



WITHROW HOME & SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

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October 18, 2013

Vladimir Tarakanov
Bruce Day
Michael Achilles

Dear Vladimir, Bruce and Michael

It was a pleasure to meet you yesterday at our school. As we had discussed, the Home and School Association has organized a School Yard Committee which I am chairing along with two other parents, Hilary deVeber and Dave Taylor. We look forward to working with you to improve the Withrow School Yard.

I wanted to put in writing my understanding of our discussion at the meeting. Please let me know if you disagree with any part of this letter. The purpose of my letter is to make sure that there are no misunderstandings as we proceed.

The primary topics we discussed were the Master Plan, pit/drainage repairs, field assessment, and items covered by maintenance or work orders.

Master Plan

You advised that a Master Plan was developed in 2001 which only covered the original kindergarten play area. If we choose to create a Master Plan of the school yard it would have to be drafted from scratch. There is, however, a topographic survey of the school yard which was done in 2008 and updated in 2012 which covers the entire school yard.

The Master Plan is a consultative process involving a landscape architect or engineer, parents, teachers and students. The process can be completed in as little time as 4 months if the community has a cohesive vision. If there are many competing ideas that are not easily resolved the process could take much longer, and even years.

The Master Plan can assist in having the community develop a prioritized list of projects, along with an estimated budget for the individual project items. The list and budget information can be helpful in developing fundraising goals.

A Master Plan would cost between \$5,000-\$6,000.00. The process would start within days of

the purchase order being issued.

If we started the process immediately a hopeful date of completion could be the end of March. Some specific aspects of the Master Plan discussion, namely pit use and choice of field turf (artificial or natural), could have the effect of delaying the drainage/pit repairs. We could go ahead with some minor grading changes to the pit and the installation of a natural turf on the field without obtaining a Master Plan.

Pit/Drainage Repairs

The plan is to replace existing clay pipe drainage (which is partially collapsed) with PVC rigid pipes and to possibly install new catch basins. The TDSB will require permits from the City to connect the drainage to the street sewers.

Vladimir is waiting for final funding approval which is expected in November or December 2013. He anticipates completing the design by February with a possible construction start date in the Spring of 2014. The start date for construction could be delayed by access issues (because a part of the currently open play field would have to be closed for the purpose of construction). Also, a decision to install artificial turf on the field would delay construction because the type of drainage required would be different. It is anticipated that construction would take more than 8 weeks so ideally it would begin before the school holidays.

The TDSB plans to stabilize the slopes and boulders which would likely require another set of stones at the base.

Repairs to the gully, drainage and pit would be covered by the TDSB. The work could result in pit improvements (beyond safety and drainage). One option is that the TDSB could reduce the pitch of the pit and level the bottom as part of this project. It appeared that a 4-5 foot increase to the base might be possible as part of the TDSB's pit/drainage project. Any further enhancements such as play structures or major re-grading would have to be covered by the community. There will be a landscape architect assigned by the TDSB to review the pit design, whether or not the Withrow community proceeds with a Master Plan.

Field Assessment

Michael advised us that the TDSB has plans to re-sod the field in 2014 but that construction in the pit must be done (because of possible construction damage) before the sod can be placed. The budget for the sod remains available even if the pit construction delays the installation into the next school year. Also, the TDSB would still cover the cost of the sod if the Withrow Community chooses to install an irrigation system at the field.

We agreed that it is essential to obtain a soil profile of the field area in order to determine our best options for this space. Michael agreed to contact John Miller to perform the tests required for a soil profile and to make recommendations for the field. Thank you for your efforts to have these tests performed within the next couple of weeks. We look forward to hearing the

recommendations.

Maintenance/Work Orders

It was very helpful to get some clearer information about the TDSB's role in performing maintenance and responding to work orders. We are particularly happy to hear that the rehabilitation of the sand play zone in the area between the Friendship and the Pit can be done by way of work order. We can confirm that our school administration has placed a work order for a fresh layer of sand to be placed in this area.

Next Steps

The Withrow Community needs to make a decision in respect of the type of turf (artificial or natural) to install on the field. If we choose to proceed with natural turf we need to determine how to best support its continued growth (such as through irrigation). We will require Mr. Miller's soil profile report in order to make this decision. We thank you for facilitating this process.

The Withrow Community will need to decide whether or not to proceed with a Master Plan. Thank you for providing us with more information about the purpose of the Master Plan and the process. We will be reviewing the issue with the community in order to make a timely decision. Please provide us with any further information that you think would be helpful or necessary to have the community make the correct decision.

Thank you for taking the time to meet with us once again. The meeting was productive and we are hopeful that we can continue to work to resolve the Withrow School Yard issues quickly.

Yours truly,

Sam Welch, Co-Chair Withrow School Yard Committee