

The North Shore Heritage Preservation Society canvassed candidates in the 2005 municipal and school board elections for their views on heritage issues. Here's what they said on the Ridgeway question.

North Vancouver School Board Trustees

Chris Dorais

What is your position on preserving historic school buildings in North Vancouver, such as Ridgeway Elementary, Queen Mary Elementary and Lonsdale Elementary?

Ridgeway, Queen Mary, and Lonsdale Elementary are cornerstone buildings in our community. The School District is currently conducting a canvass of options for the Ridgeway site in order to move on to a feasibility study. The Lonsdale site will be prominent over the next couple of years as it is no longer utilized as an elementary school and the School Board will be considering its use. Queen Mary has had some seismic upgrading but also is a building that is being looked at closely in the context of the School District's overall capital requirements.

I'm supportive of retaining the heritage of these three buildings. We need to have an open and frank discussion amongst all stakeholders including the North Shore Heritage Preservation Society to consider the School District's needs for children and the financial constraints the School District will face in addressing the capital needs at these three sites. I believe if we have that discussion with an open dialogue for timelines for each site that there can be a creative approach with the City of North Van, the School District, and other stakeholders to ensure we address and preserve the heritage value to the community.

Specifically, would you support efforts to preserve Ridgeway Elementary, a "primary" building on the City of North Vancouver's Heritage Register, over replacement in the provincial seismic upgrading program?

I prefer preservation of Ridgeway. What that will look like, depends on the discussion I mentioned in question #2.

Sandy Fleming

What is your position on preserving historic school buildings in North Vancouver, such as Ridgeway Elementary, Queen Mary Elementary and Lonsdale Elementary?

I am a structural engineer and understand the complications regarding keeping historical buildings in use given current seismic, fire and other building codes. It has been suggested to me that the cost of seismic upgrading to Ridgeway may be quite reasonable based on Lynn Valley since it was built by the same contractor at roughly the same time. However Lonsdale is a much more challenging (expensive) case because it is wood frame construction (I have been told) and I do not know about Queen Mary. I would like to see these buildings preserved but, as schools, the Ministry capital funding formula does not take into account any extraordinary costs associated with seismic upgrading and other historical preservation compared to a new building. That is a major challenge for the School Board -- trading off extraordinary preservation costs against space or other amenity benefits available in a new structure.

Specifically, would you support efforts to preserve Ridgeway Elementary, a "primary" building on the City of North Vancouver's Heritage Register, over replacement in the provincial seismic upgrading program?

Since this building has broader community value than simply a school building, this discussion should include the City and possible "top-up funding" from the municipality. Also, there may be federal or other

funding available to other non-governmental agencies (not-for-profit societies) that could be accessed to help pay for any additional costs to maintain these historic buildings. I would favour looking into these options.

Susan Skinner

What is your position on preserving historic school buildings in North Vancouver, such as Ridgeway Elementary, Queen Mary Elementary and Lonsdale Elementary?

I think it would be excellent if money could be found to preserve all three of those buildings. Lonsdale should be seismically upgraded and could possibly be incorporated into the undertakings of the Centennial Theatre and the Rec Center complex that is on the east side of Lonsdale. Lonsdale could also be a good home for a magnet school as it has a central location on a bus line. I understand the priority of preserving these buildings. However, I also understand the funding shortfalls facing our school district. With declining enrolment posing a challenge for our school district we will need to rely more on joint use of space to maximize the space utilization of some of these buildings. I would advocate for financial support for the preservation of these buildings from the provincial government as well as the District and City of North Vancouver. Community groups and corporate sponsorship could also help provide input on the financial commitment and the utilization of these buildings and specifically the Lonsdale building. We can work together in preserving these historic landmarks. With school buildings that pose a high seismic threat to children I would advocate the provincial government to make it a financial priority to seismically upgrade these buildings rather than replace them.

Specifically, would you support efforts to preserve Ridgeway Elementary, a "primary" building on the City of North Vancouver's Heritage Register, over replacement in the provincial seismic upgrading program?

