

Commons Coordinating Council (CCC) gabriolacommonscouncil@gmail.com

Notes for Meeting of March 4th, 2014

Present:

Raymond Tremblay, Heather Menzies, Rebecca Furnell, Judith Roux, Alison Fitzgerald, Robbie Huston, Guy Mireau, George Szanto, Kit Szanto, John Peirce, Nancy Heatherington Peirce, Deborah Ferens, Muriel Weins, Stef Marrie

Co-facilitators (2): Raymond Tremblay & Muriel Weins

Recorder: Rebecca Furnell (Events Team)

Next CCC meeting: April 1st, 2014 ; 7:00pm upstairs at the Commons

Recorders for upcoming meetings:

April 1st – Property Management

May 6th – Farm Management

June 3rd – Trails & Green Spaces

July 2nd – Long Range Planning

Aug. 5th – Covenant Team

Sept. 2nd – Learning Opportunities

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:
(See *February Council notesonline*)

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

A. Report from Website Task Force

B. Report from Gabe Energy feedback meeting (if it happens before April 1st)

C. Ensure Consensus Policy, with preamble went out in Communiqué and to website and feedback, if any, is being gathered for May CCC

D. Follow up with Signage Task Force

E. Follow up on any responses to communications liaison

Ongoing Discussion Topics - for 20-minute discussions:

A. Memorials (current, starting July meeting)

B. "Personal Benefit" at the Commons

C. Sustainability Building

D. Signage

F. Recognizing contributions

- G. How we decide what gets sent out to membership
- H. Website Update (will receive information package from Hans ?)
- I. Consensus Process
- J. Orienting People to the Commons.

**1. Notes from 20-Minute Discussion:
Current topic: If/How should the Communications Team/Liaison be resurrected?**

Currently there are several people who are managing specific communications jobs:

Stef – Communicate and newspaper ads for events

Hans – Website

it was noted that this is not always up to date

a task force is meeting this week to work on improving the website layout and content. It was suggested that the group keep “communication” in mind while reviewing the site.

Flickr site is accessible for people if they want to add pictures and Rebecca occasionally updates the facebook page (several others are able to as well, but generally don’t).

Currently, most basic and essential jobs are taken care of by a combination of these people listed above and by those involved in specific events. What we lack is a “**coordinated team effort**” to enhance our community connections via media, and a conduit for items going to the newspapers, as there used to be (to reduce confusion for the papers and to ensure everything going to the papers is edited/approved). We are no longer publishing non-essential items as we used to partly because of this and also possibly partly because of cost.

Heather, and Raymond, volunteered to work on Communications, and we are are looking for others to join in.

We agreed to try again to seek someone who might spearhead some efforts using Heide’s job description for “**Communications Liaison**”. This is attached to these notes (Attachment I) and could go into the next communiqué (or a link to).

It was suggested that Council might be a place for things to pass by before going to the papers

Some discussion of distribution of Council notes also occurred.

It was suggested that **Council notes** might be just posted on the web to avoid the email list through which they are currently distributed (not all facilitators are able to navigate this aspect of the job). It was noted that this wouldn’t work because the email list is where an opportunity for corrections to the notes happens.

It was clarified that the **Note Taker at Council** meetings is supposed to send the notes to the facilitator who will reformat if necessary and then email to teams and individuals (using the email contact list in the gmail account) and then the notes would go to the website (Hans is on the contact list). Having two facilitators should make this process easier.

2. TEAM Reports:

Long Range Planning (rep: Deborah Ferens)

The January 18th workshop was decently attended and the work that the LRP team has done on incorporating community input (from various visioning workshops and from team interviews) into a plan chart was presented for review and feedback from attendees. Major outcomes were and will be an organization and prioritization of all the aspects of the plan. The team is now in the process of figuring out their next steps and is hoping to have a more concrete long range plan for presentation at the 2014 AGM in September. A key aspect of this will be incorporating all the information into a framework that will still allow for flexibility as plans change and new ideas come up.

Event Planning (rep: Stef Marrie)

Dates for 2014 events: (please provide feedback to Stef if there are problems with these).

May 3rd – Spring Fair
July 12th – Community Garage Sale
September 14th – Fall Fair
November 15th – Christmas Craft Fair

As we are nearing the end of the fiscal year the Events Team has allocated funds to provide for upcoming events and expenses, and has a surplus of approximately \$2,000 dollars which will be allocated, likely to the mortgage (Final decision at next Council).

