

Commons Coordinating Council (CCC)
gabrielacommonscouncil@gmail.com

Notes for Meeting of August 6th 2013

Present: George Szanto, Raymond Tremblay, Kit Szanto, Patrick Roux, Muriel Weins, Mary Wilson, Judith Roux, Mary Aiken, Sheila Carson
Co-facilitators (2): Stef Marrie (no second facilitator)
Recorder: Rebecca Furnell (for the board)

Next CCC meeting: September 3rd 2013, 7pm
Recorder for next meeting: Trails and Green Spaces, Bob Andrew

Meeting Agenda:

1. 20-minute discussion - current:
2. Team, Project & Group Reports
3. Follow-up from previous meetings
4. Additional items arising from this meeting

Follow-up Items from previous meeting - discussions outlined below:

- A. Trustee nominations:
- B. Rick Cranston sign
- C. Consensus Policy
- D. Question from Sam Adair: Where (to what Society) is the Commons designated in the event that the Commons is dissolved

Reminders & Action Items - will be followed up at next meeting:

- A. Consensus Policy (attached)
- B. AGM Team reports
- C. Web site task force
- D. The Communications Team needs you!!!
- E. Feedback on Events accounting recommendation (attached):

Attachments:

- A. Draft consensus policy
 - B. Draft Events accounting recommendation
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1. Notes from 20-Minute Discussion:

Current topic: Memorial objects (2nd discussion)

Summary:

July & August/13 20 Minute Discussion Summary
Memorials and Memorial Objects on the Commons

As an event to celebrate a life, memorials honour those who have passed, while reinforcing the values of the Commons. Some wonderful memorial celebrations have taken place in the Labyrinth. It was recommended that the Labyrinth be included as a location to be reserved through Bookings for such events.

For the purpose of this discussion, the focus was placed on memorial objects. The main concerns with donations of memorial objects included form, location, upkeep and quantity. There were some creative suggestions to address these concerns:

- Create a list of acceptable objects that would be suitable, along with a list of components that would withstand the test of time and weather.
- We could encourage people to donate money to things we need done (specific projects or maintenance), or items that we need. Some felt that this was not likely to be popular because it is less tangible and that a “thing” would be preferred by most.
- Memorial bricks could be used to create a walkway. This may include a donation.
- Memorial objects may also be limited to specific areas of the Commons.
- How many is too many, and what happens when we reach the acceptable limit? While there have indeed, been a number of memorial donations in the recent past, we are still a long way from having to deal with this problem. It was suggested that we establish process, location and form first, and worry about quantity if it becomes a problem.
- Since memorial objects are permanent, there should be a process to help folks who wish to make this gesture.
- People would like to see a set of guidelines for people looking to situate a memorial object on the Commons (acceptable or preferred items, possible sites, commitment to maintenance, etc.). This would allow them to work with the Commons to find a mutually acceptable offering, without being bureaucratic.

BC Parks may have such a process that we could use as a starting point. Mary Aitken supplied a few copies of a brochure from the Haven, which includes a map with memorial sites. The Haven may be a great local source for information about process and how to address some of our concerns. Mary Aitken will approach Louise Amuir of the Haven to learn more about the process.

Action: Muriel will produce a draft for review and discussion at council and amongst teams. It was noted that Sharing the Commons and the Long Range Planning teams might work on this topic together and with interested individuals.

Notes: It was noted at the end of this discussion that a pattern or process is beginning to emerge where the 20 minute discussion topics wrap up with a team, teams, individual or taskforce of interested individuals producing something for review at council and by teams. The information generated in the 20 min discussion(s) provide a starting point for the draft policy, recommendation, plan of action, etc.

Next Topic:

It was decided that the next topic will be **Archiving – What to keep and how to keep it?** This topic was chosen because the archivists are hoping to get back at this task in the fall and need some direction.

Some things to consider:

- Trustees have recommended that teams be responsible for their own archiving as it is too much for any one team or person to take on all team’s work. Also, as teams are trusted to make decisions amongst themselves, they are also trusted to be responsible for their own business and responsibilities to the rest of the Commons.
- Electronic vs. paper – what to keep? Where to keep it? How much is too much?

