

MINUTES

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF OTTAWA-CARLETON

CHAMPLAIN ROOM

03 DECEMBER

1:30 P.M.

PRESENT

Chair: A. Munter

Members: D. Beamish, W. Byrne, C. Doucet, L. Davis, D. Holmes, H. Kreling,
M. McGoldrick-Larsen

Regrets: A. Loney

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

That the Community Services Committee confirm the Minutes of the meeting of 19 November 1998.

CARRIED

PRESENTATION

CHANGES IN CLIENT BASE AND SERVICES REQUIRED

- Co-ordinator, Community Services Committee's report dated 25 Nov 98

That the Community Services Committee receive a presentation* from Mr. Mark Zarecki, Executive Director, Jewish Family Services, for information.

RECEIVED

* A copy is on file with the Co-ordinator, Community Services Committee.

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- Notes:
1. Underlining indicates new or amended recommendations approved by Committee.
 2. Reports requiring Council consideration will be presented to Council on 13 January 1999 in Community Services Report 23, except Item 1 which will be presented to Council on 9 December 1998 in Community Services Report No. 22.

REGULAR ITEMS

SOCIAL SERVICES

1. IMPACTS OF SCHOOL CLOSURES ON
REGIONAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

- Commissioner, Social Services Department and Commissioner, Planning and Development Approvals Department joint report dated 3 Nov 98
- Manager, Planning and Environment Law memorandum dated 20 Nov 98
- Commissioner, Social Services Department and Commissioner, Planning and Development Approvals Department joint memorandum dated 25 Nov 98

The Social Services Commissioner, Mr. D. Stewart, introduced the reports prepared pursuant to a direction from the Committee, and in consultation with the Boards of Education. He drew Committee's attention to display boards that show all schools earmarked for potential closure and the seventy schools that co-locate with child care programs.

Councillor J. Legendre asked about Table 1 of the report, specifically the significant negative numbers inside the Greenbelt, and the overall numbers. He inquired about the source of the Table, which seems at variance with what the Region has adopted as part of the Regional Official Plan (ROP). Ms. Marni Cappe, Branch Head, Policy Planning Branch, Planning and Development Approvals Department, said the projections were developed by the Department in preparation for the ROP and were updated with information from the 1996 data, enabling population by age breakdowns. She continued by saying many questions have arisen about the ostensibly anomalous nature of this Table, in view of the ROP's objective of increasing development inside the Greenbelt. Factually, over the planning period, staff are projecting a population increase of at least 80,000 inside the Greenbelt. When population projections by age group were done, staff utilized the standard, commonly-approved method. Because of the nature of the parcels available inside the Greenbelt, the forecast calls primarily for multiple units, particularly apartment units at the end of the planning period.

Ms. Cappe pointed out there is a correlation between the type of household attracted to apartments and multiple units. The growth in the Region over the next 25 years will be driven by the aging of the baby boomers. Staff have taken into account the children of the baby boomers who will be coming into their family formation years. When that happens these children will first be seeking apartment before they start a family. The projections relate in part to trends seen in the past but the parcels of land inside the Greenbelt proposed for future development were also taken into account. Ms. Cappe indicated this was not done on a neighbourhood by neighbourhood basis. She cautioned that, as decisions are made on that basis, there could be an increase in the population of school aged children, depending on the potential developments available. More work would need to be done on a case by case basis.

Councillor Legendre asked whether the LeBreton Flats or Rockcliffe Air Base lands were factored into Table 1. Ms. Cappe indicated this was done, however only gross projections are provided. She added, in response to a further question from the Councillor, that the information in Table 1 is not at variance with that which was available when the ROP was adopted. The original forecast has been updated to ensure the base is 1996 but there is no major deviation in the trends.

The Committee Chair, A. Munter, read a Motion prepared by Councillor C. Doucet, calling for the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton to oppose the forced closure of schools. Chair Munter indicated this Motion is meant to replace Recommendations 1 and 2 of the staff report.

Public Delegations

Ms. Jennifer Breakspeare, CUPE Local 2204, said many Union members work in centres located inside schools slated for closing, and have grave concerns, not only about possible job layoffs, but about the impact on the families and children they serve.

Ms. Dawn Dinsmore and Ms. Shelley Bird presented a sketch illustrating the effects of closure on one family that receives child care through a school facility.

Councillor D. Holmes asked whether a child care centre would be able to move to another facility and whether the formula would provide operating funds. Ms. Gayle Preston, Director, Child Care Services, indicated that existing child care programs in schools are excluded from the space compilations and are not counted against the school boards. It is unclear what would happen if the program were to relocate. The Boards would not get operating funds therefore costs would have to be borne by the programs. With respect to cost implications to the Region, Ms. Preston said this depends on the policies of individual boards. There would likely be increases to subsidized space holders and to full fee paying parents.

Committee Chair Munter asked whether staff, in light of the co-funding arrangements with the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS), have informed the Ministry the RMOC will expect more money to cover increased rents for child care centres. Ms. Preston said staff have identified this concern to the Area Office of the Ministry, but there has been no response indicating whether the costs will be covered.

