

## Gabriola Commons Co-ordinating Council

Notes of Meeting, September 2, 2014

Attending: John Peirce, Judith Roux, Patrick Roux, Rebecca Furnell, Linda St. Clair, Muriel Weins, Alison Fitzgerald, Mary Aitken, Louise Amuir, Pat Durrett

**Facilitating:** Gloria Filax, Nancy Hetherington Peirce

**Recorder of Minutes:** Kit Szanto (STC)

**Next CCC Meeting: October 7, 2014**

**Recorder for Next Meeting:** Learning Opportunities Team

### Agenda

1. Welcome
2. New Items – add to agenda
3. 20 Minute Discussion
4. Team, Project, Group Reports
5. Follow-up from previous meetings
6. Next Meeting Date & Adjournment

### Minutes

1. Nancy passed to each of us a sheet of paper, one side of which had the policy statement on consensus decision-making, and on the other, several principles from our constitution and by-laws that will be useful in understanding consensus decision-making. There will be enough for each person at Council to have one at each meeting. (We will recycle them.) We all agreed it was an excellent idea.

**2. 20 minutes discussion** on the topics proposed at previous councils for discussion. We deleted a few that had been covered sufficiently and kept the following, with dates set for their 20 minutes at Council:

1. Boundaries – October: CPR – perhaps including something about orienting people to the Commons.
2. Recognizing contributions – November: Trustees
3. Timber Frame building (Sustainability bldg.) – December: LRP (John Peirce) perhaps including the Commons main entry issue and signage.
4. Web site update – January 2015
5. Personal benefit at the Commons – spring: Farm Management Team

### 3. Reports

**Judith and Becky** reported on the **Fall Fair, September 14** – and asked people to sign up to help with various aspects: set up, take down, judging, table management etc. More volunteers would be welcome.

## Team Reports:

**STC** (Kit) At our last meeting, we discussed the need for developing a clearer way to ensure that new projects have developed a “building team” as well as a management team to work on a new project. The rest of the discussion focused on issues that need not come to Council yet.

We received a proposal from Susan Brockley on behalf of Christmas Alive, which we will discuss at the meeting September 3. The performance would be Dec.20, 2014, 5 pm – 6 pm and would take place on the lawn south of the house. The proposal includes a rehearsal Saturday, Dec.13 in the afternoon, and set up time on Dec.19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>. Clean up would be completed Sunday morning, Dec.21<sup>st</sup>.

**Next STC meeting: September 3, at 10:30 a.m. in the “dining room.”**

**TAGS** (Kit) We have continued as usual in August, taking Camp Miriam kids to eradicate *Daphne laureola*, and occasionally to help in the South Garden area. One benefit of the campers has been the willingness of some to go off far and wide to locate more *Daphne* patches, and they have succeeded in ways that are a bit discouraging – they have found *Daphne* patches in places none of us had noted so far.

In late August we worked on tidying up the garden areas along the driveway to the front door.

The idea of GALTT including some Commons trails in their maps was approved at our last Council meeting. Now what? Should I talk to Randy Young about this? Rob Brockley, who has been leading a GALTT walk in various parks this summer, might be willing to lead a walk in the Commons IF we can create a path that is circular, and is appropriately long and interesting for a GALTT walk. We will try to organize this in the fall.

Meetings are few – often by email or as we work together. Newcomers are always welcome.

Another serious bit of work was the **trimming of the hedge from August 23-27**, done mostly by non -TAGS members. However, since this has raised a major “green spaces” issue, I want to report a few aspects of this experience.

I know a few Commons people have done intense work like this, for many days, sometimes alone, and have not ever made public how much work it was. However, I regret that I have never helped before with the hedge trimming – so until now did not understand what was involved. But since I think it is important we all think about this carefully, I will continue.

On Saturday, August 23 the work bee on the hedge began with John LeMarquand teaching Charles Silva, Raymond Tremblay, Dave Arnell how to do this hedge trimming. John began work each day at 7 am and continued until 3 or 3:30 for the 5 days, and did another 3 hours on the 28<sup>th</sup> to finish the last of the trimming. The 3 apprentices began work about 8 am and worked until lunch then started up again after for a while, but had done all they could manage before 3 pm. (It was very hot each of these days.) Each worked Sunday as well, and Raymond and Dave continued trimming work until the 26<sup>th</sup>.

