

Gabriola Commons Coordinating Council

Notes from March 5, 2013

Present: Bob Andrew (co-facilitator); Maya Ruggles (co-facilitator); Judith Roux, Kit Szanto, Heide Brown (recorder), Patrick Roux, Deborah Ferens, George Szanto, Stephanie Rossel (acting director, PHC), Michelle Benjamin (PHC Board member), Patricia Ludwick, Sharon Pattison, Susan Yeend, Mary Wilson, Pat Durrett, Ann Buttrick, Alina Cerminara, Heather Menzies, Mary Rose, Stef Marrie.

Next CCC meeting: Tuesday, April 2 at 7 pm.

Recorder for next meeting: Events (Stef Marrie)

Actions/Questions to be addressed:

- 1: Menu changes for website: contact communications@gabriolacommons.ca (All Teams).
- 2: FMT new mandate and food sharing policy: contact sharon.pattison@gmail.com (All Teams)
- 3: Contact Shelagh H. re: conflict resolution (Robbie H.) - from previous Council meeting

Additional Agenda Items:

- Heather Menzies – looking for feed-back about the Commons for her presentation to Island Studies Conference (May 10-12 @ Haven) heather_menzies@carleton.ca
- Mary Wilson – Commons group presentation to Island Studies Conference – field trip on the Commons requires lots of people --- if you can help, call, or email mary.gabriola@gmail.com
- Mary Rose – croquet on the Commons.
- George Szanto – Boules court on the Commons.

Ongoing Discussion Items to watch for:

- A. Current issue ongoing (starting March meeting): front yard
- B. “Personal benefit” on the Commons
- C. Sustainability Building (in progress)
- D. Signage
- E. Formation of a Conflict Resolution Team
- F. Recognizing Contributions
- G. How do we decide what gets sent out to membership?

20 MINUTES ON A CURRENT ISSUE: Front Yard. (led by Deb Ferens)

Used CHEAPBFV's **model**, listing thoughts on this issue under: **Concerns, Hopes, Expectations, Assumptions, Priorities, Beliefs, Fears, and Values**. Pages of thoughts were collected. (see below)

TEAM Reports:

Commons Coordinating Council :

Next month is Bob's last as co-facilitator. Stef Marrie will take his place. Maya will continue on another 3 months as co-facilitator with Stef.

Communications (Rep: Heide)

- **HIGHLIGHTS:** Met with Hans about web-site. Since then he has made many little functional and clarity changes to the web-site, and fixed the link for the Calendar on the home-page. Yay Hans!
- We have various changes planned for the menus, both at the top of the page and the bottom. Since these changes involve changing 60 some different pages with each change, he'd like to have all menu changes to do at one time. Hence, teams, any changes you suggest for the menu buttons, please let us know by next council at the latest. This is a “take to your teams for discussion and bring back to next council” topic.
- Send to communications@gabriolacommons.ca : anything for Imogen - Common's Communique and for Hans for the website.
- Remember to send communications@gabriolacommons.ca anything you want in the papers, and deadlines are Monday for both papers.
- **NEEDS:** I have had, all at once, three offers to fill in for me while I am away. Patsy asked first, so if she doesn't get scared off between now and April, then she will be the COM rep from late April till mid June.
- **NEXT MEETING:** Will be with Patsy Ludwick to fine tune the most essential COM rep. duties.

Event Planning (Rep: Stef)

- Trades and Services Fair, smaller because of the rain, yet Trades people were pleased to have more quality one-on-one time with potential clients. The speakers were enthusiastically received. Delicious food was donated to the Commons. Combination of table-rentals, silent auction, and food sales brought \$785 to go towards the mortgage!
- Next Event: Spring Fair. Exact date TBA – probably Saturday, May 4th. Highlighting seed exchanges and plant starts.

Farm Management Team: (Rep: Sharon Pattison)

- New mandate and Food Sharing Policy (see below) for other teams to review and to bring comments to council for future discussion.

- Registration finished for allotments. Still space available for Namaste Gardens, at the South End (Interested? Email sharon.pattison@gmail.com).
- Little Field – half ground cover this year, and half food crops. Kitchen garden now well organized.
- Needs - safe storage for seeds.
- Next meeting, Monday 11 @ 4:00 (every 2nd Monday)

Fundraising: No report this time

Grant Writing: No report this time

Infrastructure: No report this time

Learning Opportunities: No report at this time.

Long Range Planning: No report at this time.

