

Commons Coordinating Council (CCC)
gabrielacommonscouncil@gmail.com

Notes for Meeting of Jan. 6/15

Present: Kit Szanto, George Szanto, Jinny Hayes, John Peirce, Judith Roux Mackay, Patrick Roux, Alison Fitzgerald, Mary Aitken, Stef Marrie, Sheila Brook, Nancy Hetherington Peirce, Rebecca Furnell

Co-facilitators: Nancy Hetherington Peirce, Rebecca Furnell
Recorder: Stef Marrie (COM Team)

Next CCC meeting: Feb. 3, 2015

Recorder for next meeting: Property Management Team

Meeting Agenda:

1. 20 Minute Discussion
2. Reports: Teams, Projects and Groups
3. Follow-up from previous meetings
4. New Business
5. Actions and Next Steps
6. Next meeting: date, recorder, topic of 20-Minute Discussion

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

A. Communications Team: Jinny will talk again with Deb as Treasurer and also prepare a draft budget for COM, to be brought back to Feb. Council for discussion, and to go on to teams.

B. "Responsibilities for Facilitators" Information Page: Nancy and Rebecca will update the background information paragraph and bring a revised version to the February CCC meeting for final approval as a working document.

C. 20-Minutes Discussions for Future Meetings: Nancy and Rebecca will establish an order for the next several meetings.

1. Notes from 20-Minute Discussion

COM Planning, including Website Update: Led by Communications Team – Rep Jinny Hayes

The website falls under the auspice of the COM Team, which does not have a budget allocated from the Commons Operating Budget. At this time there is about \$3000 in the COM Team line, according to Treasurer Deb Ferens. Some questions arise regarding the financial responsibilities of the COM Team, which doesn't really have a logical means for raising its own funds as some other teams do.

Who should pay for ads? Events Team pays for their own ads from proceeds of each event.

Should teams be responsible for their own ads, and what types of things would teams advertise?

Most teams do not need to place newspaper ads for anything, but paying for published articles that might be associated with a given team's area of interest can be a complication. Although the *Sounder* may offer free space for an article in conjunction with a paid ad, COM would like to run articles without ads from time to time. In fact, we would like to have regular articles in the *Sounder*, like those that have appeared in the *Sounder* in the past. Derek requires four articles on hand to choose from if we started this again. Perhaps each Team could be responsible for one article each year. There was support for this idea from everyone at the meeting. Sheila suggested using info from the Communiqué for articles.

John Peirce suggested that all Teams should be allotted an amount in the Operation Budget for expenses, eg, perhaps the COM Team should be allotted \$1000. Deb Ferens, as Treasurer, had suggested this as well. How could this get approved? More discussion with Teams, Council & the Treasurer are required.

Action: Jinny will talk again with Deb as Treasurer and also prepare a draft budget for COM, to be brought back to February Council for discussion, and to go on to teams.

Website: Team of Jinny Hayes, Judith Roux MacKay, Muriel Weins and Mary Wilson has reviewed the Website and found a great need for updating info and refreshing the look. They have divided sections for each of them to work on for a "temporary fix", with a plan for a whole new site, using different software to build it in future. A request was made for 1) everyone to forward suggestions for improvements – what do you find difficult when you go to the site? And 2) names of anyone with appropriate expertise that might help mount a "new look site".

2. Reports:

TEAMS:

Communications: Rep – Jinny Hayes

- The new brochure is now available.
- Jinny is working on the COM Team mandate.
- Next Meeting: No date set at this time. Team plans to meet quarterly.

CPR: Rep – Mary Aitken

- Spent some time de-mystifying the team. Meetings start with a few moments of silent reflection. The group has become very close and offers support to each other.
- Next Meeting: 2nd Wed. am each month @ 10am

Covenant: Rep – Jinny Hayes

- No report.
- Next Meeting: Jan.13 – 2:30pm

Event Planning & Volunteers: Rep – Stef Marrie

- No report
- Next Meeting: None planned

Farm Management: *Rep – Alison Fitzgerald*

- The team would like the Commons to offer a mid-week market for Gabriola. Proposed site will be the Timber Frame building. Anyone interested should join the Farm Team at the Commons on Wed., Jan.14th to review the site and discuss. The next step would be for the participants to organize themselves, with support from the Commons, and bring a proposal to the Share the Commons Team.

- Composting toilet at the South Garden is now in place, but still needs to be set up.
- Kitchen Garden – all gooseberries have been moved from the Dragon Garden to the Kitchen garden. A lot of work has been done with the view of producing food for soup. Half of the garden has been prepared – next step is to get seeds.
- Food Forum is scheduled for Feb.21st – more info to come.
- Soup Makers have expressed interest in making a recipe book.
- Next Meeting ???