Councillor W. Byrne asked for clarifications regarding the spaces not being counted against the schools, inquiring whether these are not counted also in the calculations for student space. G. Preston indicated that the Boards do not get operating funds for the child care centres. The funding formula says that, if a school has excess space, there cannot be grants for new schools. In this case, the space occupied by the child care program is not counted against the school but it against the Boards for capacity calculation.

Pat Williams, Co-President, Ottawa-Carleton Child Care Association (OCCCA)

Ms. Williams began by saying the staff report recognizes that child care will be affected by school closures but does not address ways to keep them open. Council should take a firm stand against school closures and in favour of children, families and school-based child care in the community. The OCCCA has a policy for “the seamless day” and its goal is to minimize transition and provide minimal disruption in a child’s day. The proposals by the Province and the Boards go directly against this goal.

Ms. Williams asked where the funds required for relocating child care centres would be found, when the RMOC has only allocated \$1.5 million to the Child Care Capital Reserve Fund for 1999 with no increases over the next five years. The MCSS should be pursued to help protect its investment in child care. Physical space for relocation is another concern. If schools close in a particular neighbourhood it is unlikely space will be found elsewhere in that neighbourhood. Ms. Williams asked that elected officials take a leadership role in saving the schools, and school-based child care programs. In addition, the Boards should follow the example of Toronto and Hamilton-Wentworth and say no to school closures.

Anna Kozłowski and 3 students from St Patrick’s Adult School

Mr. Reda Djelouah, said St Patrick is one of four adult schools that provide a full-time English as a Second Language (ESL) program. There are over 2000 students in the schools, 600 at St Patrick’s. Mr. Djelouah, a Medical Doctor and a Doctor of Philosophy in his country of origin, is currently studying English for six months, taking an advanced level course in the morning and preparation classes in the afternoon. This is a requirement of his application for a Master’s Degree at the Faculty of Medicine, University of Ottawa.

Mr. Djelouah said St Patrick is perfect for his needs. Programs offered include ESL at six levels, four computer courses, literacy courses and a child care program. Sixteen different classes are offered and they are almost full every day. The contents of the programs are complementary and their quality is constantly assessed. The downtown location makes the school easily accessible to students.

Mr. Djelouah said the school represents a bridge between his new life and his old life, and is a required first step to his future in Canada. He pointed out it is almost impossible to find work without mastering English. Without working, he will not be able to contribute to Canadian society: he will be sentenced to live on social assistance and this is unacceptable both to himself and to taxpayers. Unlike adult education programs, child care facilities have space exemptions. A similar exemption is needed in order to continue occupying the building. Mr. Djelouah asked that Council appeal to the Minister of Education on behalf of the programs.

Ms. Sarah Jang, said most students are refugees and landed immigrants from all over the world. They are well-educated in their countries of origin but their English is weak therefore they cannot find work. Although most depend on the social service system, they dislike this situation, and are anxious to improve their English and find work. If they are not given this opportunity, they have no future. Ms. Jang pointed out that if too many people depend on the social system for long periods of time, the Government will have to pay more money than it would have to pay to keep the school open.

In reply to a question from Councillor Holmes, Ms. Kozlowski indicated the funding for all four schools comes from the Province. Federal funding is provided for the LINC classes, a separate program that shares school space. Ms. Kozlowski said that what is being compromised is occupying school facilities. In response to letters written by students and staff, the Minister of Education and Training has indicated that grants will continue to be provided but that the adult program would not be allowed to occupy school facilities. The Province will not help in finding new facilities since it feels this is the boards' responsibility. Adult programs do not space exemption and are counted against the space allocation.

Chair Munter asked what proportion of social assistance clients are in these programs. Commissioner Stewart estimated that approximately 50% of adult students receive assistance. Chair Munter wanted to know how the Department rates the programs in terms of moving people off assistance and onto the workforce. Mr. Stewart said the programs are absolutely critical for clients to get on with their lives, to rebuild their lives, and to adapt to a new country. As well, they are for the Department to reduce its assistance costs.

Chair Chiarelli, asked whether staff could estimate the cost to the Region of replacing equivalent services if the adult high schools close. Commissioner Stewart indicated the cost would be into the millions just in annual rent to replace the lost space. With respect to the social assistance costs of educating people to move them off assistance, Mr. Stewart pointed out that municipal ratepayers pay \$150,000 for every one hundred clients that remain on the caseload on an annualized basis. If closing the adult programs results in people staying 2 or 3 months longer on social assistance, the costs would rapidly run into the millions.

Chair Chiarelli inquired whether these facts have been brought to the attention of the Province and whether there is any sensitivity to the additional costs incurred. Commissioner Stewart said he had spoken to the Area Office of the MCSS and the network of Regional Commissioners has raised this matter with the Deputy Minister. He indicated there is little sensitivity to the increased cost potential to municipalities, however the MCSS is aware of the importance of adult programs to its business plan and to its vision of helping clients find work.

Committee Chair Munter pointed out that the total cost of maintaining clients on assistance is \$750,000 annually when the cost to the Province, \$600,000 is factored in. Commissioner Stewart added that administrative and other overhead costs to maintain the cases have not been factored into the equation.

