

**Peterborough Collegiate Foundation
Presentation to Accommodation Review Committee
Monday, February 28, 2011**

Greetings to ARC Chair Mr Blair, our elected officials, Rose Kitney, Cathy Abraham and Roy Wilfong, Councillor Keith Riel, board staff and other volunteers.

My name is Jay Amer, President of the Peterborough Collegiate Foundation, I am here presenting on behalf of the Foundation. I am a graduate of PCVS along with two siblings, and my daughter is a recent graduate.

The Foundation is dedicated to supporting the long-standing tradition of scholastic excellence at PCVS through its efforts to raise funds for scholarships and other school projects that support the one of the oldest high schools in Ontario.

The Foundation is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors that includes alumni, former and current teachers and administrative staff.

www.peterboroughcollegiatefoundation.org

Several of our directors are in the audience tonight. Those who are teachers with the Board, or retired teachers or administrators, have removed themselves from any direct discussions or presentations related to the ARC process, which is highly appropriate and a testament to our collective belief in playing by the rules and avoiding any perceptions of conflict of interest.

I am addressing ARC in order to expand on the role and important influence an active Foundation and alumni association like ours can have on a school community. It's appropriate that I am speaking to you at Kenner Collegiate, a school with an excellent school Foundation that we admire, and have learned from. Kenner Collegiate is named after Dr. H.R.H. Kenner who was hired as PCVS' classics instructor in 1893 and was principal from 1908 to 1943, totalling 50 years at PCVS.

PCVS and Kenner as the first public high schools established in share a common history, and a common present.

Like Kenner, PCVS is an anchor for its community of homes, shops and institutions. Loss of an anchor like a vibrant public school and all that it supports in a community would be deeply felt by students, parents, neighbours and businesses.

It is our hope that no school in the City of Peterborough will have to close, but the ARC process makes it incumbent on us all to get involved to advocate, monitor the process, and provide useful insights and information about our respective schools so that the Accommodation Review Committee will have all of the relevant and accurate information needed to make a wise and informed recommendation to the Board – a recommendation that will need to be enduring and defensible as the decision process and any appeals move forward.

I am here tonight to advocate for PCVS, not to talk about, for example, the potential for Adam Scott to become an extension of Fairhaven, or how well-suited the TASSS property would be for more upscale retirement condos on Armour Rd. We strongly believe that talking about the positives of each school, as a functional high school, will be in the best interests of all involved.

FOUNDATION OVERVIEW

Let me talk about the Foundation and its role.

The Peterborough Collegiate Foundation is a private charitable organization that was formed in 1999 with the express purpose of raising and managing funds for use to support students, school activities, and other special projects that support the school community. To date, several hundred thousand dollars have been raised and distributed by the Foundation to various school causes. We have a database of over 4000 alumni and keep in contact on a regular basis through a variety of means.

The Foundation facilitates the conveyance of more than 50 scholarships and bursaries at every convocation and, along with managing several established funds, we top up scholarships amounts to ensure the financial reward is meaningful to a recipient. The Foundation also funds several scholarships directly and administers \$20,000 – \$30,000 of disbursements to students and programs each year. Programs supported by the Foundation include heritage building restorations at the school, art in the halls preservation, sports teams, the student breakfast club, international educational travel and more.

We are well resourced in volunteer talent, assets and future legacy donors and want to continue to support PCVS long into the future.

ACCESSIBILITY

We strongly believe it is a Board responsibility to fund and ensure that all buildings are in compliance with provincial legislation, and making any publicly-owned building accessible to all is critically important, the more people and students who can access exceptional programs and facilities, the better. In fact it is surprising that all Board facilities have not yet been made accessible whether they are to be retained as a school or sold.

I am here tonight to advise on behalf of the Foundation that if financing an elevator and other accessibility infrastructure is a barrier to allowing PCVS to remain open **the Foundation is committed to secure adequate funding to support the Board in its efforts to make PCVS accessible to all.** We want to ensure that PCVS is not prejudiced by the fact the Board has not yet invested in barrier-free access to its public high schools. We understand that PCVS could be made as accessible as any other high school for anywhere from \$200,000 – \$300,000, a very affordable amount for our Foundation to raise, and we are prepared to do whatever it takes to assist the Board in this matter.

ACCURATE DATA & PLANNING INFORMATION

As a professional economic developer, accredited by the University of Waterloo and the Economic Developers Association of Canada, whenever I undertake economic research for a client I always ensure that the most recent and accurate data is secured and utilized to help them make decisions on their future strategies and directions. They would expect nothing less - and I am sure your clients, the public, feel exactly the same way.