Grant Writing: *Rep – George Szanto*

- Will be meeting to discuss funding for the septic for the Community Kitchen.
- Next Meeting: Tues. Jan.13/15 @ 2:30pm

Infrastructure: Team is inactive at this time

Long Range Planning: *Rep – John Peirce*

- A report was prepared by Robbie, who was not present.
- Next meeting: ???

Learning Opportunities: *Rep – Mary Wilson*

- No report

Property Management: *Rep – Patrick Roux*

- No meetings over the holidays, but lots happened at the workbees. There is talk of putting a new roof on the main building as there are leaks. There is currently a budget of \$7000 for this, but the most economical solution must be designed. We are counting on lots of volunteer help for this, as has happened with major projects like this in the past.

- Next Meeting: Sat., Jan.9th at 9am there will be a walk-about to discuss the roof and any larger projects needed.

Share the Commons: *Rep – Judith Roux MacKay:*

- Patrick Olmstead has made an application to offer an accredited wood-working workshop at the Commons.
- Next Meeting: 3rd Wednesday, Jan.21st – time TBA

Trails and Green Spaces: *Rep – Kit Szanto*

- No Report
- Next Meeting: Every work bee on Saturday mornings 10am - noon

Trustees for Gabriola Commons Foundation: *Rep – Alison Fitzgerald*

- A productive retreat was held for the Trustees in December.
- Jan.17th @ 1:30 a seminar will be offered to teach folks about Legacy Planning and Philanthropic Giving. Jinny has requested assistance with set-up and perhaps providing some

baking. This information is placed in the Trustees Report, as the seminar was initiated while Jinny was on the Board of Trustees.

- Next Meeting: ???

PROJECTS:

Community Kitchen: *Judith Roux MacKay*

- Work is continuing; no specific updates.

Labyrinth: *Mary Aitken*

- No report.

Solar Panel Project: *Judith Roux MacKay*

A 10kW solar panel project at the Commons – it just gets more and more interesting!

A community meeting was held in mid December intended to initiate a task force to take on the planning of the solar panel project. The discussion focused instead on a strong concern about our decision to exchange one of our analog meters for a digital meter in order to permit net metering with BC Hydro. (It had been made clear to us that the funding through the Community Works Fund would only be granted if net metering was part of the picture and that only the digital meters would permit this.)

At this point, Bob McKechnie announced “breaking news”, fresh from a conversation with BC Hydro, which revealed that “meter choices of BC Hydro customers are independent of eligibility to participate in the Net Metering program”. When this was subsequently confirmed in writing, we realized there could be some rethinking of the project. There is no need to give up the analog meters! *

At the same time, the recent heavy rains have demonstrated that the roof on the house at the Commons has reached the end of its life and needs to be replaced. This news has come earlier than anticipated, but it is hoped that the funds reserved in the Property Management Team budget could be attributed to the re-roofing. This would make it an ideal candidate for a solar panel installation, using standing seam metal roofing.

Consequently we are envisaging two 5kW installations, connected to the two existing analog meters, with a net metering agreement to be signed with BC Hydro for both meters. The original planning for a 39-panel installation – ground-mounted near the orchard and connected to the electrical panel in the woodwork shop – has been reduced to 20 solar panels and a second installation with the balance (i.e. 20 solar panels), can now be considered for a roof-mounting (connected through the attic to the electrical panel directly below in the house). In this way we can demonstrate both means of mounting solar panels to the community.

We will try again to initiate a task force to take on the planning of the project!

*Note that the cost levied for retaining the analog meters is currently being covered by donors involved in the Commons, although we will be requesting a reduction in this cost since we have initiated a program of recording daily readings of both meters which will be relayed to BC Hydro.

GROUPS

People for a Healthy Community: No report

Poetry Gabriola: No report

3. Follow-up from Previous Meetings – None**4. New Business**

A. “Responsibilities of Facilitators” – the descriptive document provided by Nancy was reviewed. The “background information” paragraph, which was taken from the website, needs to be updated.

- Action: Nancy and Rebecca will update the background information paragraph and bring a revised version to the February CCC meeting for final approval as a working document.

B. Social Enterprise – Item postponed to a future meeting, due to absence of Robbie Huston

C. New 20 Minute Discussion Topics

Possible Topics for 20-minute discussions:

- Budget 101 - Understanding the Operating Budget
- Social Enterprise? (Robbie)
- Presentation of the Commons Field Guide by the Trustees.
- Signage
- How do we orient people to the Commons?

Action: Nancy and Rebecca will establish an order for the next several meetings.

Next CCC meeting: Feb. 3, 2015

Recorder for next meeting: Property Management Team

Attachments: None