Councillor W. Byrne asked whether the Catholic School Board has had a response to its Motion calling on the Ministry to exempt adult schools and other measures. Commissioner Stewart said he was not aware there had been any response from the Ministry.

Ms. Margot Humphreys, Chair,

Ms. Humphreys prefaced her remarks by saying that, while her comments focus on the overcrowding in schools, they should not be interpreted as “us against them”. The closing of “empty schools” has nothing to do with the required openings of schools in other areas. She describe the situation extant in the Township of West Carleton, where, because of the geographic layout, double busing is required. School Principals have managed to get busing time down to less than two hours per day. According to the average daily enrolment figures provided by the Board, West Carleton has the dubious honour of having the largest proportion of elementary students in portables, 40%. While the new Stonecrest School relieved some of the pressure, it will likely have at least three portables next September. Buses start picking up students for Huntley Centennial School in Carp between 7 and 7:15 a.m., and this places a strain on the entire family. The school has 16 classrooms and 11 portables; almost every student from Grades 3 through 6 is housed in a portable. Fitzroy Harbour School was built in 1919 and has three classrooms, no gym, no large indoor space and no library.

Ms. Humphreys said the situation will not improve by closing schools inside the Greenbelt. Requiring schools to close so that new schools can open is like saying no new buses can be purchased by OC Transpo until all currently-owned vehicles are full, on every route, every hour of the operating day.¹

Councillor M. McGoldrick-Larsen asked whether the Region has the authority to cease building new communities or approving subdivision agreements until school problems are resolved. Mr. Nigel Brereton, Senior Project Manager, Development Approvals Division, spoke about the City of Mississauga having granted draft approval to various subdivisions and imposing, as a condition of draft approval, that prior to final approval the Boards of Education be satisfied that adequate arrangements are available. This condition has been appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board and a decision is pending. This decision will have a ripple effect throughout the Province.

¹ The complete text of the presentation is on file with the Committee Co-ordinator

Councillor McGoldrick-Larsen said she had been pleased to hear Ms. Humphreys' perspective on this issue, noting she has statistics that relate to the situation in South Nepean where there are not enough facilities to accommodate students. She asked that staff inform Council as soon as the results of the OMB decision in Mississauga are known.

Chair Chiarelli asked Ms. Humphreys what she expected Regional Government to do to accommodate her concerns, given the fact that education is not the Region's area of responsibility. Ms. Humphreys expressed the view that allowing homes to be built where there are no schools is the same as allowing them to be built where there are no sewers. It is the Region's job to ensure the downtown core is a place where people want to raise their children. This is not the case since demographics indicate people are moving away. The Region lobbying the Ministry to meet its needs would perhaps help the boards meet theirs.

Councillor C. Doucet thanked the speaker for her comments and for the support received from all other areas in the RMOC. Speaking in response to Chair Chiarelli's query, the Councillor said his experience was that constituents didn't trust that the Boards of Education would "go to the wall" on this issue, as was done in other jurisdictions. If the Boards won't do it, other ways have to be found to protect the schools.

Mrs. Martha Scott said people are here because they are desperate. Board staff see themselves as answering to Toronto and have said as much, and it was pointed out to them that they are locally elected. The level of frustration is unbelievable because the entire debate has consisted of undecipherable gobble de gook wrapped around the words "formula" and because it is clear there is no plan. Mrs. Scott spoke about her situation with her two children currently in downtown schools that are to be closed. She said she can get no information about where her children will be placed: conceivably, they may have to move when the next closures are announced. Her children are not in small classes (the smallest has 23 children). Mrs. Scott stressed it is important to emphasize this fact. She posited that if the approach of the Province and the boards, i.e., closing downtown schools and opening them in other areas, is carried to its conclusion, Ottawa will not have the population base to support police and fire services: the downtown will be entitled to no services.

Albert Chambers, Trustee, Ottawa-Carleton District School Board, said schools are integral to the regional infrastructure, whether in the urban core, the suburbs or the rural area. The Province has linked closures in the central core with growth in rural areas; many in the community believe this is an important issue. The Chairs of the respective boards are in Toronto today, trying to make the Minister understand the importance of separating inside and outside the Greenbelt and dealing with other parts of the formula. This formula is faulty; it has problems and many who have tried to understand it have come to realize this. He explained that if the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board were to reduce the 25 or so schools and remove the 10,000 or so spaces staff have indicated should be removed, this would still only get the board to the 100% level and would not ensure new dollars for new schools. Another faulty aspect of the formula deals with renovating old schools; better-directed funds are needed for renovations so the board can

provide quality of education. The “de-coupling” of inside and outside the Greenbelt has implications for boards in other municipalities with downtown cores amalgamated with other areas. Regional Councils must convey to the Province this problem needs resolution across the Province in those areas. The current policy that disallows the transfer of child care spaces from closed schools will need to change if the continuing need for child care is to be met in school facilities. Trustee Chambers urged Committee members to approve Councillor Doucet’s resolution. He expressed the belief that unless quality education is available in the community, it will not be possible to attract economic growth, the new firms required and the qualified people needed to work in the community.