I support efforts to preserve Ridgeway Elementary. The provincial government and the school district must work together in the seismic upgrading of this building. I believe Ridgeway Elementary is a beautiful building that adds much to the aesthetic value of our city.

Vickie Vinaric

What is your position on preserving historic school buildings in North Vancouver, such as Ridgeway Elementary, Queen Mary Elementary and Lonsdale Elementary?

I am very much in favour of preserving buildings which have intrinsic heritage value. Queen Mary Elementary and Ridgeway Elementary are both examples of schools which were built carefully and well. Lonsdale Elementary has a wonderful facade but the building behind the facade does not have any elements that would give it architectural heritage value. In fact, the building itself was not used for classrooms for students for several years. When the issue of development of the Lonsdale site arises, which I believe will happen in the next one or two years, it will be interesting to receive feedback from the City of North Vancouver, as well as Heritage societies like yours, to receive input on how to proceed. I believe in consultation with the community and gathering as much information as possible before making any decision.

Specifically, would you support efforts to preserve Ridgeway Elementary, a "primary" building on the City of North Vancouver's Heritage Register, over replacement in the provincial seismic upgrading program?

I do support efforts to preserve Ridgeway Elementary. The school board received a presentation by the architect engaged by the school district, Mark Ehman of Downs Archambault and Partners on Stage 1 of the Feasibility Study. He has outlined all possible options for the school board in Ridgeway's

renovation and seismic upgrading along with the requirements of the City of North Vancouver and the requirements of the City's Heritage Inventory. I believe we can come up with a solution that balances the Heritage requirements and that fits into the Capital budget the School Board has received from the province (which is only \$11,000,000 as opposed to the full upgrade cost which is in the order of \$21,000,000). Also, we have to renovate to a degree that meets the National Building Code.

This is going to be a very challenging project. As above, I believe in consultation with all stakeholders prior to a decision. I am confident we will succeed in balancing the needs of our students and staff for a safe, seismically upgraded school, along with the preservation of Ridgeway Elementary. I am committed to open and cordial dialogue and working towards an acceptable solution for the whole community.

Ginny Diebolt

What is your position on preserving historic school buildings in North Vancouver, such as Ridgeway Elementary, Queen Mary Elementary and Lonsdale Elementary?

It would be my personal wish to preserve historic school buildings such as Ridgeway Elementary, Queen Mary Elementary and Lonsdale Elementary.

As a trustee, it is my responsibility to ensure that school facilities are kept safe for students and that any upgrades or changes to our facilities does not jeopardize their safety. I know also that the Ministry of Education will not fund additional costs to preserve heritage buildings and that the school district cannot fund extra costs.

You may recall that the Ministry of Education would not fund the restoration of Lynn Valley Elementary. The 1920 building was sold to the DNV for \$1, to become the DNV Archives, and a new school was built adjacent to it.

Before making any decisions about our historic school buildings I believe it is important to explore all options by communicating and consulting with our community.

Specifically, would you support efforts to preserve Ridgeway Elementary, a "primary" building on the City of North Vancouver's Heritage Register, over replacement in the provincial seismic upgrading program?

I support full and open dialogue with our community. Good decisions are made when there is a shared understanding of the issues and challenges, and when together we have explored all options.

Pat Heal

What is your position on preserving historic school buildings in North Vancouver, such as Ridgeway Elementary, Queen Mary Elementary and Lonsdale Elementary?

School buildings are also of historical value but because they are public school facilities the upgrade and capital funding comes from Victoria in capital spending envelope. Most times there is not a recognition by the provincial government of a need to incorporate the history within this envelope. We can only hope to work with the municipalities and communities to incorporate what heritage value we can from the sites. In my mind Queen Mary and Ridgeway are better examples of something worth trying to save. The school board cannot commit to this on its own though.

Specifically, would you support efforts to preserve Ridgeway Elementary, a "primary" building on the City of North Vancouver's Heritage Register, over replacement in the provincial seismic upgrading program?

