



ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING NOTES

April 15, 2011 10 - 3 pm - CENTURY PLAZA HOTEL

The advisory council met on April 15, 2011 at the Century Plaza Hotel (see attendees list below).

OVERVIEW OF PROJECT STATUS

Gwyn Symmons provided a project status update (powerpoint presentation available on website) of work undertaken since the previous Advisory Council meeting (January 2010). The majority of work undertaken focused on the provincial consultation, securing the site, developing the space program and building concept, and creating the Steering Committee.

PROVINCIAL CONSULTATION PRESENTATION & DISCUSSION

Fred Ford, contracted by the Pacific Autism Centre Society to facilitate the provincial consultation focus group sessions, gave an overview of the consultation process, including the focus group sessions and online survey, and findings. A brief question and discussion period followed the presentation, including a discussion of where the spoke locations could/should be located and how services could be best delivered regionally. The FASD (Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder) key worker program delivered by the Ministry of Children and Family Development was discussed as a potential model to follow for regional spoke centres.

Fred's presentation and the consultation reports (focus group and online survey) are available on the website .

PROGRAM & BUILDING DESIGN CONCEPT

Larry Adams and Garth Ramsey from NSDA Architects presented the current building concept design and program. The building program and concept design work has been guided by the Steering Committee and informed by the provincial consultation process, a visit to the MIND Centre in Sacramento, California, and builds upon the program areas identified in the Strategic Plan. Individual building components were presented for discussion, comments included:

- There is a move away from physical libraries to more virtual mediums, looking towards the future will the Centre need a library?
- Suggested to rename the Family Support and Accommodation component.
- Consider noise carefully - example cited of new building where noise from a room the use by children was very noisy in the adjacent room.
- Questions on the programming for the Lifespan Centre - what would happen in that component?

- Ensure a variety of room sizes to facilitate dynamic group activities and break out space and private space all within one room.
- The potential for a roof top gardens was asked. Make use of the view to the north shore mountains.
- Ensure areas where community strengths are highlighted - i.e space for artwork.
- It was suggested to use relaxing materials - wood, ample space and openness and light. Use subtle colours to reduce stress on families.
- It was suggested to make waiting rooms “doing rooms” provide activities for children to do such as providing iPads. This would allow parents to relax.
- Ensure air conditioning as passive design and LEED design features do not always work to create a comfortable environment for the occupant.
- Ensure technology is cutting edge, stay ahead of new technology.

SPOKE CENTRES

Gwyn presented the spoke centres as a topic for feedback and discussion. Presently, the work on developing the spoke centres remains on hold as no clear direction emerged from the provincial consultation in terms of determining the locations. From the consultation work the need for one point of contact for “all things autism” and someone to help you locate and find services was very evident. This role is presently being referred to as a “navigator”. The idea of starting the spokes before the hub is built is also being considered (funding dependent) if possible, as this was identified by the provincial consultation as highly desirable.

Betty-Ann Garreck was asked to describe what she does in her position (located in Kamloops) as a potential comparison or model for the “navigator” role. Some of the services Betty-Ann offers include:

- Reaching out to a larger area outside of Kamloops, often meets families mid-way. Serves families throughout the Thompson-Nicola area.
- Important to be able to meet some families face-to-face. Other families can be helped online or by phone. Often takes laptop to meetings to show online resources available.
- Service looks different for each family depending on their situation. Always changing.
- Currently works out of home or meets people in the community. Would be great to have an office space outside of the home. Would also be desirable to have community space for parents to network and gather (currently rents space when needed).

Discussion on the spoke centre service model followed, including:

- Ensure accountability and follow through is built into program.
- Ensure training and development of skills for navigators is available, particularly on the mental health side.
- In terms of determining location, each spoke should be able to reach out to a larger area. However, parents want someone in their local area, don’t want to call a 1-800 number.
- It was cautioned that the services that the spoke and navigator offers needs to be clearly defined. Careful not to duplicate services already being provided in community.
- Concerns about problems operationalizing the spokes before the hub were expressed.

- Outreach is important to consider as the families contacting navigator will already be competent to a degree. Ensure connection with families/kids that get missed.
- Navigator position must be independent from government to ensure no conflict of interest issues arise.
- Decision on locations should consider the community capacity and readiness to collaborate. Community strengths and capacity should be considered over geography.
- Ensure that the supervision necessary to ensure program and staff are meeting mandates and objectives is in place.

ACTION - CitySpaces to further develop a written description of spoke concept to be presented to Steering Committee.

GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONS

Gwyn presented the interim governance chart and initiated a discussion on the long-term governance and operations plan for the Centre with the objective of getting advice and direction from the Advisory Council. At present, it is suggested for a Committee to be formed to complete this work and to advance the project a long term governance and operations plan will need to be developed and begin as soon as possible. A number of questions were asked, including:

- What is the scope of the governance and operations plan - will it go as far as choosing who is in the building?
- What is the timing for completing this work?

The following points were discussed:

- Caution against conflict of interest issues - ensure process is fair and transparent. Should you be involved on the committee if you want to be in the building?
- Organizations could maybe avoid conflict of interest by staying off the committee but still be consulted on their concerns.
- Committee doesn't need to have experience or a knowledge of autism - it is about setting up a process and governance. Should be looking at recruiting people with this type of experience - accountants, lawyers etc.
- Process should be clearly defined before beginning to avoid confusion and potential communication issues.
- Consider a separate consultant to do this work - avoid conflict of interest issues.

ACTION - City Spaces to redefine process for governance and operations planning and who would participate in this work.

ADVISORY COUNCIL

As part of the long-term governance and operations plan for the Centre the membership and representation of the Advisory Council needs to be formalized. This issue was presented to the Advisory Council on how to proceed in establishing membership criteria. The following points were discussed:

- Membership to date has essentially been self-selection. People dropped off or didn't come if they weren't interested.
- Need to establish how someone gets invited. Carefully consider the optics.

- Need to make the advisory Council regional.
- Are people here as individuals or representing their organization?
- Membership and attendance should be consistent to avoid re-visiting old issues.
- Parent representation important to consider.
- Suggested to make part of the Governance and Operations Plan.

Action - CitySpace to include formalizing the membership of the Advisory Council in the scope of work for the Governance and Operations planning.

NEXT MEETING

TBD.

PARTICIPANTS

Karen Bopp
 Ian Brethour
 Sergio Cocchia
 Wendy Lisogar-Cocchia
 Larry Adams
 Garth Ramsey
 Gwyn Symmons
 Dana Hough
 Mary-Ann Falks
 Grace Iarocci
 Pat Miranda
 Suzanne Lewis
 Lori Woods
 Glen Davies
 Jim McLaughlin
 Deborah Pugh
 Betty-Ann Garreck
 John Esson
 Katy Harandi
 Georgina Robinson
 Karen Kalynchuk
 Pat Morat
 Chris McIntosh
 Louise Witt
 TJ Glahn
 Stephanie Jull
 Tina Lipton
 Michael Lewis
 Anne Millerd
 Debra Antifaev
 Anthony Bailey
 Laurie Guerra
 Barb Fitzsimmons
 Katie Allen