Councillor L. Davis thanked Trustee Chambers for the hard work accomplished under difficult circumstances. She asked if he would give the Committee his sense of his fellow trustees, specifically whether they are unwilling to see the kind of disruption closures will mean for inner city schools and communities. Trustee Chambers indicated that, as a Board, a course has been set and is being continued, although this generates tremendous frustration around the table. Boards are also being pressured by the Province which says one thing in its media campaign but another through its regulations. Councillor Davis inquired whether the fact that it cost the Board \$1.5 million to renovate Fisher Park, now being considered for closure, should receive more prominence in terms of wasting tax dollars to renovate one facility and moving to another where similar renovations may be required. Trustee Chambers said the system needs rationalization. There are changes in demographics, populations shift and there is no need for the drastic closures forced on the Boards. Councillor Davis spoke about the situation in Hintonburg where the possibility of multiple closures exists. This will throw off the community’s revitalization efforts and create other problems in the neighbourhood.

Committee Chair Munter asked to what degree the Boards coordinate among themselves on issues, specifically are there “cross-overs” from the public to the catholic system and are these part of the calculations. Trustee Chambers indicated the boards exist as clear and distinct silos and there are issues that limit this kind of planning. However, this is beginning to be focused on and our board has indicated that other boards’ plans should be taken into account. The public board has the responsibility to educate anyone showing up at its door: public education must be available in the neighbourhood and to anyone who wants to access it, regardless of their religion.

Regional Chair Chiarelli pointed out there may be exceptional circumstances where school consolidation is required or where a school might be considered surplus. He expressed concern about the use of the word “all” in the first point of Councillor Doucet’s Motion, inquiring whether another word could be used to preclude criticism on the part of the Province, or others, that this approach is too drastic. Trustee Chambers explained the process the Province has put into motion by telling the Boards there must be more than 100% capacity in existing schools to get funding for new schools. If school properties are retained, the spaces will count against the Board, whether or not the schools are closed. In order to eliminate the spaces, the Boards have to offer the property to other entities such as other boards, levels of government and to the Ontario Realty Corporation. Trustees believe the intention of the Province is to pick-up the properties, to “scoop”

potentially valuable urban sites so it can make a profit and perhaps, at some future time, give the Boards funding to build new schools.

Chair Chiarelli said he thought the resolution should be clarified to indicate a change in provincial policy would be required in order for the boards not to suffer penalties because of joint uses not related to pupil spaces. Trustee Chambers posited this is covered in the second point of the resolution. Councillor Doucet clarified the resolution does not mean that boards can't close schools. Maintaining all locally-owned schools simply means they remain on the inventory of public infrastructure.

Peter Jarvis, New Edinburg Community Alliance, spoke in support of Crichton School and on behalf of Our Schools, Our Communities Alliance. The Alliance is working to stop the closure of 10 schools and of the further 20 schools it is estimated will need to close to satisfy "the formula" and permit the building of new schools in rural areas. Mr. Jarvis said he would support any methodology that will get rural schools built. He spoke about attending 53 meetings in the last few months, and this number represents an average of the seriously centrally occupied people trying to do something to stop the madness. Participants are frustrated; the experience has been horrible, and Councillors need to get a sense of this frustration. With respect to why presenters have come to the Region, it is because of the children primarily, but also because of what happens to communities when schools are closed. This should be at the top of the Region's concern about the viability of communities from the standpoint of the tax base, of recreation, etc. Mr. Jarvis continued by saying the days of single use buildings are long gone. Facilities can be used for a variety of purposes and, in cooperation with the Boards, the City and the Region can work together to find other uses. If schools are lost, they are gone forever.

Carolyn Horricks, Churchill Alternative School, noted that one of the frustrations of community working groups was the perceived lack of consultation with both regional and municipal governments on this issue. She said people were devastated by the decision to close Fisher Park, Summit School and Whitehaven, schools. She agreed there are pockets of extra space, but there are more creative ways to utilize the schools to eliminate the excess space at Fisher Park. She asked that, if possible, the Motion receive unanimous support. Ms. Horricks said it was unreasonable to expect a school to be used 100% at all times. She felt it was important to disentangle the notion of having to close inner city schools to in order to build in the suburbs or in rural communities.

Mr. Ken Hoffman, representing the Our Schools, Our Communities Alliance, said the myth that pits the inner city against suburban areas must be exploded at all costs. It is estimated there are 9,500 children in the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board currently in 378 portable classrooms. This is an urgent situation in view of recent announcements about the health impact of moulds in portables. The funding formula has not changed since earlier announcements, meaning that 20 to 25 schools will need to close just to get to 100% occupancy. The vast majority of these closures will need to be made in the inner city and three to five smaller schools will need to close to generate enough demand for the first new school to be built. Another concern is that boards won't be allowed to keep funds generated from the sale of school properties. As few boards would be able to pick-up the properties offered to them, these properties would end up with the Ontario Realty Corporation to be sold by the Province. These are community assets, paid for largely by taxpayers in Ottawa-Carleton, that will be lost forever with nothing to show for it. Mr. Hoffman called this an unacceptable tax grab by the Province. He posited the formula must be changed. Ottawa-Carleton is a unique mix of urban, suburban and rural municipalities; if the Ottawa and Carleton Boards were still separate, the latter would likely qualify for the schools it needs now. This consequence of combining two vastly different boards and the inadequate formula must be objected to by the City, the Region and the Boards themselves. The ROP recognizes that neighbourhoods go through life cycles. Although the overall trend is for fewer school age children within the Greenbelt, some flexibility is needed to accommodate natural changes in neighbourhoods and to maintain the buildings in the public sector. Mr. Hoffman expressed the hope that the creative powers of all the parties can come together to achieve this goal.

