

Gabriola Commons Coordinating Council Notes

October 2, 2018

Facilitator: Linda St.Clair; Note taker: Judith Roux

Present: Dave Lightly, Terry Stonehouse, Marcy Stogryn, Louise Amuir, Alison Fitzgerald, Patsy Ludwick, Marshall Mangan, Stuart Wulff, Jan Miklas, Brenda Fowler, Don Smardon, Bob Andrew, Lynda Toews, Patrick Roux, Kim Kasasian, Maya Ruggles, Deb Ferens, K.Louise Vincent, Jinny Hayes

Acknowledgement: That we are meeting on the unceded Territory of the Snuneymuxw First Nation

Note: October 4 to 12 is the World Commons Week (see link:<https://www.iasc-commons.org/event/world-commons-week/>)

Note: Gabriola Commons AGM Sunday, October 21 at 3 pm

◆ 20 Minute Discussion: A 25,000 gallon reservoir for rainwater harvesting

As requested, Patrick returned to Council after making a presentation to the Property Management Team on the Infrastructure Team's proposal for storage of the winter rainwater to meet the needs for irrigation and habitat preservation during the increasingly critical late summer droughts.

- The need is for non-potable water, to back up the pond (current source of water for irrigation). The estimated need for 25,000 gallons is based on the average use of 2,000 gallons per week during the summer, which at the critical period from mid-July to mid-September, has been threatening to drain the pond, an important sensitive ecosystem.
- Proposal: to construct an engineered concrete reservoir, connected to a system of underground piping collecting rainwater from the roofs on the Commons and distributing it to all gardens as needed, including an overflow catchment basin. A building permit will need to be applied for.
- Proposed size: 40 feet x 20 feet in 4 chambers with concrete lid, 6 feet deep, with up to 4 feet buried.
- Proposed location: immediately north of the Boules Court
- Estimated cost: \$25,000 including permit, engineering, excavation, drain pipes and distribution system.

Discussion: There will be a need for 4,500 gallons held in reserve for sprinklers needed in the Goat Barn as a Public Assembly occupancy. The 25,000 gallons should accommodate this, but if the severity of droughts increases, this could imply a second cistern adjacent to the Goat Barn, determined when planning begins for that project.

Timing: It is critical to launch the project as soon as possible, to retain the rain falling through the winter. The application for a building permit will add 4 to 6 weeks to the time before construction can begin.

Gardeners should be mindful of water conservation practices (mulching, hand watering)

Can reservoir surface be used by Commons? Observation of community use of the outdoor spaces of the Commons indicates a pattern involving the creation of a raised stage in the pre-

cise location proposed for the reservoir.

Needed: A response from all teams by next Council to consider proposal.

◆ TEAM REPORTS

- Property Management Team (PMT) (Bob Andrew)

- Mandate has been revised, as requested of all teams.

- There has been an unprecedented volume of repairs required over last few months.

Need to establish responsibility in spending.

- The Gabriola Arts Council will take down the “garden stage”.

- The Goat Barn: Need to determine status of Goat Barn in its current state as requests are coming in requesting its rental. What is required for a Phase One version which could be safely rented out? Consider occupancy maximum, exits, etc.

Decision needed: Do we rent the Goat Barn now? (There have been requests for this.) It could serve for a music jam, etc. It has been used well during the summer. Recommendation: not to rent it in its current state, but to prioritize planning on it. Criteria needed for short and long-term.

PMT and Infrastructure Teams will meet with the preliminary Goat Barn Planning Group to discuss this. Marshall Mangan, president of Gabriola Players, has indicated a strong interest in seeing the Goat Barn developed and would be willing to contribute ideas, manpower and funding to the project.

Jinny: We need to get project going asap to get into funding lineup when searching for grants. Deb noted the need to consider ongoing maintenance and overhead costs when budgeting a project.

- House Stewards Team has formed with 4 active members who are rotating Saturday cleaning and tidy up. Huge thanks yours.

- Events Team (Judith)

The Events Team asked for input on a request to consider changing the name of the Fall Fair. See email from Tsiporah Grignon:

"I would like to advocate to change the name of the Fall Fair to the Harvest Fair, a name that represents the true nature of the event. In my records, I have noted a few dates of this fair. I assume that this event has happened in the last 2 years on the Labour Day long weekend because the Farm to Table Feast is the week after. As a community event organizer for many years, I understand the need for groups to coordinate the timing of their events so they do not conflict. Before that, this fair was held later, closer to the actual date of the beginning of fall."

Discussion focussed on the name and the timing of the event. All comments supported retaining the «Fall Fair» name, considering it «traditional», appreciating the "alliterative sound" of «Fall Fair» and suggesting that «Harvest Fair» sounds too much like the «Farm to Table Feast» and some activities are not harvest-focussed.

It was agreed that the timing of the event should be considered by the Events Team, bearing in mind not only the actual moment of the Fall Equinox, but also calculating the probability of good weather.