A pretty good crew helped with gathering the fallen trimmed cedar, taking it down to the berm on Saturday. We began at 9 but lasted only until lunch or perhaps 1:30. I worked alone on Sunday and Monday – and lasted until about 1-ish. Dave and Sharon Arnell worked on clean up with me after that, and twice in the evenings when it was cooler. We agreed to finish the clean up on Saturday – and did, thanks to Dave and Sharon.

It is clear that the hedge, as it is, is far too much work for any of us, even as a group, to manage. John told me, when I asked, that it would make sense to cut it down to 8 feet so that a 10 foot ladder would be sufficient to trim the top. (He had 14 foot ladders for this recent work.) I think next time, we will have to hire an arborist to cut down the trunks of the cedars – they are now thick and difficult to cut through.

Long Range Planning and Property Management can develop a plan for whatever we will do in the future with the hedge.

**LRP (Long Range Planning)** (John) LRP would like 20 minutes in October at Council to discuss the main issues resulting from the July meeting.

**CPR (Conflict Prevention and Resolution)** (Muriel) CPR feels we need to discuss the problem of people who come to the Commons to participate, but who leave hurt rather than explain what has created this hurt or unhappiness.

**Trustees** (Louise): There is a big push right now for new monthly donors, so there has been/will be some presence of the Commons at a table in the Village. Our goal is to enlist new donors. There are conflicting ideas about asking continuing donors increase their monthly amounts. A good discussion about asking ongoing donors followed, with Muriel making the most significant comment – that the Trustees could explain about PHC having a much reduced rent so our attempt to get the mortgage paid off soon has been slowed down.

The AGM will be held Sept 20 at 1.30 pm at the Commons. Annual team reports of three points each should be in to Jinny by now. LRP will have time for a special report but other teams will collected into one report in order to keep the meeting short and interesting.

**PMT (Property Management)** (Patrick) – Patrick brought in a box of Purdy's chocolates left at the Commons to thank us for the work we did in having the Camp Miriam campers helping eliminate Daphne and work in the South Gardens. It was a pity Mary Wilson, who organized the list of us who did this work, was not there to get one of the chocolates that were passed around at Council.

Patrick then spoke briefly about the fact that the final touches to finishing the kitchen will cost a bit more money than has been allotted.

**Labyrinth** (Mary A.) The labyrinth is used often – path is well trod but the need for people to help maintain it remains.

**Photovoltaic panels** (Judith) Bullfrog has offered to pay half the costs of buying them IF we get the other half from a local source. The RDN has money from the gas tax fund we may well get but they are very slow to respond to the request we sent them.

**Covenant** (Judith) The Commons hopes to develop a base line report of the ecology of the Commons and will set up a system so that people can contribute their own sightings of animals, birds, etc. on the Commons.

**Farm Team** (Judith) This has been a very good year for the blueberries and apples.

### **Actions & Reminders**

1. Gloria and Nancy will list the note-takers and the 20 minute topic for future Councils. **Both lists attached.**
2. Becky will remind Robbie to get what he said he would do to the newspaper.
3. Council will suggest to Trustees to consider asking current donors to increase their donations, making it clear no one should feel obliged to do so.

## **Minute Taking List – October 2014 – June 2015**

1. October – Learning Opportunities
2. November – Conflict Prevention & Resolution
3. December – Events
4. January 2015 – Property Management
5. February 2015 – Farm Management
6. March 2015 – Long Range Planning
7. April 2015 – Covenant
8. May 2015 – Communications
9. June 2015 – Board of Trustees
10. July 2015 – Grant Writing
11. August 2015 – Infrastructure
12. September 2015 – Share the Common

## **Twenty Minute Topics October 2014 – February 2015**

1. Boundaries – October: CPR – perhaps including something about orienting people to the Commons.
2. Recognizing contributions – November: Trustees
3. Timber Frame building (Sustainability bldg.) – December: LRP (John Peirce) perhaps including the Commons main entry issue and signage.
4. Web site update – January 2015
5. Personal benefit at the Commons – February 2015 spring: Farm Management Team