Carolyn Brereton, Vice-Chair, Crichton School, said the school will soon celebrate its 150th birthday and it is a valuable facility for the community at large. When parents were informed by a call-around that the school would close, they expressed both shock and confusion. Parents said they did not believe much-needed new schools would be built and many were convinced their children would be housed in portables. Parents are determined to move their families if the schools are closed. Ms. Brereton said the overcrowding problems will not be resolved by closing schools and this will create even more social problems. Many programs at Crichton School enhance the quality of school care. Parents volunteers, give freely of their times. Young children thrive in an environment where they feel secure. Requiring 100% occupancy will not get new schools built. Ms. Brereton said representatives will urge the Board to delay its decision at this time, look for ways to build new schools and to let Crichton School remain open.

Jackie Yiptong, a resident of Overbrook, expressed the view it is flawed to take global numbers inside and outside the Greenbelt and apply them to all neighbourhoods. An examination of the City of Ottawa's population forecasts show projections by neighbourhoods are on the increase. In the case of Overbrook and Vanier, it is difficult to foresee decreases since people who reside there rely heavily on the subsidized housing units in the wards.

Because of the proposed school closures, children will have to be bused to other facilities. Ms. Yiptong asked what happens to children whose families rely on social assistance when they have to attend a school where there is no direct OC Transpo service. They are being put at risk of missing the school bus, being absent from school and falling into this pattern of behaviour.

Cathy Yach, Chair, Strategic Planning Committee, Child Care Council of Ottawa-Carleton spoke about the potential loss of Early Childhood Education (ECE) programs located in school boards. Ms. Yach said these programs increase social competence, language and play development, provide better control over aggression and increased compliance with adults, to name only a few benefits. Recent studies concluded that for every dollar spent on children during pre-school years, \$2 dollars are saved in future years on social service costs. Every dollar spent on disadvantaged children saves \$7 dollars in future social service costs. Ms. Yach continued by saying ECE programs need security of space, and boards should consider leasing properties on a long-term basis to programs where moneies for capital costs come from other sources. Rental charges should also be determined in a fair and equitable way. She posed a number of questions relative to relocation costs and transportation savings generated by school closings. She spoke about the impact of closures on the workforce and on families. Lastly, Ms. Yach asked whether the child was the focus of the decision-making and she emphasized the need for a child-centered society.

Speaking to Councillor Doucet's Motion, Ms. Yach suggested reference be made to where the properties will end up when being dispersed. She indicated the information is that once the properties have been taken over by the Ontario Realty Corporation, the boards have no say on their disposal. She spoke about there being other options, including the option of local municipalities to pass Motions to freeze all the properties, thus preventing the boards from closing schools.²

Mr. J. P. Spessot, Vice-Chair, School Council, Corpus Christi School, spoke about the Ministry Rated Capacity (MRC), a formula that calculates how many students are expected to go into a classroom and dictates which schools are to open or close. It also goes into the funding formula, which is flawed, and does not relate to the building of new schools. Ms. Spessot spoke about attending a recent meeting of the Catholic School Board where staff presented the school area review. He indicated many people found the meeting confrontational and believe the board is dancing to the provincial government's tune, moving with the formulas because, for the first time in a long time, they see the prospect of money for new schools. At another meeting held under the aegis of Richard Patten, M.P.P, the participants agreed the government would have to be targeted, and petitions were started. It if felt the Ministry has to be hit from all levels, and this is why the Region has to be involved.

² The complete text of Ms. Yach's presentation is on file with the Co-ordinator.

Committee Discussion

The Committee Chair read a number of ancillary Motions to be considered with the main Motion presented by Councillor C. Doucet.

Councillor Doucet began by thanking Councillors Munter, Holmes and Legendre for their assistance in preparing the Motion and he expressed the hope Council will unanimously support it. The Councillor posited that constituents expect action, not just rhetoric, in response to school closures. He made reference to a Motion passed by the City of Ottawa, only to be ignored by the Boards. Councillor Doucet said school closures go to the heart of communities' existence. The communities that form Capital Ward have very little green space and plenty of traffic: if schools are taken away, nothing will remain. Councillor Doucet said he felt that Council must move as aggressively as it can to ensure it will not be on the losing side of this issue, for the benefit of the entire Region.