Property Management: (Rep: Patrick Roux)

- Clean-up workbee this Sat. 9th, 10-12 – house windows, etc. – followed by soup.
- Lots of new bookings. Please email Mary mary.gabriola@gmail.com if your team plans to meet at the Commons. Spaces fill up quickly these days. Also, it is important to have all of our meetings, big or small, on the calendar because that shows how much is happening on the Commons.
- End of April, Isle of the Arts Festival will be hosting many activities on the Commons, including possibly the building of a cob oven!
- Needs: Mary needs a shadow booking agent. She will be away April 18th to May 9th.

Share the Commons: (rep: Kit Szanto)

- Hedge discussion – make it lower, to chest high, and shape it.
- Suggest putting more of the yard into productive growing food space.
- Next regular STC meeting: March 6, at 10:30 am.

Trails and Green Spaces: (rep: Kit)

- East-West Connector – have \$2,000 donated to get going on it soon.
- Village Core pathway group – conversations in process.
- Note: TAGS meetings happen during weekly Saturday walkabouts (10 to noon). Newcomers always welcome.

Trustees for Gabriola Commons Foundation (Rep: Deb Ferens)

- Every other trustees meeting will focus on fundraising comprehensive plans.
- The 50,000 from the anonymous donor has been sorted. Some major projects completed and some still planned.
- Trustees meet every 1st and 3rd Thursday, 2-4.

Volunteers: (Rep: Stef Marrie)

- Covered under EVENTS.

Dragon Garden: (rep. Ann Buttrick)

- missing Eimar
- grow produce for themselves and the food-bank.
- need more participants
- meet each Tuesday – 11-12 – coffee & cake & gossip in the garden.

Tree Stewardship Task Force: (rep. Alison Fitzgerald)

- Agreement had been reached that the trees shading the little field, and around the big arbutus by the barn needed to go.
- They are down, and being chipped and cleaned up.
- Next steps on hold right now.
- Mary Aitken has resigned from this group.

PROJECTS:

Community Kitchen Stewards: (rep. Judith Roux)

- Hoping to open by Dec. 2013.
- Work ongoing and enthusiastic.
- Next meeting: Thur March 6, 4:00.

Sustainability Centre: (rep. Patrick Roux)

- this team needs to be revived to make the space available for use.

Stories from the Memory Well:

- The stories continue.
- Next story telling: Thursday March 28, at 1:30 (upstairs in the Commons).

GROUPS

People for a Healthy Community (rep: Stephanie (acting director) and Michelle)

- Expressed wishes of the clients, that the hedge not be changed at all. Clients have fond memories of this hedge, and feel it is protective and familiar.
- Have received a grant to replace their stove with a new one.
- PHC interested in participating in signage at the Commons
- PHC interested in participating in the 'bus' discussion

Attachments:

CHEAPBFV's from discussion of front yard:

Concerns: not enough ppl to care for it properly; image (unwelcome/unclear); called 'cedar hedge'; consult hedge trimmer; Commons is invisible; about cutting it (nostalgia/protective); blind spot for traffic around hedge; water for trees/plants go to hedge

Hopes: put plan out to community to bring more ppl in; become more welcoming; better signage; safer at entrances; modify hedge (not remove); better lighting; scalloped top on hedge; reflective signage; more informative signage; use lawn in various ways; better connection between Commons and Rollo; cull hedge for better line of sight; make front yard distinctive in some way (e.g. native trees); that hedge is not modified

Expectations: welcoming image; front yard goes beyond hedge (e.g. parking/ parking area); croquet on lawn; threshold; transitional space; refuge space

Assumptions: one day, a dedicated group will take care of/ maintain front yard; noise bounces and goes beyond hedge; why has hedge thrived?; water is going to hedge; does it need to be so high? grows well because it's so old and established

Priorities: taking care of existing trees; water

Beliefs: lighting is better now (thanks!) - could be better; to not cut all grass with fossil fuels; hedge is very high

Fears: too many 'unhealthy' plants; lots of work to trim hedge, tidy and use debris; having it half done and stopping (plan well so that doesn't happen)

Values: visual/sensual experience of 'threshold'; better water knowledge on Commons; hedge is unique attribute of Gabriola; barrier from main road (noise and fumes)

FMT mandate and food sharing policy:

Mandate of the Commons Farm Management Team

- To apply the Commons vision to protect the agricultural potential of the Commons by:
 - o enhancing the land to produce food for generations to come;
 - o engaging the community in organic food production, modeling sustainable community agriculture;
 - o undertaking horticultural research, while building a seed bank specific to Gabriola.
- To coordinate the agricultural initiatives presented in our three-phase agricultural plan for the Agricultural Land Commission.

Food Sharing Policy:

Our intention while growing fruits and vegetables in the orchard and common gardens is to be self-sustaining by:

- covering expenses through the selling of produce to the community (at comparable market prices)
- producing food which can be shared at Commons events (including workbee soups) and
- offering produce by donation to Commons volunteers