2. TEAM Reports:

Communications (rep: Raymond Tremblay for Heide Brown)

Heide is no longer going to be the Communications Team Liaison for the Commons after September. We need someone to take on this role --- if you apply sooner rather than later you will have 2 months to learn the ropes from Heide! Contact:

communications@gabriolacommons.ca

Imogen has moved to Salt Spring Island and will no longer be able to send out our Commons' Communiqué. If you'd like to do something vital for the Commons that doesn't entail meetings and that you can do from your home-computer, please send enquiries to: communications@gabriolacommons.ca

MORE NEEDS:

-- More team members – more participants to meet a few times each year and work together to over-see Commons' communications, in all its aspects.

-- We continue to look for more short – 150 words – articles for The Sounder and The Shingle. You might write about why you support the Commons, what you like about the Commons, your history with the Commons, etc --- things like that. If you are interested, please let us know --- communications@gabriolacommons.ca

Event Planning (rep: Stef Marrie)

- A draft for the events team accounting process (tracking money in/out and use of funds raised) was provided and reviewed by the council. This draft is attached to these minutes and any feedback should come to Stef or Rebecca or the September council meeting.
- The Community Garage Sale was a success! Good fun, lots of recycling, upcycling, etc. and over \$700 raised for the Commons.
- Fall fair planning is in the works. Contacts are Stef, Rebecca, Judith Roux and Joood Heather.
- Next Meeting: Not yet set

Farm Management (rep: Judith Roux)

- There is LOTS to do! Watering, harvesting, weeding, etc. Some of the harvest will be going to the inter island market happening at the inter island meeting on Galiano this week.
- More people are needed for the planning side of things on this team.
- Next Meeting: Monday, Aug 14, 4pm

Property Management (rep: Patrick Roux)

- There is a great need for increased and better signage on the Commons for visitors and newcomers. Judith is working on this.
- A detailed electrical and plumbing report for the property was created for the Long Range Planning team. There is no room for new projects on the existing infrastructure. New plumbing and grid tie in would be necessary.
- The Property Management Team and Infrastructure Teams may amalgamate for simplicity.

- The kitchen is nearing completion! A few small items remain, but Patrick is feeling very positive about where things are at. The work bees have been a great success.
- The next thing that will require major attention and funds is the replacement of the septic system in order to get the community kitchen functional.

Share the Commons (rep: Kit Szanto)

At the last meeting of STC, July 3, we discussed the Skateboard Park idea quite fully, including a few pros and many cons but the main problem seems to be IF it is shared with the RDN it would violate the Commons zoning, and therefore be impossible legally. There seems to be wide opposition to having the Skateboard Park entirely on Commons property under Commons management.

We agreed to a small change on our land-use sharing form that people with projects they wish to develop on the Commons have to fill out. It will now include the Long Term Planning team, where appropriate.

The idea of going to an early PAC meeting at the school to encourage more parents, teachers and students involved at the Commons was discussed. At the next Trade Fair we thought it useful perhaps to encourage some of the young to have a table or two.

On Aug.7-9 Island Connections will be at an inter island meeting on Galiano to discuss ways we can all help each other to become more sustainable. Contact Victor Anthony if you wish to go by boat.

RE – how to allocate the extra \$4000 we have left from the anonymous donor’s money for new projects – STC is very clear that we think some signage is very important to let visitors know where they are and where various parts of the Commons are located. This should be done as soon as possible.

Note: Sam Adair did not attend this meeting, despite apparently planning to do so.

- Next Meeting: Aug. 14th, 10:30am

Trails and Green Spaces (rep: Kit Szanto)

The recent activity in TAGS has been mostly focused on clearing out more Daphne laureola (the invasive, phytotoxic Daphne, not the various other charming forms of Daphne). Several of us have worked year round during the Commons Saturday work bees on this project (when not helping with roofing the Goat Barn, helping in the orchard or developing the new Community Kitchen). In addition, the same several plus a few generous others have been active in July and August with the Camp Miriam campers – helping campers have fun in working to eliminate the Daphne, all organized by the undauntable Mary Wilson.

We hope (if all goes well) this year to embark on beginning the work on the East/West connector trail. We have \$2000 put aside for this project, half of which is a gift from GaLTT.

