

Commons Coordinating Council Notes

July 6, 2016

Present: K. Louise, Joyce Babula, Brenda Fowler, Jinny Hayes, Judith Roux, Bruce _____, Sharon Arnell, Muriel Weins, Louise Amuir, Patrick Roux, HawkOwl, Bob Andrew, Linda St Clair, Rebecca Furnell, Deb Ferens, Alison Fitzgerald, Maggie Mooney.

Joyce made a presentation on behalf of GICHA asking for a letter of support for a grant the Community Hall Association is applying for to upgrade the hall to be able to function as a theatre space. Their wish is to have 37' of black curtain, portable tiered seating, a sound and lighting booth, rolling scaffolding for lighting. They would like our letter to say that we think it would be great to have professional theatre coming to the island and we support upgrades to the Community Hall to be able to make that a functional theatre space. The letter should be prepared before the end of the month. Joyce also invited us all to come to the Salmon BBQ on August 13

Decision: We are in support of GICHA's grant application. We have assigned the letter writing to the trustee team
(Joyce then left the meeting)

There was some discussion about the Goat Barn and our aspirations there. Some ideas are that we would be more local, more intimate size, could be one of many performance spaces for festivals and we don't see ourselves in conflict. LRP will be sharing their plan for a planning meeting in the fall.

Garage Sale - Bruce introduced himself. In the past, Steph has looked after the garage sale in July. She is unable to do that this summer and so Bruce is happy to do it. Saturday August 6. Jinny asked for a blurb so ComTeam can publicize it.

(Bruce then left the meeting)

Agenda review

Appreciation to PMT for the thorough report on water and to Sharon and Jill for bringing up the security discussion last month.

Safety and Security Discussion

Covenant Team decided to look at safety and security through their covenant lens. Please see their entire document at the end of these notes. They looked at many of the balances that are important in the governing principles of the Commons. Thinking about a code of ethics of stewardship. Once you step on the property, you are in a stewardship position.

CPR team is thinking it through and wanting to be fair. The hedge is forbidding. Next month, CPR would like to do a "thing" about the hedge.

A number of people noted that dogs seem to be reigned in better. PHC has said no dogs at events. Appreciation expressed to Brenda and PHC that things seem to have gotten better with the dogs due to her action.

We had a letter from a gardener, which brought the dog issue to Council's attention. Jinny has been in contact with the gardener, who she asked to speak to the RCMP. (may not have happened yet). The RCMP suggested we do something about the hedge.

Teams are asked to follow the lead of covenant team and make some response to safety and security using their own team lens. Part of the conversation could be around code of ethics and how to develop guidelines for different situations. Should trustees be the reporters for bikes found on the Commons and other particularized questions like that.....

Dishwasher in farm house – we have an older dishwasher that has been donated. PMT doesn't want to install it because it is likely to leak fairly soon. Various options were discussed: directions for the VIHA 3 tub system posted, a smaller new dishwasher with 2 drawers, a sanitizer. What about a grant for a new dishwasher?

Decision: No one is standing in the way of getting rid of the older dishwasher and there is general interest in acquiring a new one with two drawers.

Team Reports

LRP (Linda) LRP met on July 4 and is planning a session on Sunday Sept 18 from 1-6 to look at what has been accomplished so far and what is it going to take to get a project to completion. There will be pizza. Their next meeting is July 19 @ 2pm at the campground.

PMT (Patrick) PMT met last month. Discussed water. Seems to be a pretty good water situation right now. The pond level is stable, due to water restrictions for pond use. Drought info letter came from VIHA. Patrick will send link to Jinny to include in Communique and facebook page. PMT is monitoring electricity based on the energy audit and has noticed that there is a freezer with very high use and heaters with high use. Heat pumps for downstairs offices and upstairs rooms would be fabulous. GERTIE has moved to the big parking lot. Charles is in the hospital. We want to send a card. Their next meeting is of Friday July 8 @5pm

Covenant Team (Deb) Cov Team getting fired up to do the Baseline Report, Draft Covenant & Stewardship Plan preparatory to having the mortgage paid off in a couple of years. These are all very important and needing shaping to be appropriate for the Commons. **LOOKING FOR COVENANT HOLDERS!!** (ideally 2) Island Trust Fund Board was suggested. June bio-mapping was informal (and planned that way). Recent bird bio-mapping with Sharon McInnes revealed a significant bird population. The report is on Bird Watch Canada website – photos by Patrick Roux. Sharon is willing to do birdwalks and workshops with people. **THANK YOU Sharon**, for your fabulous report (and Patrick for the great photos!). Jinny and Becky to include link in Communique and facebook page. <http://www.birdcanada.com/gabriola-commons-habitat-extraordinaire/> Their next meeting is Tues Jul 19 @ 2pm at the campground.

