

## Commons Coordinating Council

Notes for October 6, 2015

**Present:** Linda St.Clair & Muriel Wiens (Co-facilitators), Robbie Huston, George Szanto, Judith Roux, Sharon Arnell, Deborah Ferens, Patrick Roux, Jinny Hayes, Rebecca Furnell, Brenda Fowler, Cameron Murray, Kit Szanto (Note Taker)

### **SPECIAL TOPIC: Signage**

Cameron put up a drawn rendering of the Commons along North Road, with the current suggestions for signs, the sizes, the options for fonts that could be used & their actual sizes, capital letters, spacing, placement of signs and so on, and asked for suggestions. The two large signs at the east and west boundary of the Commons are, in this pre-proposal, to be 12' in width & 6' in height. The other 3 or 4, will be 2 ½' in width, round in shape. They can not be perpendicular to the road due to clearance allowances, but may perhaps be able to be angled very slightly so as to be visible to drivers traveling north or south along the road.

Rebecca spoke about the costs for various options of these signs, \$500-700 for wood signs of 2 ½' signs, \$5000 for the large, 12'x6', signs, and discussed various options for the lettering. After a good and complex discussion of the options, costs, etc. it was generally agreed to let the Signage group make the final decisions. A tentative budget will be forthcoming. Further discussion is planned.

### **Parking**

Judith presented a new map of the Infrastructure Team's recent reconceptualization of a parking on the Commons. It would be close to the #2 map most people preferred, as seen at our last Council meeting but with some significant changes: a pedestrian entry close to the central North Road entry (at Hydro pole), leading to a walking path around the drip line of the big Arbutus, and then moving east to the original parking lot, south to the gardens, etc. Parallel to that entry but a bit further west would be a vehicles entry, with 15 new parking spaces, to the west of the Arbutus only, adding up to a total of 30, with our current spaces. There is a small space for bike parking, maybe two areas, and 4 extra parking spaces to be used for whatever need we choose. An exit, or perhaps exit and entry, would be where the current opening west of our regular parking is now.

The possibility of a small, 4 levels perhaps, amphitheatre in the slope above the Boules Court, which could be developed in future, providing various potential uses. Further discussion later.

### **Team Reports**

**Finance** - Deborah reported the amount of un-allotted funds that remain from the large donation of two years ago. She asked what our priorities are for this money, noting the septic field had come in under budget. Including the savings from funding for the septic field, we have about \$16,570, but a discussion arose suggesting we could not use the extra \$9000+ from the funding of the septic field without discussing this with the

donor. The Grant Writing Team agreed to talk with this funder. Other discussion followed re: former priorities for the extra funds, eg, the farm gate stand, signage, farm equipment storage, and in various ways these priorities have almost been dealt with in other ways.

New needs were discussed briefly, finishing the roof (flashing still needed), a band shell, signage and perhaps some additional funds to finish the kitchen.

**Farm Management** - Sharon Arnell's report read by Judith – Phyllis Fafard won the biggest potato contest at the Fall Fair with a 2 lb. 5 ½ oz. potato. Apple juicing is going on, and the little field harvest of squash produced 400 lbs. of them. Judith reported the mid week market has become very successful and brought in a good sum for rental of tables.

- **Needs:** spoiled hay, manure, seaweed, leaves – for the little field and for the kitchen garden. Please put these in the compost bin closest to the Yurt (western most).

**Trustees** – Robbie reported about the AGM. Date - October 24, 1 pm, here in the Council meeting room. It will be short, with the financial report, election of new trustees, and a brief tribute to Sheila Huston who has been so important to the creation of the Commons and is now leaving Gabriola to live in White Rock, BC.

**Events** – Rebecca reported on the Fall Fair and the debriefing after about what went well and what changes might be worth thinking about.

**PHC** – Brenda reported the seniors are becoming accustomed to talking Gertie to the Seniors lunch, but it will take time for this to become the norm.

70 kids helped harvest 110 lbs. of squash for the PHC lunches.

**Communications** - Jinny Hayes agreed to the idea of writing a short article about Shelagh Huston's important role in the creation of the Commons, and that now she was leaving Gabriola, how much she would be missed. Some work has been done on the website. The Commons will have an entry in the Chamber of Commerce *Official Gabriola Island Visitor Guide* as a one year trial. This will put us on the fold-out map that every tourist receives when crossing to Gabriola. This team meets virtually, but will meet in person in November.

**Covenant** – Deborah Ferens reported on the Fall Equinox Bio-Mapping from dawn to dusk, over 4 periods (6 to 10 am; 10 am to 1pm; 1 to 4pm; 4 to dusk) and the valuable effect of what got done. The next session of the mapping of the Commons as it is now will include the farming done here.

**Sharing the Commons** - Kit Szanto - Tsiporah Grignon came to the last STC meeting and made several suggestions for the next Fall Fair. She has also offered to help at the next Fall Fair. She has offered to ask Peter Joyes to make a Fall Fair sandwich board sign that can be used for ongoing Fall Fairs. If Council agrees to this, we will ask her to go ahead.

Patrick Olmstead was also at the STC meeting to talk about the Économusée of BC meeting on September 28 at the WI and to give us a magazine about the Économusée. Its focus is on artisans in crafts or agri-food producers who have a studio where tourists can visit their workshops – and the discussion re Gabriola's participation was inspiring. The GAC is taking the lead on this.

CKGI has not yet responded re: the need for them to fill out the long term Commons Land use form.

The Team supported the idea of North Gardens building a pergola, after seeing the plans, and assume Infrastructure has no objections.

Poetry Gabriola request from Lisa Webster-Gibson for removing the small fir trees close to the yurt, on the east side (left if looking at the yurt's entrance) since they are contributing to the mildew and mold on the yurt roof. Can anyone offer help with this? If so, please advise PG folk so they can help with this work. Susan Yates can give info to PG helpers.

Next STC meeting: Wednesday October 21, 10:00 (check, might be 10:30)  
Place: in the dining room

**Trails & Green Spaces** – Kit - We have returned to pulling out as much Daphne as we can (and also some broom which has re-appeared) after enjoying the work bees with all who helped with the re-roofing of the big building. We focused on the tidying of the pieces of old roofing as it sailed down to the ground, and turning the shingles into packs of kindling to sell at Saturday work bees and mid week markets.

One regular-sized GaLTT extractigator was found to be missing from those returned to Randy Young in September. TAGS has replaced GaLTT's, but this means that a Commons one is still missing, and we need to find out if someone may have borrowed the extractigator without leaving any info. A note will go out in the next *Communiqué*.

**Next meeting of the Commons Council will be on November 3 at 7 pm**

*Feedback and discussion on allocation of funds and review of priorities will be a focused topic.*