- Next Meeting: Meetings are few – often by email or as we work together. Newcomers are always welcome.

Trustees for Gabriola Commons Foundation (rep: Rebecca Furnell)

- **Year End**

We finished up reviewing some details of the year end accounting with Deborah and worked out some questions from our accountant.

- **Handbook**

A small taskforce met to review the “Trustee Handbook” and to start working on creating a new and improved “Gabriola Commons Handbook” that would replace this document and provide something that is more useful to all Commons Participants. When a draft is ready we will bring it to Council for feedback.

- **AGM Planning**

AGM Planning was a focus at our last 2 business meetings. **We still need your team reports.** Three highlights for the year and a picture if you choose. We would like to have team reps stand up for 2-3 minutes to give these reports so please plan for this. If you cannot have a person at the AGM, Jinny will report for your team. Please contact Jinny or Rebecca with your report and the name of the person who will be giving it.

We are having two extra meetings this month to work out the motions for bylaw changes for the AGM. You will see these on the website the week of Sept. 9th along with our AGM announcement in the newspapers.

- **Consensus policy**

Deborah has prepared a draft of an updated consensus policy. This draft responds to the extensive feedback to the decision making document that questioned our process if a block occurs. **Please review this draft with your teams and provide your feedback at the September council meeting.** Also please note that this document is separate from the decision making document, but that it is referenced in the decision making document. Feedback may also be sent to Rebecca.

- **Website taskforce**

No one outside the trustees has stepped forward to be involved in a small task force that would work on updating the website. Please bring this request to your teams as we need 2-3 more people who are not trustees to work on this. Contact Heide if you are interested.

- **MEP (Mortgage Elimination Project)**

At our MEP meeting we continued updating our MEP prospectus and began to set some action items into it. A major focus at this meeting was working on a case statement together. In early July we sent out personal thank you cards to all our monthly donors which were well received.

- Next Meeting: August 15th, 2pm

Conflict Resolution Team (Temporary Name) (*rep: Mary Aitken & Muriel Weins*)

- Interested individuals met and a team has begun to form. The group is struggling to find a name that feels right so is being called “Conflict Resolution Team” for now.
- The team is trying very hard to keep within Commons process and not create excess bureaucracy.
- The team may put on workshops in the future, for example: compassionate listening and non-violent communication.
- Muriel has facilitated a small workshop using a process she created for discovering “what’s under the surface”. Many people at council were interested in this process.
- The team will continue to meet and will report to council.

PROJECTS:

Community Kitchen (*rep:Patrick Roux*)

- See PMT report

Labyrinth (*rep:Mary Aitken*)

- Lots of weeding to be done! People are away and shut down has prevented mowing/weed whacking.
 - A special ceremony (and possibly work bee?) will happen on Saturday the 10th

3. Discussion on follow-up items from previous meeting:

A. Trustee nominations: A call out will be coming from trustees for nominations for the AGM. Qualifications are not currently in our bylaws & policies but the trustees are working on updating this for next year and council will be able to provide feedback (likely along with the upcoming handbook review). For now, recommended qualifications are provided in the call out. If you would like to stand or know someone who you would like to nominate, please ask them and also inform the trustees.

B. Rick Cranston sign: Stef spoke to Rick and thanked him on behalf of the Commons for the sign he donated that is now in place. Stef also apologized for the Commons taking so long to put the sign up. If Rick would like to make a second sign, as previously discussed, it is in his hands now.

C. Consensus Policy: (also see Trustees report)

The draft policy is attached with these minutes. Please provide feedback ASAP to the trustees or at September council.

D. Questions from Sam Adair: Where (to what Society) is the Commons designated in the event that the Commons is dissolved? : It was noted that AGES would not absorb the Commons if it were to dissolve as previously brought up by Sam Adair (Now that the property transfer has occurred, AGES is not involved). The process for Commons dissolution is outlined in our constitution (paragraph 4) and is unalterable (paragraph 5):

“Upon winding-up or dissolution of the Society, the funds and property remaining after the payment of all costs, charges and expenses properly incurred in the winding-up or dissolution, including the remuneration of the liquidator, and after payment to employees of the Society of any arrears of salaries or wages, and after payment of any debts of the Society, shall be distributed to such charity or charities, registered under the provisions of the Income Tax Act (Canada), or such “qualified donees” allowed under the Income Tax Act (Canada), as shall be designated by the trustees of the Society that conduct operations on Gabriola Island.”