Councillor M. McGoldrick-Larsen indicated that, while she agreed with the spirit of the Motion, she could not support telling the Boards that none of the schools should close. She pointed out that Trustees are duly-elected to manage and while the RMOC has an interest because of the programs it operates in school facilities, it should not dictate how the trustees run the Boards' affairs. The Councillor questioned where the funding would be found to "maintain all locally-owned schools under board or municipal control", indicating she could not support this approach. She expressed her strong support for amending the formula as it makes no sense, and it illustrates that the right hand doesn't know what the left hand is doing at the Province. The Province wants more training programs to get people off assistance but closes facilities that provide the training: it increases per diem rates then closes facilities where child care centres exist.

Councillor McGoldrick-Larsen spoke about the formula not allowing space for special needs students, when it has been identified these students should get help at an early age to ensure later successes. She said there is no question suburban schools are needed, citing the example of an elementary school that will, in 1999, have to accommodate 1300 students when it was originally built to accommodate 456 students. The Councillor said she felt this was not a proper environment for elementary students.

Councillor W. Byrne spoke in support of the Motion before Committee. She posited the first point simply calls for maintaining school properties for ownership and represents asset management: properties can be retained, used for other purposes and, when demographics warrant it, the buildings can revert to school usage. The fact that the Province keeps changing the formula is an indication the formula is deeply flawed. There is a lot of uncertainty as what is or is not included, as illustrated by the presentations made today relating to child care and to adult education programs.

Councillor Byrne expressed the view that having child care facilities within schools is an innovative and intelligent approach which is now being destroyed and this will impact on the choices people make regarding schools for their children; it will also impact on demographics and capacities. In addition, the impact of new developments is not being recognized, nor the pressures these will place on existing school facilities. The Councillor said many of her constituents indicate they chose a certain community because of amenities such as the proximity to schools for their children. They are willing to pay more for their property because of these amenities, and this too will be impacted. The lack of schools may also prevent people coming to Ottawa-Carleton to work in the high-tech sector. Councillor Byrne concluded by saying that, as a parent, and as a Member of Regional Council, she has a duty to lobby the Province to change the formula: to be silent would be seen to be acquiescent, and this is not an acceptable course of action.

Councillor H. Kreling said that while he supports the Motion, he shares the concerns of Councillor McGoldrick-Larsen on point 1. He said neither could he support point 6, as he felt the approach suggested by Chair Munter in his Motion was the preferred option. He pointed out that approving Councillor Doucet's Motion in place of staff recommendations 1 and 2 will leave the Region without an alternate plan should the Province choose to disregard the Region's input. Councillor Kreling said Council must express its concerns with the formula devised by the Province, and say it does not agree with the removal of adult high school programs and with the impact school closures are having on communities generally. He posited Council's role is one of advocacy for area residents, given that the Region does not have decision-making powers in matters of education. Approving the Doucet Motion will accomplish this advocacy role. Councillor Kreling said that, while his concerns are based on issues of financing, ownership and decision-making, he appreciated the passion that Councillor Doucet has brought to the issue and the strength of the arguments he has put forward.

Councillor D. Holmes expressed the view this is one of the most important issues elected representatives will deal with in this term of office. She spoke in support of Councillor Doucet's Motion, saying that the staff recommendations can be used later should the present action fail. She stated that it was not her intention to fail. She pointed out that the Boards of Education are likely unaccustomed to provincial legislation that is hurried, not carefully thought out, unprofessional and juvenile, whereas the RMOC has seen this happen time and time again. The present government believes in speed at all cost. It is clear the consequences of these actions have not been analysed, and the proposed measures must be stopped, in the same manner as other detrimental measures have been stopped before. The Councillor posited that other Boards and other Cities will want to participate in the discussion all parties will want to work together. Councillor Holmes said not only is the loss of schools a problem for communities, it also has an economic impact. She pointed out schools are publicly-funded buildings that should be available for use at all times, in the same manner as Regional Headquarters is used regularly by public groups.

Councillor Holmes noted that many schools were paid through local property tax dollars and to have the Province “scoop” these assets out of the community and turn them over to developers is not acceptable. She spoke about Ottawa City Council having refused, in the past, to rezone any of the properties the Ottawa Board of Education wanted to close and none of the schools slated for closure can be sold unless they are rezoned. Councillor Holmes said she foresaw that many cities would go to the Ontario Municipal Board to appeal every zoning change requested. She expressed her interest in the Region looking into its own legal and planning authority in this regard. Councillor Holmes said she was appalled at the school situation in the outlying areas. The Province has to be forced to debenture in order to build needed facilities and should be actively lobbied to get back to a more practical way of doing things.

Councillor L. Davis spoke about Fisher Park School being cited as a model by other communities. An incredible amount of work has been done therein to deal with racial integration and the school has been called a centre of excellence. In addition, almost \$1.5 million was spent to refurbish this facility which is now targeted for closure. Councillor Davis said this doesn't make sense and things are happening too rapidly. She expressed her concern about the situation in surrounding communities where the absence of a planning process contributes to new schools needing portables almost immediately after they are built. The Councillor said she also worried about what Phase 2 would bring. Communities and individuals have very few facts to help them plan their lives. She pointed out that if the Province sees enough of a reaction, it may back down, as it has done before and approving the Motions can be the first step. There will be a wave of reaction throughout the Province, with voices united in saying closures are happening too rapidly and that the proper assessments have not been made. Board Trustees are charged with responsibility for education, but they need the community's support to counter the negative impacts of school closures.