One of my major concerns, and it is shared with my colleagues on the Foundation, has to do with some of the data being used by the Board for this review. The following are some examples:

- 1) **Facility Condition Index** – 2003. Two of the oldest schools rank 1 (Kenner) and 2 (PCVS) in condition. However facility improvements, including a recently installed heating system and washroom accessibility at PCVS would not be captured in this information and could be even more of an advantage to PCVS

Will you be asking for more up to date information before you make a recommendation to the Board? Will the public be provided with the data sources that were utilized?

- 2) **Projected enrolment numbers.** Right now PCVS is trending above projections, at capacity, and showing steady growth in enrolment. However, in Board data, as soon as “projections” are made there is a sharp decline for PCVS that begs the question – from where is this data derived? We are told it comes from “detailed analysis of demographic and planning data”. However it appears to me the data is incomplete and inaccurate.

Has the ARC been provided with or will it secure accurate and up-to-date information on all subdivisions planned in the PCVS catchment area as defined in the Board's April 2010 school district map or other provincial and municipal policies and plans that may impact the need to retain PCVS to serve an increase in population? for example:

Lily Lake Growth Area – 2600 residences, 6600 people. Plan to be released this summer with development likely to begin in spring 2012 (Note: The Avonlea & Carnegie subdivisions that are shown to be in the Adam Scott catchment area on the above noted Board map, and appear to be the reason for future projected enrolment increases at that school, total only 3300 residences, and less than ½ have been approved to move forward as of 2011)

Raymond/Symons – 50 new residences in PCVS catchment area at city council tonight (February 28) for approval.

Growth Plan for the Great Golden Horseshoe – residential intensification in the downtown, increasing the density to 150 people/hectare by 2031. With reports of up to 5000 more people living in downtown. (City of Peterborough Official Plan Amendment #142)

Central Area Master Plan – City of Peterborough, released in late 2009 and now just being implemented. Excerpts:

- ***Section 19 – Seek to Secure the Longevity of Midtown Schools in Order to Support Residential Growth.***
- ***Section 20 – Level the Development Playing Field – Tip it in Favour of the Downtown if Necessary.***

OFFICIAL CITY POLICY Re: CENTRAL AREA MASTER PLAN

CITY OF PETERBOROUGH POLICY # 10.5.4.3 Strategies to Encourage New Residential Development:

"The commitment to advocate for a change in Provincial school funding policy so that local Schools Boards have the financial capacity to retain midtown schools in Peterborough."

Has the Board or Province engaged in dialogue with the City of Peterborough in regards to this?

For the record, based on historic growth, policies and plans currently underway, and those being implemented by the City of Peterborough to promote sustainable growth and investment I am **professionally optimistic** about the future of downtown Peterborough.

Before wrapping up I want to mention that in future we are expecting letters of support from the Royal Canadian Legion, on behalf of veterans, and their special relationship to PCVS; and also from the Downtown Business Improvement Area. I will finish by reading a letter from police chief Murray Rodd into the record (text below), and I have copies for all ARC members.



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February 8, 2011

Mr. Jay Amer, Ec.D.
Principal, Amer & Associates
205-261 George Street North
Peterborough, Ontario K9J 3G9

Dear Mr. Amer:

Re: Peterborough Collegiate and Vocational School (PCVS)

Every community has a downtown core, which acts as a barometer as to the health of the broader community. I believe that the healthy vibrant downtown core is in fact the heart of a community and an economic driver.

From a healthy community perspective, the downtown benefits greatly from the presence of our single remaining school, specifically PCVS. The student population from PCVS serves to animate the downtown core before and after school and during lunch hours. They produce a positive induced economic impact through their daily purchases of snacks, lunches and the contributions they make to the retail community.

The presence of the students also provide a positive example for youth through their engagement in higher education and often they provide community service that is focused on their partnership with other downtown institutions.

The types of students attracted to PCVS, specifically those pursuing arts and theatre, provide a unique offering to the broader community with respect to performances, often dealing with social issues and concerns, as well as art exhibits and musical events.

From a policing perspective, PCVS contributes virtually nothing towards crime, vandalism, or other antisocial behaviour. While it is not the business of the police to deal with the delivery of education, the role of this institution in retaining a positive youth influence in the downtown core is significant. From a first principle safe community design perspective, it is most desirable to retain the presence of this last remaining school in our downtown.

Yours truly,

Murray Rodd
Chief of Police

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to address you on these issues. On behalf of the Foundation I wish you all the best in your deliberations and we look forward to working with you, and the Board to help you make the right decision for our Students, the Community and the Board.

Jay Amer
President, Peterborough Collegiate Foundation