- Next Meeting: Not scheduled

Farm Management (rep: Judith Roux)

Allotment renewals on Saturday March 8th 2-4pm

Looking at needs for an equipment shed (as there will be an upcoming need to remove stored items from the goat barn as it is transformed into a performance space).

- Next Meeting: TBA

Infrastructure (rep: Guy Mireau)

- The team has not met recently but plans to VERY soon!

- Next Meeting: TBA

Share the Commons (rep: Kit Szanto)

Report submitted by Kit Szanto

At our last meeting, we discussed a project by Stephen Levesque of Watercliff Permaculture Farm to bring Starhawk to the Commons on May 14. STC supported the idea strongly and suggested a few things, which Stephen agreed to. Starhawk will convene a discussion on permaculture, including social permaculture, from 1-4. Discussion will be followed by a potluck supper, a full moon ceremony (May 14 is a full moon), and a spiral dance.

Stephen agreed to rent porta-potties and book the Community Hall in case of inclement weather. Tickets will be sold (on a sliding scale) at Art Works, and Stephen expects hundreds of people will attend. (Starhawk charges \$2000.) STC hopes Council and the various teams will discuss this and give feedback for Stephen. Mary has booked the Commons for the day, including the kitchen.

We discussed the GabeEnergy proposal as well – including the idea of where to place the solar panels. Many ideas were expressed, including the concern that if the southern fence of the orchard is used, it may be unduly intrusive for people using the labyrinth. One group of panels might be placed on the side of the upper deck facing south. The south side of the new kitchen might also be a good place for another group of panels.

At Share The Commons' next meeting, tomorrow, we will be discussing a proposal to set up a pottery on the Commons, using perhaps some unused space in the workshop, for communal pottery space. Christos Glaros is willing to donate his equipment and to teach small groups, adults and children, various aspects of pottery. He envisions this as a space for common use, where potters could come to use the equipment, to exchange ideas or teach others as well.

- Next Meeting: March 5, 2014 at 10:30 a.m. in the “dining room.”

Trails and Green Spaces (rep:Kit Szanto)

Submitted by Kit Szanto

The TAGS team have met and discussed the **GabEnergy proposal** over several weeks in small groups. There seems great support for the idea but some strong feelings about **where** to place the panels.

The idea of placing them along the south fence of the orchard has met with some distress by people who feel the use of labyrinth would be hurt by the impact of seeing the solar panels close by.

Other suggestions are:

1. locate solar panels close to, or on top of, the existing buildings.
2. place the panels where people can easily view the installation but not in a place where they could be accidentally damaged
3. consider that the placement of the panels may affect the future use of that area - for example: possibly restrict "play" like frisbees and soccer balls. Also, activities like equipment operation (lawnmowers) and garden development, and the growth of natural vegetation and trees will have to be managed with respect to the solar panels.
4. place the solar panels close to the electrical demand in order to minimize energy loss and to avoid running underground wiring across fields and garden areas
5. be sensitive to the possibility of compromising and/or altering the "natural atmosphere" of agricultural and naturalized areas, and the labyrinth: avoid infrastructure creep.
6. solar panels on the roof of the community kitchen and/or goat barn might be possible if, as Judith has mentioned, the house roof is not appropriate.

The installation of solar panels at the Commons is a great idea ... good to hear everyone's thoughts on this.

- Next Meeting: TBA

Trustees for Gabriola Commons Foundation (rep:Robbie Huston)

The Consensus Policy was formally adopted by the trustees, and the trustees would now like to suggest that the Commons as a whole adopt this Policy for consensus decision making to be used at all meetings (except AGMs where voting is required).

The Council agreed to send this policy out for review by teams and individuals for feedback until May

1.

Please find the document attached to these minutes (Attachment II) and in the upcoming Communiqué. A link to the Decision Making Document (which references the policy) will also

be made available (it is a longer document, impractical to send in communiqué)

A couple of very small technical edits were suggested and recorded by Deborah

Robbie will create a short preamble for the document for the communiqué to explain the process.

Stef will gather feedback for May Council meeting.

Draft Case statement to be used for mortgage fundraising efforts is nearly done

Dissolution (through BC Registry) of the original (and now dormant) Gabriola Commons Society is progressing. Note: The Gabriola Commons Foundation is the active registered society now.