Councillor J. Legendre began by thanking Councillor Doucet for his leadership on this issue, along with Councillor Holmes and Regional Chair Bob Chiarelli. The Councillor said schools work but the formula doesn't, as was illustrated by the presentations on the adult education program. This program contributes to economic development by helping new Canadians quickly integrate into the community. The immersion programs contribute to making the Region of Ottawa-Carleton more bilingual than it is. School infrastructure in neighbourhoods is important to sustain healthy and viable communities. Councillor Legendre spoke in support of asking staff to draft conditions for subdivision approval placing the requirement for school infrastructure on at least the same level as that for sewer infrastructure. As well, school boards should be asked to examine demographic data on a community basis, and not rely on broad inside vs. outside the Greenbelt generalizations, or on generalizations based on the huge territories now encompassed by school boards. The Councillor pointed out this is not the first instance where the Province has created a diversion to “take the flack” for the real decision-makers, citing the Hospital Restructuring Commission as a recent example of this strategy.

The Regional Chair, B. Chiarelli, stressed the importance of clarifying, for the broader community, why Regional Government is involving itself in an educational issue, and of stating this is not grandstanding, province-bashing or pandering to a special interest part of the electorate. He continued by saying the school closures issue is not happening incrementally, it is not something that will seep into communities over time and allow them to adjust. It is a massive incursion into communities, with massive repercussions for Regional Government in areas where it is involved on a daily basis. For these reasons, Councillor Doucet and Social Services Commissioner Dick Stewart should be complimented for taking a leadership role and for raising the issue. Mr. Chiarelli said the impact of closures on child care centres, on adult education classes and on social services will be significant. As well, the cost to the Region and to the Province of relocating community services now being provided in schools has not been assessed adequately.

Speaking to the planning issues, Chair Chiarelli said the entire matter of new subdivisions and the conditions imposed by the Region will need to be evaluated, to allow the community to grow with a sense of order and with rational planning principles. The provincial policy of housing intensification, which the RMOC has adopted through the Official Plan, dictates that the infrastructure be available to serve the people the Region wants to attract and build for within the urban area. These are very significant issues that impact on the everyday responsibilities of Regional Government; these areas of responsibility have been assigned to the Region by provincial legislation and they must be carried out in an accountable manner.

Chair Chiarelli indicated he will strongly urge Regional Council not only to pass the resolutions to communicate ideas and opinions on school closures but also to take action. If such action includes zoning changes, if it is felt that a school closure is not in the best interest of the community, whether this relates to child care services, social services or adult education, it should be opposed and the matter should be referred to the Ontario Municipal Board. If it is felt there are too many children in portables in the suburban areas with no prospect of resolving existing problems, let alone problems that will ensue from new subdivision approvals, these subdivisions ought not to be approved. Chair Chiarelli pointed out that, in order to achieve these goals, the Region will need to work in partnership with the Province. If the Province is going to dictate and not work in partnership with regional municipalities across Ontario, the only powers left to municipalities are in the areas of zoning, and these should be utilized. Regional Council cannot impact on Ministry of Education policy. However, the Region does have legislative and zoning powers at the local level; it should exercise these powers to plan well and to protect the community. Chair Chiarelli said he would strongly encourage Council to do just that.

The Committee Chair, A. Munter, pointed out he represents an area with severe school overcrowding. Both he and the Trustee on the public school board agree that the formula does absolutely nothing to address the overcrowding issue. Once the Boards close every "excess" space, they do not get money: they get authorization to build one new school in Ottawa-Carleton. They will have to close even more schools before they get the authorization to borrow more money. The provincial government is confiscating buildings that, in the case of the Ottawa Board, were paid 100% by local taxpayers, and that in the case of the Carleton Board, were paid 40% by local taxpayers. These buildings will then be sold, the money from the sale will be retained by Queens' Park, and the Boards will be asked to borrow to build new schools. The fraudulence of this process is clear: this is the theft of community assets. Chair Munter suggested that, if all the Boards are going to be able to do is to borrow, they should be authorized to do so immediately, as the need is pressing. Speaking to the suggestion of blocking new subdivisions, Committee Chair Munter said he felt this is a tool the Region needs to consider. Doing so may motivate the development industry to join with the community and this would be a positive outcome, since it well known who the provincial government listens to in these matters.