CPR team (Muriel) We were impressed with PMT's water report. We are currently interested in community relations. Next meeting is Wed July 27 @ 10am

Farm Team (Sharon) Watering schedule set up and water conservation info for gardeners and PHC sent out. See Appendix 2 at the end. On drought measures. Frost in the South garden in June stunted some things, North garden is beautiful. The shed is great. Little Field had a flea beetle battle in a puddle with a paddle. Diatomaceous earth has been the most successful paddle in the flea beetle battle. Lost a pear tree and a northern spy in the orchard – soil needs replenishment or maybe plant grapes. Fencing changes in the kitchen garden to make better access to manure pile. Cookbook sales have garnered \$652.80. Tour de Coop donated \$570 to Farm Team. An apple juicing shed is being built. Need space and more efficient storage shelves for drying seeds, storing produce and the for the seed bank. Minutes, watering schedule and water conservation info can be found at the end of the Notes. Next meeting is July 24@ 9:30am

STC (Judith) Woodwork shop will be operating as a stewarded space with workshops and rentals. There is still the need for dust collectors and a lot of other details. The north zone of the shop is stalled between being a bike kitchen, a pottery coop and a PMT space. PMT is installing an electrical box so pottery, bikes and PMT can all peacefully coexist. There are tools, money in the green bike fund and some people interested in reviving the bike kitchen AND some very keen potters AND the PMT needs workshop space. STC will try to resolve what might become a territorial skirmish. Bookings – Gloria wants a discussion on how we view meetings and revenue. Next meeting July 20 @ 10am

Infrastructure (Judith) GERTIE bus has moved to the parking lot. Waiting to hear from grant application for the next phase of the parking lot. Solar project also waiting for a grant from BC Hydro to put in a remote meter. Renewed interest in bio-diesel processing, with awareness that there may be by-law issues.

Trustees (Alison) Trustees have invited previous trustees to brainstorm about a legacy fund once the mortgage is paid off. A lawyer has been found to handle the AGES donation.

PHC (Brenda) Grade 7 class fundraised and bought 3 trees (1 apple and 2 hazelnuts) as a thank you for the hot lunch program and their gratitude for being on the property. Brenda offered the trees to be planted in the orchard or elsewhere if they are wanted there. Brenda will plant the trees inside garden areas that are already designated for PHC. General feeling during discussion is that the trees were a gift to PHC and that best to keep clear boundaries between the Commons and PHC.

ComTeam (Jinny) they meet by email but are having an actual face-to-face meeting in July (date TBA) to discuss brochures and tagline. They had a meeting with Islands Trust and have made slight modifications to signage proposal based on current signage by-laws. If directional signs have arrows, they don't count as part of the allowable square footage, so the round signs will all have arrows. George and Kit have pledged to match donations (up to \$1250) to bring the signage budget up to the necessary

\$. There was some discussion about when the end of the campaign should be. Aug 15? The end of the Fall Fair?

Appendix 1

Safety & Security on the Commons – through the lens of the Covenant Team

June 2016

Stewardship of the Commons

The stewardship of the *Commons* involves balancing ecological protection, a working agricultural landscape and multi-purpose community spaces. Stewardship principles also pay attention to the right of public access to the land & participation in stewardship activities.

Central to the ecological stewardship of the land:

Preserve & protect sensitive ecosystems, biodiversity and integrity of the landscape, water conservation; promote deep knowledge of the land, manage invasive species, preserve vistas;

Central to the agricultural stewardship of the land:

community agriculture – shared use by a community of farmers/gardeners; agricultural education & food security; compliance with ALC support of “non-farm” uses, protection of agricultural land and promotion of farming.

