

Commons Coordinating Council Notes August 06, 2019

Facilitated By: Heather Menzies & Louise Amuir

Present: Deb Ferens, Judith Roux, Maya Ruggles, Don Smardon, David Lightly, Stuart Wulff, Heather Menzies, John Hollmsworth, Patrick Roux, Bob Andrew, Brenda Fowler, Kim Kasasian, Linda St. Clair, Jinny Hayes, Danielle Artuso, Kevin Chopin, Terry Stonehouse, Lisa Butler Heath, Patsy Ludwick, Sheila Brooke

Notes: Danielle Artuso (Trustees)

Welcome and Acknowledgements

Our presence on the traditional Territory of the Snuneymuwx First nations was acknowledged. Louise expressed gratitude for the ability to live on this beautiful Island.

20 minutes discussion – Safety on the Commons

- Lead by Stuart and David

Stuart - Safety is objective and a matter of perception. The perception of safety is just as real and important as physical safety. Women using south gardens and school children using trails have expressed feeling unsafe on the Commons. We want everyone in the community to continue to feel safe here. This is very important in order for the Commons to continue to serve its purpose.

What does it really mean to be safe?

To know this, we need to define what safety means to us. Safety means different things to different people depending on age, gender, privilege and ethnicity.

Empty or unused areas create space to hide, will attract unwanted activities such as overnight camping, theft and vandalism.

Safety is increasingly being questioned as there has been repeated theft and vandalism in the South Gardens. The appearance of tents and evidence of people sleeping on the Commons is also a concern and needs to be addressed.

Ideas and Recommendations

- Use the land
- Occupy spaces
- Have a human presence as much as possible
- Trail maintenance, eg, widening
- Improved signage
- Continue boardwalk all the way through property
- Lighting
- Cameras
- 'Beating the Bounds': Create group/event to routinely walk the property, making notes on what is happening around the land.
- Someone to live on the land on temporary/rotating basis: Caretaker, Farmer in Residence, Intern, WOOFer (restricted by current zoning)
- Evening/nighttime Events

RCMP Recommendations:

- Occupy your space

- Increase the presence of positive things/events
- Set boundaries respectfully and safely
- Work in groups (never alone)
- Do not engage in conflict

Stuart – It is important to keep the process going and not let it drop or get buried. The matter of safety on the Commons needs sustained attention and solutions.

Where does it go from here?

- Document – ‘Safety and Security on the Commons’ Deb to send out to teams for comment (See Document attached)
- PMT to create task force and come up with recommendations
- Revisit idea of residence on property (caretaker) - Trustees to look at regulations/policies/zoning for residence on land
- Trustees to write letter for placement in tents, requesting their removal.

Team Reports

Process Team - Louise

- The process team had visitors. It was nice to sit with people hearing each other in different ways. A positive experience.
- David appreciated that they started their meeting with temple bells and took the time to sit and BE before beginning. This starts meetings on a peaceful footing. Maya described how the use of a speaking feather in discussions allowed for the time and patience required to really listen to each other.

The Process Team invites anyone to come visit. They meet the last Wednesday of every month at 10am in the dining room.

PMT – Bob

- Major Work Bee last weekend with a turn-out of about 20 people. An amazing amount of work was done.
- There is a long list being kept of what needs to be done please let PMT know if you have anything to add.
- Another Big Work bee planned for August 24th 9-12
- Water levels are steadily going down despite rain. At the rate it's going, water will be shut down in a couple weeks. Highly recommend being extremely careful with water use.
- Cistern Project – Slowly coming to grips with costs. PMT encourages teams to consider how to raise money and contact PMT with ideas.
- PMT has created an emergency response program if something compromises the water/well.
- Installed Well Watcher. Not working presently but will be soon
- Creating Kiosk at well head to function as entryway to Commons and protection for well

- Fun idea – Paint the propane tank. Paint as yellow submarine, ladybug, caterpillar. Ideas?
- There was support for putting door on the Big Room suggestions were made - double doors, keep width and height, transom window, disability friendly (wide enough for a wheel chair)

PMT meets the second Thursday or Monday of the month at 4:30 pm

Trustees – Bob

- The Trustees are currently reviewing all MOUs
GAC Cultivate MOU Signed/Done
- Still seeking Holder – The Land Conservancy of BC has expressed interest in the Gabriola Commons and are a potential Covenant Holder. We will be having them over for a visit before the end of August.
- Trustees are seeking new trustees for the upcoming term

Covenant Team's next Meeting August 14th 2:30

Trustees meet the second Tuesday of the month at 2:30

PHC – Brenda

- Community Health Worker Training program is being finalized – starts Sept 11th
- Food Security and Literacy – Canning workshop in Community Kitchen Wednesday August 7th
- 4th year of the hot lunch program is beginning to take place; one per week will contact Community Kitchen for bookings.

