

Commons Coordinating Council Note
for
Meeting of June 2, 2020 7 pm held by Zoom

Present

David Lightly, Louise Amuir (Co-facilitators)

Bob Andrew (Notetaker)

Doug Scott, Maya Ruggles, Jinny Hayes, Carol Ferguson, Mary Ann Richards, Brenda Fowler, Don Smardon, Deb Ferens, Linda St. Clair, Judith Roux, Patrick Roux, Stuart Wulff + 1 other person.

Acknowledgement of the Land

David L. acknowledged we are on First Nations Land, stolen or unceded territory, and posed the question of where and how do we go beyond “acknowledgement”?

Welcome and checkin

Gabriola Arts Council (GAC) & Cultivate Festival 2021 (Carol and Mary Ann)

GAC would like to suggest two possible dates: June 25/26/27 or July 2/3/4 if at all possible; they want the Festival to be positive for the Commons. Maya to consult with Events Team and other Teams re: these dates. There was a request to GAC that they attend Council meetings

One person liked these dates already as it would be better spacing for other functions such as the Fall Fair.

Covid 2020 Update (Deb)

A small task force (Deb, Kim K., Jinny and Bob A.) met to discuss how the Commons ought to proceed with implementing the Covid 19 guidelines from the Provincial and Federal Gov'ts as Phase 2 rolls out. A draft document had been developed for continued closures, etc. on the Commons; this had been pre-circulated with the call for this meeting, and a revised version is attached. Noted that the Community Kitchen has been opened for three regular users.

Noted that GERTIE drivers and Community Kitchen users will help clean and disinfect after every CK bathroom use; posters and supplies are already in this bathroom.

Action: Recommended that this document be sent out to MOU holders by the Trustees with a request that they submit plans for their own Phase 2 planning.

Action Maya will figure out a wording for the Autoreply for Bookings.

Brenda, the PHC rep, inquired about what will happen with the School Hot Lunch Program in Sept, as the CK is used for that. A note will be sent to the Kitchen Stewards and the Covid

Group re this question, but it was noted that they are experienced users and as they know and use the cleaning routine, a booking will likely be fine.

A question was asked about how the grounds could be used, and if the port-a-potty could be available. The answers are that people can wander through the grounds as they are not shut off; the port-a-potty does not belong to the Commons.

In general, the Council approved the guidelines. **Action:** Jinny to make revisions and post out. The Covid group will meet in August and reassess, but meanwhile may have to address changes required by the CDC Phase 2 requirements. See Attachment A.

Carol and Mary Anne left the meeting

Team Reports

South Gardens (Doug)

Next meeting July 3, evening. 2 x "half plots" are still available.

No evidence of vandalism this year so far, but it was noted that it didn't start till late June last year.

Trustees (Maya)

Trustees are looking at possible alternative insurers, and are updating all MoUs, eg, one with the Pottery Group is started. They are also looking at ways to hold stored e.documents in Canada.

Need to nominate 3 new Trustees for Fall AGM. Please let them know if you have suggestions.

They note that the upstairs bathrooms in the house will be closed to any "casual" users when the house opens up again. An invitation was extended to PHC to have input on how to meet this goal as they will be the most impacted. David then reported that Process Team wants to examine how the relationship is breaking down between PHC and the Commons. The members believe that we need to look at the bigger concerns, strengthen the partnership between PHC and the Commons, and that there ought to be more generosity of spirit towards PHC. They are optimistic that change could be effected, such as better definition of boundaries. The Process Team wants involvement in this concern. It was noted that the Commons and PHC do not operate in organizationally similar ways.

Next Trustee meeting is June 23.

Covenant Team (Deb)

Have been in contact with the Agricultural Land Commission.

Still trying to find a covenant holder; The Land Conservancy of BC is interested but also cautious.

Thoughts to reviving/reviewing, repurposing, the old “Commons Society” to act as a holder for this and other Covenants. Questions were raised about the optics of doing this.

Question: Has there been any conversations with interested First Nations about holding the covenant? Answer: This is something that could be pursued again. It was noted that it would be ironic if a First Nation were to hold the Covenant on their own unceded land.

Next meeting: June 17 at 2.30 on Jinny’s deck (for social distancing).

Long Range Planning (Linda)

Held a brainstorming session as no community event can be held this year. Not much to report; are working on their mandate. Applauded the Covenant Team and how they have been helping to advance Commons thinking, eg, all elements of LRP now address plans as “stewardship” plans; all teams ought to be stewardship teams.

Communications Team (Jinny)

Written report attached in the interests of Council meeting brevity; see Attachment B.

Concern was raised by Maya for the Trustees about changing our website host to a multinational, ie, international not local. The new website server is easier to use and cheaper (for now) and was requested by our website builder, Colleen McCarthy. The decision to change was a COM Team one, as it seemed to be within its mandate. Questioned if we should go with the best technical support or primarily consider the bigger political issue. Commons teams should be aware of the issues; does need to be a larger conversation. In the meantime, it was decided to proceed with our new three-year contract and re-evaluate before it is renewed.

PHC (Brenda)

Attentiveness for seniors moved to home-based services (60 meals/week), as are most Food Bank deliveries; 99% of food bank is now home delivery; more than 200 boxes, up from 80. Great increase in hours of respite care -> 48 hrs/week.

PHC gardens doing well. Changed the kids’ gardening to a seed program of 240 packets. Learn to Cook Food Program has been moved to Zoom.