Central to stewardship of community space use (indoors & out):

Ensure the community benefits of the buildings & structures and the gathering places (indoors & out); balancing the widest possible range of permitted community use with quiet peaceful sanctuary; Maintenance of buildings and infrastructure to safety and accessibility standards;

Stewardship principles

- precautionary principles – do not harm, duty to prevent harm.
- light footprint (not just from environmental point of view but also from “Surveillance” perspective),
- due diligence and being pro-active rather than crisis management and reactive.

Safeguarding safety and security

The space has to be welcoming and accessible to everyone

People in the space have to feel safe and comfortable

Factors contributing to safety and security

- **Design**
- **Social Responsibility**
- **Emergency/prevention procedures**

Design (Landscape as safe space)

A creative design process based on whole-systems thinking informed by ethics and design principles, an ethics based design system that looks at landscape as a whole rather than pieces. design is a holistic approach integrating nature, sustainable agriculture, and people spaces. Good design can facilitate meaningful social interactions.

Good places for interaction are places where people – often from many parts of the community and/or diverse backgrounds – meet naturally and interact comfortably and often pleasurably because of the nature or attraction of the space and/or the activities associated with it.

Social Responsibility (Commons as part of a safe island community)

- Upholding Human rights
- Freedom of association
- Engagement in community initiatives (helping make the larger community safer makes the Commons safer)
- building awareness of and helping to resolve safety & security issues in the community.

Emergency/prevention procedures (keeping people safe in the moment)

- Personal safety – site & situation specific
- Buddy systems
- Patrols
- Good lighting (but not intrusive)
- Signs, plaques, statues, murals
- Emergency Response Plans/Emergency Information
- Police (911) to report criminal activity or suspicious or threatening behavior.

The presence of police or citizen patrols, or police call boxes. Police or citizen patrol presence doesn't have to be huge or aggressive. If people know they're there, they feel safer, and those who might cause trouble are less apt to do so.

CODE of ETHICS (this is blank in document)

Appendix 2 – Farm Management Team June Minutes, Water Conservation Info and Watering Schedule

1. Drought level 1 is reached at the pond.

In order to conserve irrigation water as much as possible we agreed at the June Council to send out water conservation strategies (eg mucho mulching!) and establish schedules for watering in the different gardens when the level reaches 3 feet in the pond.

We're there now and schedules and strategies have been sent out to reps of North and South Allotment gardens, Dragon Gardeners and PHC as well as Orchard and Little Field stewards. See attachments.

Note that the agreement at Council included the necessity of **shutting down all irrigation should the level drop to 2 feet.** (Further loss of water could cause lasting damage to the ecosystem in and around the pond.)

Please take note of this and prepare for alternative measures (bringing water from home, catching any rain in containers, redoubling mulch etc.)

2. Updates

- South Gardens: Climate extremes are being experienced, with frost in the middle of June (devastating to those who have planted squash, tomatoes and potatoes!), after the early heat in the month requiring shade cloth to protect the plants!
- North Gardens: flourishing!
Beautiful painting on garden shed, with new roof and window!
- Little Field: also flourishing! (All crops doing well: purple barley , beans, potatoes, garlic, squash, cabbage, tomatoes, fennel, cucumber...!)
Note that flea beetles love mulch! Remedies: Vaseline, diatomaceous earth (works well – can be found in the lower marshland near the S. Gardens)
Call for scythers to take on the edges around the field.
- Orchard: thin, granular soil in west has taken 2 of the pear trees and a northern spy. If we replant there, care must be taken to improve soil fertility and texture!
This looks like an “on”-year for the Belle de Boskoop apples. Great for cooking!
- Kitchen Garden: Fencing will be altered with the removal of SW post to permit easier access by truck to compost.
The garden continues to look spectacular with multicoloured poppies and lavender taking their turn! Good harvests of broad beans, asparagus, strawberries and raspberries.
Rust has hit the garlic and seed leeks, but the crops are fine (just looking a little shorn)

3. Financials

- Cookbook sales: Second edition selling well (venues include Village Foods, Wednesday market, Tour de Coop. Idea: try for a Commons table at the Saturday market in August with cook books, T-shirts etc, poppy seed sales (w/ photos!)
\$652.80 reimbursement to Sharon for costs of the printing and purchase of copper* spray (to help tomatoes resist blight.)
- Tour de Coop donations totalling \$570 to Farm Team. Note enthusiastic organizers of this event may be eager to join in the organization of the Fall Fair! (Judith will explore further with Events Team)
- Midweek market: going well, with two new vendors last week.
Revenue to date (May 25 to June 22) for tables and sale of FMT produce: \$188.55

4. Other:

- Apple juicing equipment storage space: Long awaited storage space is being built on the west wall of the new Kitchen to hold the crusher, press, bottles etc.)
- FMT space in the Kitchen needs shelving to be built.