Commons Representation at Cultivate Festival – Kim

- A display will be set up at Cultivate to raise awareness and funding for the proposed Water Reservoir – A 3D area will be marked out at the location of the reservoir with a fundraising thermometer. A tent with information on the project and the Commons will also be present. Volunteers needed.

Water – Linda

- Reservoir doesn't solve all water problems. We need expertise to look at big picture/infrastructure and long-term water planning.
- A Task Force needs to be put together to do this with knowledge of the Commons and water situation and requirements. Need to determine the scope of this task force
- How much water is enough? How much water do we use and need?
- Bob - recommends putting call out to gardeners who may have expertise. The *Communiqué* could also be used to share information and ask for assistance.
- Task Force: Patrick (point person), Bob, Maya (to join after September), Don, Deb (as Finance Team rep).
- Danielle – As water is an issue for many islanders, the process we go through could be used as a model/learning opportunity for the community – a way to get people interested and involved; share what we learn (workshop with expert, work parties, article in *Sounder*)

The next fundraising meeting for the reservoir is on Monday August 12th

Communications - Jinny

- No in-person meetings; doing business by e.mail as much as possible, but our members are all a bit time-challenged at the moment (Rebecca, Jan, Nancy HP, Stef, Jinny).
- Trying to set up a meeting with Kim and Heather M to talk about the “info boards”, but schedules are very difficult; no success yet.
- Logo: Brainstorming session held this afternoon. Was open to the community with a large ad in *Sounder*. 7 attended, using Grade 2 & 3 students’ drawings as triggers. Suggestion to call this a symbol or image rather than more corporate term “logo”. Report to Council in October.
- *Sounder* articles: monthly submissions continue; please get any suggestions and submissions to Nancy Heatherington Peirce: nhpeirce@gmail.com
- Website: Jinny has been away so no real progress. Also no feedback either or PHOTOS (please).
- *Communiqué*: If you have content for this, please try to plan in advance send information to Communications Team 2-3 days before you want it sent out. Other promotional media are: Facebook, our website, *Sounder*, and eventually Instagram and Twitter.
- Library: Consensus that the library continue to be kept as is ‘wildly organized.’ House Stewards to keep tidy.
- Reminder to teams: Time to review your mandates and get them to Jinny for replacement on the website prior to the AGM (Oct).
- Yesterday, Maya initiated a meeting to discuss how our MailChimp list (*Communiqué*) could or could not also be a membership list and expanded to hold some member data.

Next mtg: TBA

Signage – Jinny

- Team has been in a hiatus d/t lack of budget. We still have a big weather-proofed map to put up and the wayfinding signs for trails and other amenities. A solution to the budget issue was found in that Farm-to-Table organizers were looking for a non-profit to take on the Raffle at that event.
Actions:
 - Theme: A gourmet eating basket
 - Jinny will apply for the raffle license.
 - Need donations of items for basket and help approaching local businesses to donate items. Please email or phone: vhayes@uvic.ca, info@gabriolacommons.ca, 250-247-8898
Volunteers
Danielle – To donate made on Gabriola wooden spoon
David – To donate Food
Louise – To donate Food
- Jinny attended a meeting with Maya and Kim to discuss the Commons side of Signing needs for the Cultivate Festival, the point being that any signs to be retained by the Commons should be made and stored (or used) at the Commons. (Cultivate staff will make and supply the required other signs for temporary use.

Our list:

- Bicycle Parking – where should this go?
- Commons Information – at the kiosk location
- Drinking Water Station – where?
- Garbage, Recycling, Composting – we need to establish permanent place for these and sign them well.