When one becomes a trustee one pledges an oath to uphold the school act and legislation. Our first priority has to be the safety of our students, that is our mandate. As a trustee I would be remiss if I did not hold the children and their safety first. If a way could be found to do both I would be willing to explore it keeping in mind the very real fiscal restraints.

Jane Thornthwaite

What is your position on preserving historic school buildings in North Vancouver, such as Ridgeway Elementary, Queen Mary Elementary and Lonsdale Elementary?

I am fully in support of preserving these magnificent buildings rather than replacing them. These buildings are historical treasures.

Although I have driven by, and played soccer on some of their fields, I have not been directly involved in any of the discussions of preserving these specific buildings. If elected, I would be pleased to research this topic fully. I recognize that the issue likely comes down to the cost of the maintenance and upgrading of the building vs demolishing it, building a new one, or selling the property. Obviously I am not in support of housing students in a school that is unsafe for any reason, but I am interested in evaluating the costs of maintaining and preserving these buildings - keeping in mind their heritage value. I would also like to solicit input from the community at large.

Specifically, would you support efforts to preserve Ridgeway Elementary, a "primary" building on the City of North Vancouver's Heritage Register, over replacement in the provincial seismic upgrading program?

I am definitely in support of preserving Ridgeway Elementary over replacement, but it must be properly maintained and it must be deemed safe for our students. I feel that there should be open dialogue between the School Board and the City of North Vancouver, and since it is a "primary" building on the Heritage Register, it deserves several levels of government funding in addition to the support from the School Board. If elected, I will work towards this open communication and take a leadership role in obtaining other sources of funding to support these architectural treasures.

City of North Vancouver Council

Mayor Darrell Mussatto

What is your position on preserving historic school buildings in North Vancouver, such as Ridgeway Elementary and Queen Mary Elementary?

Both historic buildings must be preserved, and the city must play a role in their protection and eventual restoration. I would also add the recently closed Lonsdale Elementary School to this list.

Councillors

Pam Bookham

What is your position on preserving historic school buildings in North Vancouver such as Ridgeway Elementary and Queen Mary Community?

Ridgeway Elementary and Queen Mary are landmark buildings in the City. Every effort should be made to preserve them if they are structurally sound, if preservation is economically feasible and if they can meet the educational needs of students today or serve some other purpose in the community.

Bob Fearnley

What is your position on preserving historic school buildings in North Vancouver, such as Ridgeway Elementary and Queen Mary Elementary?

I support preserving and maintain those structures as working schools where possible. We also need to look at something innovative to retain the old Lonsdale Elementary School building if possible. Maybe we can retain and strengthen the shell while upgrading the interior for use as an apartment building.

Bob Heywood

What is your position on preserving historic school buildings in North Vancouver, such as Ridgeway Elementary and Queen Mary Elementary?

Both Queen Mary and Ridgeway are great examples of heritage buildings. I think they should be preserved and I would suspect this is possible as long as they are maintained in their current use, which will likely continue into the future. These are very quick and top of mind answers to questions that require much more extensive discussion to make meaningful comments. I would want to have more information and discussion before stating a view that I would consider a binding commitment. Perhaps there could be an opportunity for an appropriate discussion at some future date. I could benefit from that.

Craig Keating

What is your position on preserving historic school buildings in North Vancouver, such as Ridgeway Elementary and Queen Mary Community?

I am a great believer in the preservation of heritage public buildings. As noted above, I was a supporter of the density transfer that allowed for the retention of the Paine Hardware building. I would be very pleased not only to see the retention of Ridgeway and Queen Mary Schools, but their retention in their current use.

Barbara Perrault

What is your position on preserving historic school buildings in North Vancouver, such as Ridgeway Elementary and Queen Mary Community?

I served for the past three years on the City's Heritage Advisory Committee. Ridgeway and Queen Mary School have played a very significant historical part in the development of our city. I believe we should do all that is possible to save and restore these buildings.

Sam Schechter

What is your position on preserving historic school buildings in North Vancouver, such as Ridgeway Elementary and Queen Mary Elementary?

I encourage members of the community to work with the North Vancouver School Board, City, and District to encourage the continued preservation of public heritage sites.