5. Council questions:

- Security: do we consider opening up the hedge to improve visibility from the street?

- Water: issues addressed
- PMT Should the donated dishwasher in the big house be installed, knowing that the piping is probably stiff and prone to cracking (leaking dishwashers the most frequent causer for claims with insurance companies!)
Team response: No dishwasher. Careful Handwashing and air drying should be adequate. A vinegar rinse could be considered if necessary.

* Copper: A note to let you know why you would enjoy coming to the FMT meetings:
A story from the prairies, long ago: a badly injured dog developed gangrene. Copper pennies were crushed to dust, inserted in a wiener and fed to the dog. The dog was healed (thanks to the antibacterial action of the copper in the system!)

ATTENTION - GARDENERS

Due to low water levels and in an effort to manage our water resource to make it through the gardening season we are asking all gardeners on the Commons to use water saving strategies and to water only on the days designated for their garden area.

North Allotments, PHC gardens including the Dragon Gardens

Tuesdays

Thursdays

Saturdays and

Sunday PM

South Allotments

Mondays

Wednesdays

Fridays and

Sunday AM

Little Field and The Orchard

Wednesday and Saturdays

Water Conservation Tips for Gardens on the Gabriola Commons in Drought or Anytime

Please do your part to use water effectively and efficiently. Following these suggestions will build the foundation for a healthier and happier, water-conserving garden.

MULCHING

One of the best ways to reduce water is to place mulch or surface covering on your garden bed. Mulches help to keep the soil cooler, add nutrients to the garden and prevent weeds.

If applied too early, mulches may slow soil warming in the spring. Wait until plants are about 6" tall and then add 3-4" of organic materials such as shredded paper, straw and dried grass clippings, as these all decompose relatively quickly.

Avoid wood chips and fresh grass clippings as they may rob the soil of nitrogen.

Plastic adds nothing positive to the soil, it prevents water and oxygen from flowing between soil layers.

WATER WISELY

Before watering, check the soil moisture. If the soil has dried to a depth of 3-4", the garden needs water.

Water early in the morning or in the evening. If you water while it's hot out, normally between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m., most of the water will evaporate and will not benefit the plant.

Avoid watering when it's windy. Watering overhead wastes water and can cause fungal diseases such as powdery mildew, especially on squash and tomatoes.

Deep watering will train roots to grow deep into the ground and will provide better access to water. Set your hose to a low-flow-setting, water close to the base of the plant and completely saturate the soil.

Burpees has an excellent one pager on watering strategies at:

<http://www.burpee.com/gardenadvicecenter/areas-of-interest/flower-gardening/watering-your-garden/article10365.html>

PLAN WISELY

Focus on drought-tolerant vegetables that produce abundant crops like tomatoes, squash, peppers, chard and eggplants.

Broccoli, cauliflower and sweet corn require a lot of space and water, so they are not ideal vegetables in this climate, especially during a drought.

Plant your vegetables in the spring before the hot and dry days of summer arrive. They'll have time to establish a root system that will allow them to survive the hotter days.

Think about getting a rain barrel for your plot, fill it early in the spring and save it for the drought.

BUILD YOUR SOIL

Adding organic amendments will help your soil retain moisture and provide nutrition to plants.

COMPOSTING

Compost is decomposed plant material. Adding 2-3" of compost every year can greatly reduce water use and add needed nutrients to the soil.

Choose material free of insecticides, herbicides and weed seeds.

A great compost is the recycled debris from last year's garden, as long as it is mildew and weed free.

Wood chips or fresh grass trimmings are not recommended, as they will deplete nitrogen from the soil. Peat moss also is not recommended, as it is a non-renewable resource.

CONTROL WEEDS

Weeds compete with vegetables for water and can reduce your yield.

water users. Should conditions reach Level 4, provincial water managers may exercise their authority to temporarily suspend authorized water usage in affected watersheds and aquifers.

Further reductions in stream, lake and aquifer levels could lead to water shortages and affect people, agriculture, industry and fish stocks. Ministry staff will continue to monitor conditions, work closely with local governments and key stakeholders, and provide updates as the need arises.

