



February 9, 2008

Hello everyone!

Here is an update on new developments concerning the fate of Ridgeway Elementary School.

Members of the Ridgeway Heritage Committee attended two public input sessions on Feb. 26-27, concerning the School District's plans for development of the Lonsdale and Queen Mary school sites. Feelings at the first meeting ran high, particularly over the plans to demolish the Lonsdale School heritage building, park and tree issues, and the process of public consultation. The latter focused more on questions of parking and access.

The idea is to sell the land on the Queen Mary site currently used for the School District administration building to developer Amacon for a four-storey residential project, to sell half the Lonsdale site to Amacon for residential development, and to use those funds to build a new administration building and Artists for Kids gallery on the front part of the Lonsdale site. Some extra funds would be created by squeezing in more density than zoning rules allow, which would be used for heritage preservation work at Ridgeway and Queen Mary. The School District would also be allowed to sell unused density rights from the rest of the Queen Mary site (which would be left as is) for several millions more, although this is contingent on finding a buyer.

The School District is not yet giving firm numbers on revenue and funding, or a firm commitment to the heritage projects. Similarly, there is no word on the different design options for restoration of Ridgeway, including retention of the 1926 wings.

Further public input sessions are planned for early April. The School District is aiming for a public hearing before City of North Vancouver Council in June, which will be the decisive moment for the plans. Provisionally, they are looking at June 23.

We will keep you posted.

Yours,
The Ridgeway Heritage Committee