Work on the 2014-15 budget is underway but is waiting on several pieces of information including a rental amount agreement with PHC.

Discussions with PHC regarding a new rental amount and changes to the lease relating to this are underway and progressing amicably. The two groups are tending towards an arrangement that involves less exclusive use/rental of space and a lower rental amount starting at the beginning of our fiscal year (April 1st).

- Next Meeting: March 20th, 2014 (Mortgage elimination meeting) 4:30 at the Commons

Conflict Prevention and Resolution (rep: Alison Fitzgerald)

A project is underway which will be coming to Council at some point in the future....!

Some members of the team attended a Compassionate Communications workshop

- Next Meeting: TBA

PROJECTS:

Community Kitchen (rep: Judith Roux)

A LOT of work has been done recently (there is some time pressure related to one funding source). Work has been done on figuring out septic costs/money sources so hopefully we should know soon if any of the donated funds are needed for this (will help figure out how to allocate the rest).

Goat Barn/Roxy at the Commons (rep: Robbie Huston)

Still working out how this would work within our bylaw restrictions with the planner at the Islands Trust

Looking like the arrangement would be for the Commons to rent the space to individuals at an hourly rate, and the rent could collect money from ticket sales, donations, etc.

Members of the project have been speaking to other venues around the Island to see how they feel about a new venue opening. Feedback is mixed but generally accepting.

Gabe Energy Solar Installation (rep: Judith Roux)

Relevant teams have been asked for feedback on the proposal and this is still being gathered

It was agreed that a special meeting should be arranged by Gabe Energy and Sharing the Commons Team where Gabe Energy could bring the proposal with some options for layout. This would provide individuals and Commons teams a time to provide feedback on the project without the limited time frame of a Council meeting. Judith will arrange this meeting (and will provide the Decision Making

Document to members of Gabe Energy to help them understand the process that the proposal will go through).

GROUPS

People for a Healthy Community (rep: Not present)

N/A

Poetry Gabriola (rep: Not Present)

N/A

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

N/A

4. Additional Items Arising:

Robbie's Signage Proposal

Robbie suggested that a small task force meet to make a plan for signage as this has been a priority project for a long time, with funds already allocated, that has not had any work done on it.

Rebecca, Judith and Raymond offered to help with this. Robbie will organize a meeting.

Future agenda items:

April: Allocation of money – Deborah will bring information on costs for priority projects

May: adopting the consensus policy Commons-wide

ATTACHMENTS

I. Communications Liaison “job description”

--- **Take notes at Council.** Attendance, up-coming events, team meetings, any specific team “needs”, that could go out to the membership, like need for volunteers at a special event.

--- Write up a brief **Council Report** ~ to be sent to the Council facilitators, and eventually to the website.

--- Make up a list of this information and any other ideas that have accumulated since the last CC, and email it to the person doing this job. That person will organize and format it further. I try to get these notes for the Commons Communique in to the person who sends it out by the end of the week of Council.

These same notes for the CC need to be sent to Hans at the same time, for the CC should be used sparingly, as it is a lot of work to send out the group emails, and also members don't appreciate getting flooded with emails. What seems to work well is a monthly CC as soon as possible after Council, to keep members up to date, and sometimes, if there are events happening that need more sharing, once or twice in between. Vary rarely is there an event that warrants a special CC, like the death of a well-known Commons participant, or a sudden opportunity/event on the Commons.

--- Respond to questions that come from people out of the CC, which often means, send the questions off to the appropriate person/team rep.

--- All team reps are responsible to send Council Minutes (sometimes called “Council Notes, sent out by Council facilitator) out to their teams whenever they receive them. This means the Communication Team rep – at this time the same person as the Liaison, sends a copy of these council minutes whenever she/he receives them, out to all members of the Communications Team – see list below.

--- **Newspapers** --- deadlines for both are Mondays, information for the paper on the following Monday. Important: equal amounts of stuff to both papers, especially paid

Sounder: Gabriola Sounder <derek@soundernews.com> Coming Events (free, to us, as his donation to the Commons, operating on the assumption that once in a while we will put in paid ads, which we do)-- each week, on Monday, Derek needs to be sent dates for whatever is coming up in the next few weeks. Even if you sent in the same information to him the week before, and the event won't have happened yet, he needs that email with that info again, or he won't put it in. Except for the weekly events (weekly work-bee). So, Commons Council, (1st needs to be put in each week, plus anything else coming up.