The new Water Sustainability Act contains new tools to manage water use during times of scarcity, including authority for all households to access a basic amount of water for essential household needs, protection of critical environmental flows for fish and ecosystems, and regulation of groundwater withdrawals that may impact streamflows.

Water conservation is everyone's responsibility. Many communities in British Columbia are prepared to deal with water supply shortages and low streamflow conditions by drought management plans and water conservation programs that are already in place.

Water conservation tips:

At home:

- Limit outdoor watering.
- Don't water during the heat of the day or when it's windy.
- Consider planting drought-tolerant vegetation.
- Take shorter showers.
- Don't leave the tap running.
- Install water-efficient showerheads and toilets.

On the farm:

- Implement an irrigation scheduling program using real-time weather data.
- Schedule irrigation to match crop needs and soil storage capacity.
- Improve water system efficiencies and check for leaks.
- Focus on high value crops and livestock.

Industry:

- Reduce non-essential water usage.
- Recycle water used in industrial operations.
- Use water-efficient methods and equipment.

Learn more:

B.C. Drought information: <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/air-land-water/water/drought-flooding-dikes-dams/drought-information>

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everywhere, every time



Sent on behalf of Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

Island Health has been advised by the West Coast Technical Drought Committee that a large portion of the Ministry's West Coast region has moved from Drought Level 2 to Drought Level 3. Drought Level 3 covers all of Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands, but not the Central Coast and Haida Gwaii, which are remaining at Drought Level 2 at this time.

The BC Drought Response Plan which contains suggested actions for Drought Level 3 can be found at

<http://bcgov03.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=9042807690964463b268dfd91949d65b> . Under Resources on the right hand menu, there is also a reference for water systems, Dealing With Drought: Handbook for Water Suppliers

http://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/environment/air-land-water/water/drought-info/suppliers_drought_handbook_2009.pdf

The British Columbia Drought Information Portal 2016 can be found at

<http://bcgov03.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=9042807690964463b268dfd91949d65b> includes links to the BC Drought Map.

The tab at the top for Drought Information Site will link you to the BC Drought Response Plan which contains suggested actions for Drought Level 3. Under Resources on the right hand menu, there is also a reference for water systems, Dealing with Drought: Handbook for Water Suppliers.

INFORMATION BULLETIN

For Immediate Release
2016FLNR0100-000887
May 30, 2016

Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource
Operations

Vancouver Islanders, Gulf Islanders urged to conserve water

VICTORIA – Most streams and rivers on Vancouver Island are currently experiencing very low flows similar to this time last year.

With weather conditions expected to remain dry in the coming week after some initial short-lived precipitation, water users on Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands are being urged to reduce water consumption.

These regions are currently experiencing Level 3 hydrological drought conditions, which call for voluntary water use reductions of 30% from all municipal, agricultural and industrial users, except for systems supported by storage (lakes and reservoirs) or groundwater. The areas of particular concern include southern Vancouver Island, south of Tofino on the west coast and Campbell River on the east coast, and the Gulf Islands.

The Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations anticipates that the region will likely experience significant water supply shortages in 2016 unless there is substantial precipitation between now and the end of June.

Ministry staff are closely monitoring river levels and may upgrade the drought level if the weather continues to have a negative effect on stream flows and water supply. Residential, agricultural and industrial users within municipalities and regional districts are encouraged to observe local water conservation bylaws.

Similar to last year, partial or complete closures of streams for recreational fisheries may need to occur this summer. The closure dates and the listing of affected streams will be publicly communicated and posted on the ministry's in-season regulation changes website:
<http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/fw/fish/regulations/>

Water users are also encouraged to ensure that water intakes are screened to prevent fish from being pulled into water systems as water levels drop. Low water levels can impede the passage of salmon to spawning grounds, increase susceptibility to disease, or cause stranding or death due to low oxygen and high water temperatures.

Groundwater measurements taken at provincial observation wells in these regions currently indicate one half of the wells are currently below normal seasonal levels. However, shallow wells connected to streams are likely vulnerable to going dry earlier than usual this year. Well owners are encouraged to prolong groundwater supplies by using less and relying on stored water.

Level 4 drought conditions, the highest rating, are determined by factors including regional stream flows, water storage capacity, ecological concerns, weather forecasts and impacts on

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