

Attending: Bob Andrew, Deborah Ferens, Patrick Roux, Kit Szanto, Sharon Arnell, George Szanto, Judith Roux, Rebecca Furnell, Allie Charron, K. Louise Vincent, Muriel Weins, Hawkowl, Brenda Fowler, John Peirce, Jinny Hayes

CoFacilitators: Bob Andrew & Jinny Hayes

Notes: Rebecca Furnell for Events Team
Next Notes: CPR

NEXT MEETING: January 3rd 2016, Notes – Conflict Prevention & Resolution Team (CPR)

AGENDA

- 1. Welcome and Introductions**
- 2. 20 Minute Discussion: Covenant Team Update/Report**

Submitted by D Ferens on behalf of the Covenant Team:
What is a Covenant?

A Covenant is registered on the Land Title and focuses exclusively on land uses and property rights. In property law, a statutory covenant is a voluntary, written agreement between a property owner and a covenant holder covering all or part of a parcel of property. A Covenant is crafted to protect the conservation values to be protected and not related to who owns the land.

Creating and Registering a Community Commons Covenant on the land

Goal: To ensure that all legal tools, entities and actions achieve the goals of ecological protection and community stewardship/participation for the property known as the Gabriola Commons on Gabriola Island.

Zoning Background

In the spring of 2010, the Gabriola Commons property was rezoned as per an application submitted to the Islands Trust in 2007. A unique and distinct zone was created in the Official Community Plan, the “Gabriola Commons Comprehensive Zone” with aligned regulatory bylaws reflecting “community commons” land uses. We believe it is the first time in BC, perhaps in Canada, where the term “community commons” has been enshrined in land-use language, zoning and regulatory bylaws.

Challenges

The successful zoning emphasized the need to align the covenant to the zoning and land use bylaws. It reinforced the awareness that a covenant significantly different than a traditional conservation covenant was required to protect the concept of a “community commons” in perpetuity. In conversations and discussions with potential covenant holders, they quickly realized the challenges of upholding and enforcing a “community commons” covenant, and provided valuable feedback and information. Hunt for two Covenant Holders

continues with some exploration on how each covenant holder could be responsible for different aspects of the covenant.

Specific Objectives

- Complete the Covenant draft before the mortgage on the land is discharged.
- A mortgage takes precedence over a covenant
- Once the mortgage is discharged, a covenant can be registered on title.
- Complete the Baseline Inventory Report and the Stewardship Plan.
- The year long Bio-mapping on the land contributed towards the Baseline Inventory Report.

Discussion:

- Deborah noted that one other major challenge is creating something restrictive (the covenant, by nature) while also ensuring the “openness” of the Commons and it’s many uses, current and potential, are protected. Capturing the social/Community Commons aspects in covenant language has also been a challenge.
- It was clarified that the baseline report also includes the uses of the Commons land.
- It was suggested that splitting up the aspects of the covenant might make finding two (or more) appropriate holders easier – the COV team acknowledged this and indicated that this is sort of what they are currently working on with the most recent draft.
- Approaching a First Nations group was suggested as a possibility for a covenant holder- this is already something the Covenant team is exploring. Muriel offered to Help with pursuing this option.

Note: The May 2012 version of the Covenant (v. 2B), now somewhat revised, is available at:

<http://www.gabriolacommons.ca/pdf/covenant-dr2b.pdf>

3. Team Reports

a) Communications Team (COM) - Jinny

- Minor edits to the brochure are underway and a new batch will be available Jan 3. The team expects to do a major revisit in 1-2 years when a number of large changes are expected to have taken place on the Commons (particularly the mortgage pay down).
- COM Team thinks it’s time to adopt a new tagline (replacing “A Place for Everyone”), and we like “Where land and people meet”, originally suggested by Deb Ferens when this discussion was had at council a long time ago, and now used on the new Commons Field Guide. Once the tagline is changed, we’ll revisit generating a new logo that fits, though it was noted that past calls to the community and local artists has not proved productive. **Teams are asked to review this option and come to January Council with feedback.** Please see the info attached at the end of these notes regarding this potential tagline.
- Communiqué is being read by about 40% of it’s 500+ recipients (according to MailChimp), which is actually pretty good for this kind of mail out.
- Jinny and Justin are looking into format possibilities for a new and improved website (Word Press) and hope to get to work on this soon. The new website will be easier to update and coordinate with social media (hugely under used at this time) and will be accessible in mobile format.