At the request of several committee members, Councillor Doucet's Motion was considered clause by clause, with the following outcome:

Moved by C. Doucet

WHEREAS unlike Toronto, Hamilton-Wentworth, Peel and other Ontario municipalities, the forced amalgamation of school boards in Ottawa-Carleton has combined historic central boards, containing schools dating back to the founding of the city, with new boards serving the newest areas of the Region; nor in the past has this ever been done as the idea has always been accepted that you cannot compare the needs of these two very different urban areas; and as the Taman Provincial Commission stated in 1991, the needs of outer communities should not be linked to those of the inner city communities; and,

WHEREAS local property taxpayers paid entirely or partially for schools in our community and the Province's funding formula requires local school boards to liquidate these valuable, locally-paid-for assets with proceeds accruing to the provincial government; and,

WHEREAS community programs are able to pay rent to the Boards for the use of temporarily surplus facilities and thereby help school boards fund important community programs; and,

WHEREAS even if school boards close every single space labeled as "excess" they are still not guaranteed any funds for new school construction and would be required to borrow money to build new schools;

1. THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Regional Council oppose this forced removal of valuable local assets and offer to work with the school boards to

develop proposals to maintain all locally-owned schools under school board or municipal control; and,

CARRIED
(D. Beamish, H. Kreling,
E. Mc Goldrick-Larsen
dissented)

- 2. THAT schools that are operating on a no-cost basis to the school boards or are rented out and generating revenues for the boards should be allowed to continue as long as an agreement is signed permitting the immediate return to school use should that need be identified; and,**

CARRIED
(D. Beamish dissented)

- 3. THAT the provincial funding formula be amended as was recently done for operating costs to reflect 80% capacity and ESL, FSL education, child care, adult education and other no-cost community rentals be included in this formula; and,**

CARRIED

- 4. THAT new school construction not be tied to closures of schools in other areas of the Region and that new construction of needed new schools begin immediately; and,**

CARRIED

- 5. THAT, since the Province would not be covering the full cost of new school buildings even if school boards close schools and would require instead that the boards borrow to finance new construction, the Province be requested to proceed with the use of such debentures immediately to deal with the needs of new communities; and,**

CARRIED

6. THAT staff be directed to draft an Official Plan amendment that would protect schools.

CARRIED
(D. Beamish, H. Kreling,
M. McGoldrick-Larsen
dissented)

Moved by C. Doucet

That Council request that the school boards, as part of their studies, account for the future potential of increased school enrollments represented by large parcels of residential land within the National Capital Commission Greenbelt such as LeBreton Flats, Rockcliffe Air Base and other potential sites.

CARRIED

Moved by D. Holmes

That school boards be encouraged to use projections based on demographic data which is community-specific as they consider re-deploying their physical infrastructure.

CARRIED

Moved by D. Holmes

That the Ministry of Community and Social Services be urged to protect the present public investment in child care spaces that are located in schools.

CARRIED

Moved by A. Munter

That the Planning and Development Approvals Commissioner's report dated 12 Nov 98 in response to Outstanding Inquiry No. P&E - 4(98) be referred to the Planning and Environment Committee for a discussion of ways to deal with the issue of lack of school facilities, along with documentation relating to the Ontario Municipal Board appeal in Mississauga; and,

FURTHER THAT staff draft several potential clauses for subdivision agreements which could effectively address this issue.

CARRIED

Moved by D. Holmes

That Council express its strong support for the position expressed by the Ottawa-Carleton Catholic School Board, that adult education programs are essential to the fabric of our community and that Council object to a funding formula that does not permit boards to allocate school space to these programs; and,

FURTHER THAT, given that approximately 50% of adult education (English as a Second Language, French as a Second Language) students are social assistance clients, staff be directed to prepare a report on the cost to these clients and to taxpayers of closing the programs.

CARRIED

Moved by D. Holmes

That these resolutions be circulated to all local school boards, all local school trustees, all local MPPs, the Minister of Education and Training and the leaders of all provincial parties.

CARRIED

Moved by C. Doucet

That Council be requested to waive the requirement of the Rules of Procedure and consider this report at its meeting of 9 December 1998.

CARRIED

HEALTH

2. **ENDORSEMENT OF LETTERS**

- Co-ordinator, Community Services Committee's report dated 19 Nov 98

That the Community Services Committee recommend Council endorse the attached letters to Health Minister E. Witmer, Environment Minister N. Sterling and Municipal Affairs and Housing Minister A. Leach, and;

That this information be forwarded to other regional municipalities in Ontario to seek their support.

CARRIED

3. PUBLIC HEALTH IMPACT OF CASINO GAMBLING
AND EXPANDED GAMING - SIX-MONTH FOLLOW-UP
- Medical Officer of Health's report dated 24 Nov 98
- Response to CSC Motion No. 13 (98)

That the Community Services Committee recommend Council receive this report for information.

CARRIED

4. EARLY POST PARTUM DISCHARGE POSITION PAPER
- Co-ordinator, Community Services Committee's report dated 19 Nov 98

That the Recommendations outlined in the Ontario Public Health Association position paper on Early Post-Partum Discharge be referred to the Health Department for a review of the strategy outlined on p. 43 (of the OPHA document) and that the Health Department report back on the implementation of this strategy in Ottawa-Carleton.

CARRIED

5. TOWARDS A PUBLIC HEALTH APPROACH TO
REDUCING CHILD POVERTY AND ENHANCING RESILIENCY
- Co-ordinator, Community Services Committee's report dated 19 Nov 98

That the report of the Ontario Public Health Association entitled "Towards a Public Health Approach to Reducing Child Poverty and Enhancing Resiliency" be referred to the Health Department and to the Social Services Department for a report on the RMOC's mandate in this area and recommendations for action.

CARRIED

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

17 December 1998

CHAIR

CO-ORDINATOR