4. Additional Items Arising:

Reminders & Action Items - will be followed up at next meeting:

A. Consensus Policy (attached): Please provide feedback to trustees ASAP or at Sept. Council

B. AGM Team reports: please provide a VERY SHORT team report for the AGM. 3-4 point form highlights of the year and a photo if you like. Please send to the trustees along with information on who will speak at the AGM for your team (2-3mins). If you don't have someone, Jinny will give your report.

C. Web site task force: Please contact Heide if you would like to be involved in a small task force to work on updating and improving usability of our website.

D. The Communications Team needs you!!!: Contact Heide if you or anyone you know might be interested in replacing Heide OR Imogen for Communiqués.

E. Feedback on Events accounting recommendation (attached): If any please send to Stef.

Attachments:

A. Draft Consensus Policy:

Policy: Consensus Decision Making

Date: May 21, 2008 Revisions (date): Jan 14, 2009, June 2, 2011, Aug 2, 2013

DRAFT

Policy Statement:

“Consensus decision-making will be used at all Society meetings”. (Foundation By Laws Part 6.33)

Unity does not mean unanimity; it means the best general agreement possible in a reasonable time period.

Procedure:

1. Introduce the proposal.
2. Clarify questions and call for concerns.
3. Amend and modify the proposal through more discussion, or withdraw if there is no support at all.
4. The facilitator of the meeting will then ask for any further changes, reservations, or objections. The following options are ways to indicate a lack of support for a proposal or decision:
 - Non-support – I don’t see the need for this, but I will go along.
 - Reservations – I think this may be a mistake, but I can live with it.
 - Standing aside – I personally can’t support this, but I won’t stop others.
 - Blocking – I cannot support this or allow the group to support this.
5. If there are no further amendments or objections, the decision will be accepted.
6. If a proposal is blocked, the decision making process is suspended until a resolution process is activated.
7. Resolution Process:
 - Blockers are given the opportunity to present reasons for blocking which must be clearly stated and recorded.
 - Reasons for blocking must meet criteria that demonstrate the decision would: jeopardize the legal existence of the Commons; place the Commons in an untenable financial position; create irreversible impacts on the land and the environment (Do No Harm), constitute unethical or imprudent behaviour.
 - After an agreed upon time frame to consider the blocking in light of the criteria, the issue is re-introduced for a decision. If the new information does not persuade other members to change the decision, the decision goes ahead.
 - If the block does not meet the criteria but raises some concerns, the group should consider moving forward cautiously with the decision and action.
 - The nature of the block and the blockers will go on record along with the decision.

B. Draft Event Team Accounts Recommendation

July 22/13

Event Team

Present: Judith Roux, Judith Heather, Rebecca Furnell, Stef Marrie

Event Fund Management

1. All funds raised through events will be deposited into the Commons General Account, with an accounting line to designate **Event Funds**.
2. All expenses incurred during the production of an event will be paid from the **Event Funds** line in the General Account.
3. **Event Funds** could be used to purchase equipment or rent items that would enhance an event, at the discretion of the Events Team.
4. The funds raised by a particular event or from the **Event Fund** line in the General Account, could be designated to subsidize a specific project; subject to approval by Commons Council.
5. The Events Team will evaluate **Event Funds** line of the General Account at the end of the fiscal year. A working amount will be rolled over for use in the upcoming year, and recommendations will be made to the Council as to the dispersal of remaining funds.
6. Any funds donated specifically for the purpose of paying down the mortgage will not be counted as Event Funds, but rather, submitted directly to the General Account with this designation. An example of this is the Donation Table set up at the Christmas Craft Fair.
7. Since events are the main outlet for **T-Shirt sales**, the Events Team is willing to assume management of t-shirt production and sales. This is subject to approval by Council. Discussion is invited to determine the designation of net profit from t-shirt sales.