- Two *Sounder* articles are in the works – one on the community kitchen and one on the new food/composting program between the Village Food Market, PHC and the Commons.
- It was agreed that Jinny would draft a policy on material donations to the Commons which will be reviewed at a future council meeting and by teams. When completed the policy would go on the (updated) website
- Charles (PMT) and Jinny have come up with a design that may work better and teams have been asked what their “cubby” needs are. Please be in touch ASAP if your team would like a cubby space and hasn’t been in touch yet.
- Signage Taskforce – Round entrance signs are done and will be installed on concrete bases as soon as weather is appropriate and labour is available. Large Commons sign design is being finalized and materials will be ordered in the new year. Dog on leash/Pick up after dog signs (donated by Peter Joyes) have been placed at entrances. Large, detailed map of all facilities and locations on the Commons property (to go on North side of workshop or nearby) will be the next stage of signage to be tackled once the large road signs are done.
Next Meeting: TBA

b) Property Management Team (PMT) – John

FMT minutes provided by John, edited for these Notes by Rebecca

- Finances – PMT needs a financial update after all the Fall expenses. Will be in touch with Maya regarding this.
- Work bee Sign – Done
- New electrical hookup has been completed. Final costs came in at \$2965 (\$560 over estimate) because pole had to be made higher to clear the house roof. Paid for by BC Hydro grant of \$2000 and the balance from PMT budget.
- New concrete pad for generator shed will be poured this weekend.
- The new pipes leading into the shop are now deeper and will be below frost. Also found the junction where house and goat barn water lines take off, and there will be an access box installed.
- Meeting with Workshop Stewards – Will clarify insurance issues and Letter of Understanding with the Commons Trustees. Plan is to have work benches installed by end of January, and then to layout needs for more electrical work and better lighting and cabinets, and do some fundraising to cover that work once we have some progress to show.
- Discussed night time lighting coming from parking area to farmhouse door, in follow up to Jinny Hayes’s email. Light over the door is on a motion detector, but inside switch must be left on. While light on the side of the house is plugged in. Currently working. If not working the first thing to check is the plug. The light on the post by the path is controlled by the switch at the corner of the workshop. Adding a motion detector at the post would be an improvement. Charles to investigate.
- Had a recent positive fire safety inspection by Rick Jackson, Fire Chief
- Working towards having a workshop booking procedure/policies set up. Kitchen could provide a good model.
- Future Meetings. Thursday, January 5, 1700, in Dining Room

c) People for a Healthy Community (PHC) - Brenda

- Spirit Feast has been relocated to the Fellowship Church!
- New arrangement with Village Food Market on collection of produce “seconds”. This is providing a great new source of food, but is also a big adjustment as there is a lot of labour/logistics to work out. Still a work in progress, but good so far. Space changes may need to happen, but needs will be better known after doing it for a bit longer. Compost is going to the Commons.
- Will be replacing the PHC kitchen sink with a larger, stainless steel model.

d) Conflict Prevention & Resolution (CPR) - Muriel

- The addition of a new member brought up discussion that lead to wondering if/how the teams on the Commons are practicing consensus decision making. **CPR would like teams to consider and report back at Council.**
- The team has existed long enough that they are starting to feel like they are ready to “do work” on the Commons.
- Considering doing exit interviews with folks who have stopped being involved at the Commons in order to discover reasons for pulling away. It was brought up that Robbie Huston did some work on this when he was a trustee - **CPR was encouraged to contact him to find out what he has on this.**
- There was very positive response to the “hats” exercise done on the hedge at the past council meetings. CPR will discuss the future use of this tool for examining complex and/or divisive issues.

e) Trustees - Allie

- Have had first meeting with 3 new Trustees – working out roles and responsibilities
 - The financial process/roles are being reviewed by a small taskforce. Immediate concerns/needs can be directed to Maya Ruggles for now.

f) Events (Judith via Stef Marrie)

- Report provided via email by Stef:

The Craft Fair was once again a great success, with over 35 vendors in the Commons and Rollo. Even the weather cooperated. The event was well attended, resulting in a lot of very happy vendors and shoppers. There was also wonderful support for the Commons, with a steady stream of Gabriolans joining us in the Commons room to bid on the raffle baskets and check out the bargain table. After expenses, the event raised about \$1430. As always, we cannot run the fundraising events without a little help from our friends. Many thanks to Kelly and Glen Kerr, Patricia Durrett, Alison Fitzgerald, Susan Yeend, Jinny Hayes, Judith Roux, Daryl McCullough, Raymond Tremblay and Heide Brown for their parts in decorating the hedge and running the fair. A message of thanks will go out to the Commons Community in an upcoming *Communiqué*.

g) Grant Writing – George

- Didn't get the AgriSpirit grant that was applied for to cover costs of improved parking area but will be applying to the Village Food Market for this to be part of the 2017 Community Card program.