Cultivate crew will take care of signs such as:

- Keep clear @ access points - requires Safety Plan including emergency guidelines, etc.
- Accessibility parking Port-a-potties
 - Should we move the Main Entrance sign back to where it was originally?
Sign to stay where is Dave will remove branches to make more visible
 - Need to install the East (round) Entrance sign but need rock removal. Suggestions?
Somehow incorporating rock into sign
 - Kim and Judith have been working on the design of and building on the “triangle” at the wellhead.
 - There’s been a suggestion to have names on all the buildings; what do you think? –
Agreed this would be a good idea

Finance – Deb

- March 31, 2019 Year End books have been delivered to the Accountant.
- First quarter of new fiscal year has been posted and information distributed to various teams.
- Re Finances - Reservoir

Estimated budget \$32,000

Dedicated funds to date:

\$5000 - Community Card Nesters

\$160 - Sundaze Family Picnic

\$5000 - projected Farm to Table

\$6000 - Farm Team

\$300 - South Garden

\$100 - Donation (fund challenge to others)

Total dedicated \$18,560.

Grants: Nanaimo Community Fund (application - August);

Next Meeting Mon Aug 19 at 12:30

Bookings Task force

- Will be bringing recommendations to September meeting
- Putting together all info/ideas on rental costs, building on the work that has already been done to consolidate, align and standardized. Give bookings the right tools to deal with inquiries.

Farm Team – Judith

- The Farm Team is busy with harvesting and selling produce at Wednesday market from 4-7 – HELP needed. Fun place to spend time. Come out and enjoy the music and good food.

Trails and Green Spaces – Judith

- TAGS Would like to have trails better laid out and will work towards this when more time is available. TAGS will let people know when volunteers and help is needed for trail building.
- Working with Camp Miriam has been a positive experience. They will be coming to the Commons to eradicate Daphne again on Sunday Aug 11th

Tool library – Patsy

- Took down motion detector lights to research solar powered ones to light up the path. Recommendations for which solar lights to use would be greatly appreciated.
- Closed on Saturday August 31st for Cultivate. The pergola will be used at the festival as a rest space.

Agi Coop Wednesday Night Market – Lisa

- There has been 4 night markets so far with 15-16 vendors (which is a great start but would like more for next year) The market has a great feel and they are so happy to be hosting it on the commons.
- Hoping to get more farmers. It can be a challenge with VIHA regulations so would like to work with farmers to go through the process.
- Porta Potty – Contacted people in charge with no response; don't know how or when pumping/maintenance will take place. Hope to share cost with other users of commons (GAC, YURT, Sundaze). A lock is needed. Different location for next year. Composting toilet committee looking into this option.
- Trustees to look at MOU's regarding Porta Potty, maintenance costs, pumping schedule.
- Lots of support at Council for the Wednesday night market. Happy it is taking place on Commons

Cultivate – Maya

- Theatre tent will be located on front lawn, Family zone in shady tree area near north garden, stage on lawn behind house. Fenced area only around theater, music and family tent the rest is open to the general public
- Work Bee July 27th got lots done. Well organized
- Next work bee is August 24th With the Commons and Cultivate crew working together which will lead to a larger turn out.

Community Kitchen – Maya

At our last meeting on July 17, Dawn Fulton let us know she would be leaving the team. Dawn has been a valuable member and we thank her for her time and contributions in stewarding the Kitchen. Dawn's departure leaves just two members on the team which is a stretch given the amount of work involved. We need to recruit new members to the team.

Sharon Arnell has also recently decided to leave the Kitchen Stewards team at the end of September. She has done a ton of work to keep the kitchen clean and running smoothly, including organizing our on-site files, doing lots of deep cleaning, making sure the kitchen is in good order after our Saturday workbees, and so much more.

The change to the Kitchen Steward duties in regards to bookings has highlighted the way Commons teams interrelate and need to work together. It also became apparent at our

meeting that there are questions about what it means to participate at the Commons (generally) and to be a Steward of the Kitchen (specifically).

We decided we need to prepare a revised and more thorough orientation for all Kitchen Stewards that includes: updating Kitchen Steward duties, Kitchen policies and procedures, how Common' Teams work together and general guidelines for Commons participants. This is currently being worked on by Sharon Arnell and Maya Ruggles. A draft will be circulated for comments in the hope that we can recruit and orientate Kitchen Stewards as soon as possible.

