

Hi James,

Thank you for the notes. You have done an excellent job of capturing a discussion that ranged quite widely and seldom stayed within the framework of the agenda, but nevertheless provided a great deal of important information.

I have included below what I hope will be seen as supplementary information and clarifying comments.

1. The level of funding for a seismic project is determined by the "least cost option" which, for any given project, may be a full upgrade of the existing facility, a new facility, or a combination of upgrade and new construction.

The total cost or budget for a new facility is determined using area standards and unit rates for a given number of students but the school community has discretion regarding how that budget is used to provide facilities that match its needs.

2 -3. Phase 1 addressed seismic upgrade options and costs. Phase 2 is intended to extend planning consideration to other inputs, including those mentioned in these 2 items.

4. The analysis I provided in my previous e-mail is a very brief outline regarding current use and does not yet include a consideration of future needs.

In the interest of clarity, we should keep in mind that the provincial funding is for seismic mitigation, while the VSB's and Kitsilano's goals are both seismic mitigation and school renewal. We should not be surprised that a program funded for one purpose (seismic mitigation) is not structured nor funded to be optimal for a different purpose (school renewal). With that understanding, we may be able to get past our frustration with the process and to concentrate our efforts on turning the process to better meet our paired goals of seismic mitigation and school renewal.

Once funding for seismic mitigation has been established, we can begin the process of assessing the school's needs. Where we find the funding for seismic is inadequate for also addressing school needs, we then have a basis for lobbying for extra funding for school renewal.

7. As I understand it, the VSB goal is to access seismic mitigation funds to seismically upgrade deficient schools. In parallel with that aim is the goal to simultaneously renovate, renew, or rebuild schools to better meet current and emerging needs. The challenge is to accomplish both goals within the funding envelope available for seismic.

8. In order to access any VSB funds, in addition to Ministry seismic funds, Kitsilano will have to make a case for that use of limited VSB funds. Such funding does not occur as a matter of course.

9. As mentioned in #1 above, seismic funding is based upon the "least cost option". In order to pursue other options, we will need to access other sources of funding beyond the seismic program.

11. The VSB Educational Facilities Review (EFR) began with input regarding all areas of the city and is now proceeding to implementation in a phased manner, beginning with the area west of Dunbar. Kitsilano will be part of a future phase, but the timeline and details of that phase have not yet been determined. (I am not aware of any plans either to accelerate or slow down the current seismic process for Kitsilano in anticipation of any different direction emerging from the EFR). The Kitsilano part of the review is not seen as too complex; however, implementing all aspects of the EFR across the entire city simultaneously has been deemed to be both ill-advised and beyond the resources of the VSB to undertake.

Phase 2 of the Kitsilano seismic project includes a budget for consultation and planning but this budget is not unlimited. Part of the construction budget will be an allowance for inflation but this will be within an expected timeframe. If consultation and planning delay completion beyond what is anticipated in the approved budget, escalating costs could reduce what can be built within that budget.

A. If a full upgrade was the "least cost option", then the cost of portables would have to be included in the overall budget for that option. My understanding is that the consultant did not include the portables cost because the full upgrade was already more expensive, even without that cost added in.

B. It appears that the alternative to accepting the seismic funding formula is to accept zero funding. The Ministry has not yet demonstrated a willingness to respond to lobbying with more money.

C. Our goal in Phase 2 should be to alert the VSB to those areas of need that go beyond what the seismic project will fund and to enlist the VSB's active partnership to secure the funds necessary to meet those needs.

D. The funding formula does not specifically preclude an auditorium, nor does it make inclusion of an auditorium easy to achieve. Once our needs assessment is complete, we will be better able to determine which essential components will be achievable within the funding formula.

1. A new school would be smaller than the existing building. The actual configuration and type of spaces included in a new school would arise from the design process and the priorities established by Kitsilano.

2. School renewal - going beyond what gets provided by the seismic program - will require additional funding and/or partners.

3. Phase 1 identified a new school as the "least cost option" for seismic mitigation. In order to access seismic money for a more expensive option (such as upgrading some or all of the existing school building), the VSB would need to make a business case for proceeding with that option.

4. Since we have not yet completed a formal review of the adequacy of the existing building, nor do we have a planned new building for comparison, it is not self-evident that "the quality of the spaces planned to replace the existing rooms is not on a par with the existing".

Regards,
Alex

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