- Thanks to the Long Range Planning event held in November the team has good direction for future grant needs

h) Farm Management Team (FMT) – Sharon

FMT minutes provided by Sharon, edited for these minutes by Rebecca

- **COMPOSTING:** The Village Food Market and PHC have begun a new project as part of their focus on sustainability. Produce which can no longer be sold at the end of the day will become the responsibility of PHC. They will pick it up daily and sort it for highest use, with produce unsuitable for human use offered to local farmers for animal feed and any unusable for animals will be composted in the Commons compost bins. (Note agreement by the FMT to take on the Saturday pickup from Village Foods.) PHC is responsible for sorting. They will go to the Kitchen Stewards to discuss possible use of the cold storage room for large or unexpected (power outage) amounts. The design for a new “recycling gazebo” to shelter the triage process near PHC’s refrigeration units will be proposed to the Sharing the Commons team and the need for one or more new compost bins will be analysed. It was noted that, at the Long Range Planning event held on November 27, the proposal that the community be invited to take part in a “Compost it on Gabriola at the Commons” project met with very clear support from attendees.
 - **EVENTS:** Christmas Craft Fair : Sales of books, jelly, apples, goodies netted \$432. With donations, total revenue was \$579. Thanks to all who took part! Food Safe Course: A day long course organized by Jennie S. was extremely successful, enabling participants to get certification at a reasonable cost without leaving Gabriola.
 - The FMT needs to join other teams in posting tasks for volunteers on the new dry-erase board overseen by Charles. These tasks can be invitations, not only to volunteers coming to the Saturday morning workbees, but also to anyone with an hour or so to spend during the week. Source of manure needed. (Dave Chorneyko has offered his truck for collection.)
 - **South Gardens:** there is a continuous balance of people giving up their allotments and new people joining in. Water issues is a recurrent theme, after the summer’s shut off of irrigation as the pond level dipped to minimum point. The Long Range Planning event focussed on water management issues, with a working group forming to study the situation. The South Gardeners would send a member to join this group.
 - **ORCHARD:** Two local farmers (John Switzer and Ike MacKay) were invited to come to the orchard to assess the condition of some of the trees suffering from canker.
 - **Community Kitchen – FMT room:** Successful work on mouse-proofing w/ new sill under exterior door. Planned: sweep closing gap under door between Kitchen and FMT w/ventilation in door.
 - **Apple juicing shed** has been mouse-proofed by Bob Andrew, who is also working on shelving
 - **Timber Frame Building Planning** began with LRP event on assessing agricultural needs to be accommodated in this building, i.e. enclosed drying area upstairs
- Next meeting: December 19 (Note unusual date!)
- Working out logistics with PHC on new produce seconds/composting program
 - Kitchen at the Christmas Craft fair raised \$432 for the FMT

- Food safe course that was offered was well attended and appreciated by folks who didn't have to leave the island to take the course.
- A member of the South Garden committee will join the water taskforce (please contact John Peirce).

i) Sharing the Commons Team (STC) - Kit

- Susan Brockley asked if a Christmas Alive banner could go on the hedge. There were no objections at this meeting so Kit will get back to her. The group was reminded that we have a policy on not advertising (in *Communiqué*, etc.) for other groups, but felt this was an ok exception.
- The possibility of joining Economusee was brought to the team by Patrick Olmstead. The Council felt that this was not generally worth the cost/energy to pursue at this time, particularly since we were not directly invited.
- The Rod and Gun Club (hosts of the annual Easter Egg hunt on the Commons) would like to have a bonnet making workshop at the Commons during this event. There were no objections to this at the Council so Kit/Judith will respond to the RGC.

j) Long Range Planning (LRP) – Deborah

- Will give a quarterly report at January or February Council
- Planning event on Nov 27th was very successful- details to come. 4 Projects (previously identified as priorities) were investigated in depth (Goat Barn Complex, Pond- viewing platform, Commons wide water systems and the Timber frame building). Small taskforces were struck to further investigate each of these. Info generated by these groups will be used by the LRP to reprioritize.