- John, Jinny and Heather volunteered to help with editing this document.
- Ideal Kitchen Team composition: 6-8 people. Two weeks on, 4-6 weeks off.
- Deb –Suggested we use do a 20 min discussion on the health and wellbeing of teams. What makes a successful team?
Heather – We could tie this with the 20min discussion with the Bookings Task Force

Hedge - Dave

- In-planting of the dead portion of the hedge will be done in the fall when the rains come.
- Kim is watering the new trees and shrubs. Dave volunteers to bring water from his well to continue watering but needs a barrel or container with a hose.

South Gardens – Stuart

- There has been more theft and vandalism in the south gardens. Locks have been placed on the gates at night. Suspect has been identified, charged and restraining order has been placed. Options for restorative justice are being explored. Another meeting is schedule with RCMP to look at ways of moving forward.
- Possible long term impacts of these events; participants not returning, discouraging new members.
- Praise to garden stewards for all their work.

Sharing the Commons – Heather Menzies

Goat Barn transformation to theatre space is back on table

Doug McKnight and Heather to take lead re: process, helping organize meetings and move toward a task force or team draft mandate. Judith Roux will take lead on design, incorporating ideas from March/19 meeting into Andreas Kahre's initial design to have a second draft available for a next meeting before the end of Sept.

Next Council Meeting: Spetember 3, 7/00 pm

Notetakers and Facilitating Next meeting: Trails and Green Spaces

Attachment

Safety & Security on the Commons – through the lens of the Covenant Team
June 2016

Stewardship of the Commons

The stewardship of the *Commons* involves balancing ecological protection, a working agricultural landscape and multi-purpose community spaces. Stewardship principles also pay attention to the right of public access to the land & participation in stewardship activities.

Central to the ecological stewardship of the land:

Preserve & protect sensitive ecosystems, biodiversity and integrity of the landscape, water conservation; promote deep knowledge of the land, manage invasive species, preserve vistas;

Central to the agricultural stewardship of the land:

community agriculture – shared use by a community of farmers/gardeners; agricultural education & food security; compliance with ALC support of “non-farm” uses, protection of agricultural land and promotion of farming.

Central to stewardship of community space use (indoors & out):

Ensure the community benefits of the buildings & structures and the gathering places (indoors & out); balancing the widest possible range of permitted community use with quiet peaceful sanctuary; Maintenance of buildings and infrastructure to safety and accessibility standards;

Stewardship principles

- precautionary principles – do not harm, duty to prevent harm.
- light footprint (not just from environmental point of view but also from “Surveillance” perspective),
- due diligence and being pro-active rather than crisis management and reactive.

Safeguarding safety and security

The space has to be welcoming and accessible to everyone

People in the space have to feel safe and comfortable

Factors contributing to safety and security

- **Design**
- **Social Responsibility**
- **Emergency/prevention procedures**

Design (Landscape as safe space)

A creative design process based on whole-systems thinking informed by ethics and design principles, an ethics based design system that looks at landscape as a whole rather than pieces. design is a holistic approach integrating nature, sustainable agriculture, and people spaces.

Good design can facilitate meaningful social interactions.

Good places for interaction are places where people – often from many parts of the community and/or diverse backgrounds – meet naturally and interact comfortably and often pleasurably because of the nature or attraction of the space and/or the activities associated with it.

Social Responsibility (Commons as part of a safe island community)

- Upholding Human rights
- Freedom of association
- Engagement in community initiatives (helping make the larger community safer makes the Commons safer)
- building awareness of and helping to resolve safety & security issues in the community.

Emergency/prevention procedures (keeping people safe in the moment)

- Personal safety – site & situation specific
- Buddy systems
- Patrols
- Good lighting (but not intrusive)
- Signs, plaques, statues, murals
- Emergency Response Plans/Emergency Information
- Police (911) to report criminal activity or suspicious or threatening behavior.

The presence of police or citizen patrols, or police call boxes. Police or citizen patrol presence doesn't have to be huge or aggressive. If people know they're there, they feel safer, and those who might cause trouble are less apt to do so.

CODE of ETHICS

TBA