- Trustees (K.Louise)

- A modest ceremony at the Fall Fair honoured Heide Brown and Shelagh Huston for their final donation to the Gabriola Commons at the dissolution of AGES (Amazing Grace Ecological Society), which had played a key role in the acquisition of the 26 acre Goat Farm for the community of Gabriola in May 2005.
- The Annual General Meeting of the Gabriola Commons Foundation will take place at 3 pm on Sunday October 21. Changes to the membership bylaws were submitted with notice.
- The Covenant Team is closing in on a copy edit of the three-part Covenant (Focussing on the agricultural, ecological and multi-purpose facets of the Gabriola Commons). The Covenant will run with the land in perpetuity, regardless of future owners. The Stewardship Agreement and Plan are reviewed every 3 to 5 years and are monitored by the Covenant Holder. A discussion with GaLTT (Gabriola Lands and Trails Trust) as potential covenant holder is slated for November 13.
- A meeting between the PHC board and the Commons Trustees to deepen understanding of the mandates and vision of the two organizations has been postponed to accommodate both AGMs and change of board members.
- Discussions have been ongoing between the Trustees and the Kitchen Stewards, regarding sharing of the Kitchen during large community events and clarifying the zoning under the "Commons Commercial" usage. Thanks to Sharon Arnell and Maya Ruggles for bringing these concerns to the Trustees. Recommendations came out of the discussions with the kitchen stewards for reviewing communication between teams & role of representation at Council. It was suggested a 20 minute discussion be dedicated at Council to this in the future.

- Farm Team (Judith)

Those who enjoy a close relationship with soil are seldom fond of meeting to talk about it. This fall has been different. As gardens all over the Commons are put to bed for the winter, serious concerns have arisen at the South Allotment Gardens requiring the participation of allotment holders at several meetings. Incidents of vandalism and theft (of produce and tools) were reported by numerous South Gardeners and some began experiencing a reluctance to be alone in the gardens. The RCMP were asked for advice, but suggested photo proof would need to be provided before they could intervene.

A call went out for new members to join the thinning ranks of the administering committee of these gardens with gratifying results: A group of 7 people agreed to commit to clarifying the structure and encouraging participation in South Garden workbees, with Stuart Wulff as contact person. Three to four individuals volunteered to serve as "Farm Stewards" (with boots on the ground) to monitor issues as they arise.

The new South Garden committee asked the Commons Process Team for advice in dealing with those suspected of being responsible for the vandalism and theft. Their advice proved to be positive and helpful. A letter was eventually sent to the allotment holder(s), cancelling their right to renew the holding and prohibiting them from accessing the South Allotment Gardens.

It was decided to develop a Code of Conduct for all gardeners to make expectations explicit. A Commons Code of Conduct had been drawn up several years ago and Deb said she would retrieve it to help in the process.

Discussion: All were thanked for the care taken in addressing the concern.

The South Allotment Gardens are isolated “in a far corner of the Commons”. It could be helpful to encourage more walkers to take the “Boardwalk Path” across the Commons which connects South Road to North Road. An offer has been made to create signage to this effect.

- Learning Opportunities Team

- Maya proposed we consider deepening our understanding of First Nations cultures and intentions (beyond the simple acknowledgement that we are on unceded Territory of the Snuneymuwx). “Step into the spaces where we live.”
- This would be a journey of learning for both First Nations and Settlers, working together toward common goals.
- Maya is willing to lead and proposed 3 suggestions for Council:
 1. A 20-minute discussion focussing on acting as allies
 2. Connecting (in a round): telling about our personal journeys: “Who are we? Where do we come from?”
 3. Making recognition of First Nations territories important
 - There will be two meetings: with a film (video) and with conversation.
 - Discussion: at what point do we get in touch with First Nations?

See attachment from Maya and get in touch with her.

- Finance Team

Deb is looking at the budgets of all teams; expressed concern about funding for new 200 amp panel (\$4000) - needed for further development of Long Range projects.

- Process Team

Dave let us know that HawkOwl is not well and is moving into palliative care at the Nanaimo Hospital. Hawk Owl is an early participant in the Commons.

- Communication Team

Jinny wanted to discuss the roles of teams as they work together on the Commons and requests time at next Council to discuss this (also to report on the logo).

- ◆ Groups on the Commons:

- Tool Library (Patsy and Kim)

- Soft opening next Tuesday and Saturday
- Open House at Fix-it Fair on October 27

Question: why is Wifi not functioning in the Toll Library shed? Perhaps new modem is required; Jinny will research and take action as a COM responsibility.

Issues: Need to surface pathway to building (Bob will help)

How to store huge tools? (Bob)

Idea: Holding training courses in Woodwork shop. How does one contact Patrick Olmsted?

- People for a Healthy Community (PHC)

Brenda reported that 36 children at the school are participating in the Breakfast Club and that hot lunches have increased to 3 per month.

New program: Cooking classes for 8 weeks for 10 children with Robert).
Food Recovery project - Funding of \$23,000 (more info from Brenda)
Note that Sacha Peterson will no longer be managing these programs

Next Council: Tues. November 6, 2018 at 7 pm
Please send agenda items to linstc01@gmail.com
Note-taker needed!