4. Business Arising

- PGS Yurt:** Trustees have worked out insurance issues with PGS. Costs are divided between PGS and Commons
- Council Facilitators:** upcoming schedule was worked out as follows:
 - Bob Andrew- current – March
 - Sharon Pattison – January (replacing Jinny) – June
 - John Peirce (replacing Bob) – April – September
 - **Need someone for July – December**
 - Deborah willing to fill in or take non-summer months

5. Other business

- “When is a team a team?”** question came up amongst the kitchen stewards, wondering if they are a team or not. A document* on this topic was produced in the past but likely needs updating at this point. The document is attached to these notes at the end. **Teams are to review and bring feedback to next council.**

*The following was pulled from the new Field Guide to Governance at the Commons document, produced by the Trustees in 2016 (includes text also found in the older document, “Decision Making at the Gabriola Commons”). The original document outlining teams, etc. and the team-creation process could not be found.

“Teams, Projects and Groups:

Teams are groups of individuals who operate on the Commons with a specific mandate. All Commons affairs are attended to by one or more teams rather than being directed in a top-down manner. Teams function independently on the Commons while co-operating with each other to ensure the organization functions effectively. There are also project groups on the Commons which function as teams throughout the duration of a specific project. Additionally, there are several community groups that are active on the Commons property. Members of these groups are encouraged to attend Council so as to stay informed on current affairs.

Team:

A permanent entity that is part of the Commons; concerned with a one or more related aspects of the ongoing functioning and/or development of the Gabriola Commons; has a well-defined mandate and objectives. Teams are generally autonomous in their decisions, according to their own mandates and budgets. It is very important that teams consider how their decision on any matter will affect another team or the overall Commons and that they bring their activities forward in team reports at Council.

Project:

A temporary entity that is part of the Commons for a limited period; usually involves creating or renovating some infrastructure; is monitored through several stages by the Share the Commons Team; has a well-defined mandate specific to the project; may eventually evolve into a permanent team.

Taskforce:

A permanent or temporary entity that is smaller in scope and/or duration than a team or project; a spin-off from a team or project and reports directly to the corresponding team or project.

Group

An entity that operates on the Commons property or in conjunction with the Gabriola Commons but that has its own separate identity or registered status.

Representative

This is the person(s) who attends Council to represent their team, group, project, etc. This person is responsible to bring the information their team wants heard to Council and to circulate information from Council to their team and, when required, collect input on that information and for following up at Council with their team’s input on issues from the previous Council. The team representative is trusted to speak on behalf of their team when a time-sensitive decision is required to be made at Council when no time is available for team input”

PROPOSED NEW TAG LINE (Deborah Ferens):

“ Gabriola Commons. Where land and people meet.”

Rationale:

- emphasis on place/space – it’s very concrete.

- includes an active word “meet”
- reflects important relationships such as: the one between the actual 26 acres and the people (or community) who tread upon the land; between people meeting each other on the land and working/talking together.
- it can harken back to the past, to the historical uses of the land, and how the land provided for previous generations – the pioneers and settlers – we are building upon traditions and wisdoms from our ancestors and generations before us – including First Nations who had a strong connection to the land on Gabriola.
- it can point to the future – it will always be a place where land & people meet and determine together how a “community commons” engages & nourishes community and stewards the land
- it can reflect the three strong pillars of the commons – ecological (land); agricultural (land; people); cultural (people)
- it can be revolutionary & transformative – how the symbiotic relationship between land & people ensures that the land sustains people and people steward the land, creating a balance that is beyond market, state and private self interest.
- it can also encompass the more prickly situations when there is disagreement & conflict – turning that into recognizing diversity, the struggle for truth and justice as people (meeting on the land) engage in healthy, robust conversations that open up to all our variety, messiness and differences. We’re coming together there in the full spectrum of our diversity (and questions & criticisms). It might not work for everyone and that’s ok – instead of promising that it’s “a place for everyone” and not being able to deliver or being challenged on that.

A new logo idea:

Maybe we could use a stylized design of the cob wall (rather than a photo) and incorporate the elements of land (nature); agriculture (harvest); and people all in equal weight around/woven into the cob wall – which is human built but comes from the earth and land. Or maybe we could use some version of the beehive design concept from the new brochure which would reflect “where land & people meet” quite nicely.

Thanks for considering!

Deborah