

**Minutes of Meeting with CPS Representatives  
At KH Presbyterian Church  
August 6, 2003  
(Recorded by N Morgan)**

**Attendees**

**Representing KHCC:** Noel Morgan; Charles Clingman; Mimi Gingold; Van Foster; Ce Holm; Duane Holm; John Burlew; Charles Bronson; Kevin Moeller; Ernie Barbeau; Kathy Spoon; Kay Briggs;

**Representing CPS:** Michael Bursen (Facilities Director); Darlene Kamine (Board Consultant).

**Note:** This is a topical summary of the meeting rather than a blow-by-blow, formal “minutes”

**Purposes of the Meeting**

Meeting was originally requested by Ms. Kamine; when we requested meeting with Mr. Bursen to discuss plans for the KM site, he suggested we combine into one meeting.

1. Planning for schools in KH; specifically, Ms. Kamine wanted to assured KHCC representation on the Shroder Planning Committee
2. Disposition of the former Furniture Fair property at Kennedy & Montgomery (KM)
3. KH presentation of proposal for constructing new neighborhood school at KM rather than at the present site of Silverton School

**Darlene Kamine**

- She is working to develop schools as community learning centers
- Wants to be sure they are engaging communities that are affected and use the buildings as hub for the learning environment in the community
- 70% of the CPS children are “in poverty”; 3,500 have psychological admissions; the juvenile justice figures are “way out of whack.”
- The experience with siting of Pleasant Ridge school educated her as to the “challenge” involved in assuring community involvement
- She wants to be a little more clear on just what KH wants
- Her immediate issue: KHCC representation on the Shroder “planning committee” that will be making decisions related to the relocation of Shroder.

**The Board’s Intentions for KM**

- CPS bought KM intending to build a new school to replace PR School
- That met with opposition. He tried hard to maintain his recommendation that the school be built at KM, but the Board voted to re-build in PR
- The Board is no longer interested in using the site for CPS education
- He’s been instructed to sell the property with no particular regard for the buyer’s intended use of the property. However, “we’re a public institution and are not going to sell to a Hustler store.”
- There have been numerous inquiries. He is “talking to some people,” but there are “no active buyers.”
- He has been told to recover the Board’s full investment (\$1.7 million or so).
- There are no restrictions on the sale—no requirement, e.g. that they first offer the property to a charter school, because the building is not usable for that purpose
- He recognizes our interest in what goes on the site and will let us know when there is a serious purchase proposal.

**Woodford School**

- There was confusion as to whether Woodford is a “magnet” school
- Mr. Bursen said he has been assured that Woodford “is not filled to capacity” and “can take as many students as apply.”
- Residents disagreed—Kathy Spoon said she’d been recently told her child could not enroll.
- Duane Holm said that “the history for the last 15 years is that the school has actually tried to keep KH kids out.” Charles Clingman asked, “why can’t our children just walk in?”; Bursen responded, “that’s something I’d have to look into.”

- Ms. Kamine agreed Woodford might be a good site for Montessori, if & when it moves away from Paideia. There are many Montessori students at the pre-school who now go out of the community for elementary school.
- Duane Holm stressed that we are not proposing to make any changes in Woodford. When we raised the issue last year, we “ran into a buzzsaw” and came out feeling we would have a civil war on our hands if we insisted on opening Woodford up as a neighborhood school.

### **KHCC Proposal for KM**

Ce Holm made the initial presentation, supported by maps showing the location of students who now attend Silverton and other schools

- The Administration has already recognized KM as a good school site—having bought the property and Mr. Bursen has advised the Board that it was where the Pleasant Ridge school **should** be built
- Until last fall we had never dreamed the site could again house a school.
- While the PR school cannot be built on that site, there is another attractive alternative: Re-building the Silverton School at KM
- Over one third (63) of Silverton’s 155 “neighborhood” students actually live in KH, and almost all of the 92 Silverton students live west of the school (i.e. between KM and Silverton school)
- 225 children are bussed into Silverton from various neighborhoods
- In effect the Board’s present plan, to rebuild Silverton on its present site, would be building a new school in a community that is providing only 92 children.
- There are sufficient “neighborhood” children in Kennedy Heights, to justify the more central location at KM
- Removing the school from Silverton would free up that land for residential use—which would contribute to the Silverton tax base

Other comments by residents supportive of the proposal

- KM is the center of the community; unlikely site for commercial success (viz. Kroger & Furniture Fair)
- Community Master Plan calls for three alternative uses: Recreation, Senior Housing, or Education. The Recreation Commission has made it very clear that it has no interest or intentions of building a recreation center at KM.
- The corner functioned for the Kennedy school for decades until the Board decided to demolish it and ship our students out of the community
- When Kennedy School was eliminated, we were told that Woodford would serve as a magnet/neighborhood school (IGE), but that gave way to Paideia and then lost its neighborhood identity altogether
- KH has always been a big supporter of the CPS, voting in large numbers for school levies, e.g. Yet the Board has consistently short changed the community.

### **Response to KH Presentation**

- Parents are putting kids in schools where they think they’ll do best, so it is incorrect to talk about schools “importing” our children.
- Any discussion that affects any other school needs “frank discussion with everyone concerned”
- Unfortunately they were never “afforded the opportunity to have frank discussion with the community” in the debate over where to locate the Pleasant ridge School
- Although Mr. Bursen selected KM as the site for relocating PR school, in his professional opinion as an architect, Woodford would actually be the preferred site
- If what we want is a neighborhood school, we should talk about Woodford
- If the issue is where kids go to school, “need to sit down with that school [Woodford] and work it out.”

### **Where Next?**

- In response to question as to what our next step would be—if we’re determined to pursue the KM/Silverton school—Mr. Bursen suggested meeting with Asst. Superintendent Jeff Brokamp and said that he would set up a meeting after school starts.
- Charles Bronson suggested we deal with the Board and the Administration at the same time
- Concerns that we may be on a short time schedule—everything depends on the Board’s continued ownership of the property.
- We need to approach Silverton to get some sense as to their position.