Shingle: Shingle Editor <editor@flyingshingle.com> Monthly Calendar (free to community) Second to last Monday put in any events that will be coming up in the next month. Also, can send in at that time any short descriptions of stuff at the Commons, photos, short articles. She will use them when and if there is space. See below.

Articles: Derek has offered to do his “Common's Corner” again whenever there is space, for free. 250 words. Likes to have several on hand, and will put time-sensitive stuff first when requested. Shingle will take small stuff, also for free, and put in if/when there is space. Also photos with captions. It is important to make an effort to give the Shingle the same amount of articles as the Sounder, but different ones, or, the same ones changed enough to be seen as articles on the same subject but not the same. Sharon McInnis <sharon9320@gmail.com> has been doing a series for the Sounder – contact her, and if she's still willing, she'll send stuff to you, and you send it on to Derek. A plea could go out in the “needs” portion of the COM report to council and the CC, for people to write 250 words about what the Commons means to them/why

--- **website** --- send CC notes, as above. Also feel free to be in touch with Hans about what he needs, and how to do whatever that you need. He was on the COM team for years and is very techy – as is Doug McKnight.

--- **Brochure** --- Doug McKnight <lads@shaw.ca> has agreed to continue to help with this, if necessary, and Jinny Hayes will also. If someone wants more copies, new photos could be put in, or not. Best way to do the printing is at Eternal Flow.

At the moment they –Eternal Flow -- have a copy of our latest brochure on file, There are two plastic brochure boxes on the Commons; they need to be kept full.

--- **Membership List** --- you don't have to print it out. You're just the repository of it,

in case of need. When you get it from the membership person – at the moment Linda (see COM list), forward it also to the Trustee Co-Chairs – at the moment Robbie Huston <robbie.gabriola@gmail.com> and Jinny (Virginia) Hayes<Vhayes@uvic.ca> I've already

--- **Events** --- A Commons table needs to be set up at all Commons Events, and sometimes at other community events. This is something the COM team has traditionally done in conjunction with the Trustees. Stuff like membership forms, brochures, and photos/information posters.

Membership forms that anyone collects at events have to go to Linda --- she lives near me so I've been dropping them off. You may need some other transfer mechanism, like for her to pick them up from the COM slot inside the door of the office, which is not locked.

Any photos sent in for the Commons get forwarded to Richard. These can then be used for the papers or the brochure, or slide shows, etc. ---

--- Board of trustees of the GCF --- the COM rep. works with/keeps in touch with, the

Trustees, helping to maintain clear communication with the membership and Gabriolans

in general, to both educate people about the Commons and to raise the profile of the Commons. Ideally, though by no means always, the COM rep is a member of the Trustees Team, and makes a report to trustees meetings whenever she has anything to

--- **Team Contacts list** --- update this list at least once a year, and periodically at Council remind Teams to let you know about any changes in contacts as they happen throughout the year. The up-dated list is sent immediately to: Website Manager (Hans), Membership Person (Linda Markewitz), Council Facilitator (Stef Marrie), Trustee Chairs (Jinny and Robbie), and all of the Team Contacts on the list. See below.

Communications Team:

Website --- Hans Van Kessel <hvkgab@gmail.com>

Common's Communique --- Imogen Whyte <imogencwhyte@hotmail.com>

Membership --- Linda Markewitz <lmarke03@shaw.ca>

Flicker photo site -- Pullano Richard <richard.pullano@gmail.com>

Brochure & Welcome Wagon & U-tube video --- Doug McKnight

Occasional editing – Patsy Ludwick -- <pjludwick@gmail.com>

ALL THIS IS THE IDEAL. NOTHING IS SET IN STONE. ALL IS EVOLVING. THE WORLD WON'T STOP IF ANY OR ALL OF THIS DOESN'T HAPPEN. HAVE FUN.

ATTACHMENT II Consensus Policy

Policy: Consensus Decision Making

Date: May 21, 2008 **Revisions (date):** Jan 14, 2009, June 2, 2011, Aug 2, 2013, Feb 20, 2014

Policy Statement:

“Consensus decision-making will be used at all Trustee meetings”. (Gabriola Commons 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.