less than 1.6 km. As for the courtyard, the idea is to keep the same amount of courtyard area that the FACE School currently has, i.e. approximately 1,300 m², even with the modular buildings.

- **Have you considered keeping the primary school at FACE until 2023 (or almost the earliest date that the secondary school will be relocated) and sending secondary students to Christophe-Colomb, since it is smaller? Would that meet the needs of secondary students without cutting up the elementary program?**

This is possible, but the building on Christophe-Colomb is better suited as a primary school. So far, the building on Christophe-Colomb is the best option from the CSDM's real estate portfolio for the FACE primary school. The CSDM reiterated that the educational program will be maintained at the relocation sites. The architects who are developing the functional program are taking into account all needs while ensuring that the use of rooms is optimized.

- **There was another school/building nearby on the CSDM's list of surplus buildings: 1130 Saint-Joseph. It was too small by itself, so we ruled it out. But it's right next door! Together, would they be large enough to accommodate the entire primary school? (With the daycare relocated to a completely different spot!)**

According to our studies so far, adding this building would not make up for the shortfall to accommodate the entire primary school. For the moment, the CSDM is not planning to take back this building.

- **Will this project take as long as the Saint-Gérard and Baril school projects?**

We must remember that the students at these two schools were relocated before these projects had started. For the FACE School, the relocation will take place after the project is already underway. This means that work can begin as soon as the students are relocated. The CSDM indicated that the work could take up to 3.5 years or more. This will be defined at a later date. It remains to be determined under what conditions the work will begin if the secondary school is moved after the primary school.

- **Why did the Cardinal-Newman option come up so late?**

This is an ongoing project that will become a transitional school and will accommodate students from other schools that need to be rehabilitated. This school is the largest in the CSDM's real estate portfolio designed to accommodate primary students and is adapted specifically for this purpose. The rehabilitation project for this school began in 2018. As soon as its characteristics became better known following professional studies, it became an interesting and viable option to host FACE primary school students.

Specific questions about Building B (Sun Youth)

- **In theory, how many groups can the Sun Youth building accommodate?**

According to preliminary studies, all secondary students could be accommodated in this building. This could be validated with more in-depth studies that will be done in the near future.

Specific questions about Building C (Jeanne-Mance)

- **When the Jeanne-Mance School was proposed, the idea was to keep everyone together. That's why the idea was chosen at the time...**

What is being proposed is a different option that would let secondary students in the sector stay in the school. In this proposal, the school would be shared by secondary students in the area and FACE secondary students. Considering the projected student population growth for the Jeanne-Mance School in the future, the CSDM recognizes that this option represents a major challenge. Indeed, if this option is chosen, FACE secondary students could be asked to move a second time to allow students from the area to use the space.

Stéphanie Bellenger-Heng mentioned that the Jeanne-Mance School is also an ASD service point and that it seems unlikely to consider a second relocation for her students who are waiting to have their own school (Irénée-Lussier) built.

Specific questions about Building D (Georges-Vanier)

- **Georges-Vanier was ruled out as an option a long time ago! Far too distant for clients in the west + south-west neighbourhoods. Are these sites really suitable for large instrumental + choral music ensembles? It is rather cramped at the moment, the robotics options (Roberval Academy) do not feel comfortable there. Let's think about OSF or Con Brio!**

This option is being considered because part of the school is already being used for transitional purposes and it is a secondary school. The school is near the Jarry metro station (orange line). Floor plan studies will be done to see what modifications should be made to the facilities so that FACE's educational program can be deployed. The FSOC members expressed concern about the loss of EMSB clients if this option is chosen.

- **The Georges-Vanier School seems to be the CSDM's preferred option to relocate the FACE School. What is happening with this?**

The CSDM indicated that this was not the case. It was pointed out that the Georges-Vanier School is very well known by our services since this establishment is already a transitional school. Its strengths and weaknesses are well known but do not necessarily make it the ideal building for the relocation. In our evaluation sheet, the Georges-Vanier School did not get the best score. Furthermore, the school is not currently available as it is at full capacity. Its transitional section is in fact occupied by students from Roberval Academy, whose building is about to undergo major renovations (this project has not yet started). The CSDM stressed that it has a duty to consider all viable options within its real estate portfolio, even if these options are not perfect.