New initiative: Applied for a grant for a “mental health initiative.” If PHC get this then they will decide how to use it.

An Agriculture Infrastructure grant was applied for and received, to serve three purposes in the Food Recovery Program and Commons and PHC gardens:

1) A partnership has been formed with Nesters re-establishing a new refrigerated container to

allow for greater food recovery.

- 2) Replacement of irrigation systems in the North and South Gardens (applied for after talks with S. Gardens group)
- 3) Renovation of the N. Gardens greenhouse: enlarge size to render it more usable for groups of kids. PHC indicated they would take care of the N Gardens work.

Brenda noted that receiving of this grant is bad timing for them now, so they are requesting that the irrigation system replacement in the S. Gardens be taken on by the S. Gardens. The grant is good for one year.

A question was raised as to why only the South Gardeners knew about this grant application when others on the Commons didn't. The response was that the S. Gardens had recognized the problems with the infrastructure of the irrigation system over the past years and had been planning for replacement and restructuring, paid for by them. It has been priced out at approx. \$2300. The issue was discussed between the S. Gardens and PHC and run through the S. Gardens committee (some S. Gardeners donate produce to the Food Bank). It went no further as it was believed to be in the Gardeners' mandate to make the decision about this. Stuart apologized if they'd made an incorrect decision in accepting PHC's offer of funding. Concern was raised that the Commons as a whole was not informed, just some gardeners. It was noted that there would be financial implications for the Commons finances and the plan ought to come before the Finance Team and other teams. **The question was, "How did this happen?"**

Suggested that the next 20 min. discussion be about the process for this collaboration; this might improve clarity about this situation. Brenda stated she would write up the proposal for the irrigation project for further discussion.

Reservoir Project (Deb)

There was a financial update re the Reservoir project, which is still about \$6K short of its \$50K goal.

Next Council: July 7 at 7 pm. Jinny to set up Zoom meeting.

The next note taker will come from Sharing the Commons and be facilitated by Don Smardon and David Lightly.

ATTACHMENT A

The Gabriola Commons is committed to upholding a safe and careful approach to Phase 2 as recommended by the BC government (BC's Restart Plan) and best practice guidelines from the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC). Our collective vigilance is critical in minimizing the risks of transmission on our island and keeping all of us healthy and connected in community during this unprecedented historical event.

As it would apply to the Commons, a Safe Operating Plan according to the BC government Restart Plan and BCCDC includes:

- Maintaining physical distancing (staying 2 meters apart - no handshakes, hugs, touching)
- Providing hand washing stations or hand sanitizer if this is not feasible
- Staying home if you are feeling ill or think you may have been exposed to the virus
- Enhanced cleaning and disinfecting of public settings
- Indoor meeting spaces must accommodate 2 metre physical distancing, the limited exchange of paper products; management of the flow of people to one-way so people are not crossing paths (eg, on stairways or hallways).
- Posting of Covid-related precautions, restrictions and safety requirements in public spaces

A safe operating plan with the above information has been posted in pertinent spaces on the Commons.

The Covid Task Force (CTF) notes that:

- the layout of the upstairs in the farmhouse cannot meet the spacing and flow requirements
 - the Commons is limited in its capacity and resources to ensure that a thorough safety plan can be maintained
 - the Commons is not set up nor able to monitor compliance with the necessary measures.
- The CTF therefore suggests the following framework for Covid Phase 2 on the Commons:

Buildings

- The following buildings will remain closed (no access to the general public for rental/meeting spaces): Farmhouse; Workshop; Pottery Space; Goat Barn.
- Restricted use of the Community Kitchen for preparing food (considered essential service); only former renters who know and maintain stringent cleaning directives to CDC requirements will be using the CK. The Kitchen Stewards will continue to oversee approvals and use.
- Community Kitchen bathroom to be used **ONLY** for CK renters, GERTIE drivers and during workbees. Cleaning and disinfection **after every use**; Cleaning and sanitizing

instructions are posted in that bathroom and tools and solutions are supplied. The posted log of cleanings to be checked off by users.

- The Workshop will be available for Commons workbees and at other times by Property Stewardship Team (PST) as needed for Commons repairs and maintenance purposes. All CDC recommendations to be implemented (distancing, handwashing, etc.).

All holders of Commons Memoranda of Understanding should please provide their Phase 2 plans to the Commons Trustees.

Outdoor Spaces

Given the benefits of nature and outdoor activities, where it is easier to maintain physical distancing, the Gabriola Commons provides healthy and special outdoor spaces for small gatherings and recreation: open grassy fields, the labyrinth, forest trails, a boardwalk. We hope that Gabriolans will see the Commons as a place to visit occasionally as families and small groups (socially distanced as appropriate) as a place of gentle solitude when needed and a place to enjoy the natural environment and landscape.

Community Gardens, farming and subsistence agriculture are considered essential services. South Gardeners, North Gardeners, Namaste and various other gardeners/growers/teams on the land are encouraged farm and garden while adhering to the guidelines of physical distancing, hand washing, cleaning surfaces & tools, etc.

Other Notes

Commons Workbees: Stewardship of the grounds & buildings and projects such as the reservoir remain a priority so workbees will be ongoing; Covid precautions apply.

Food on the Commons: Though we all miss the Saturday workbee soup lunches, special cleanings of the CK and complexities of adequate disinfection of the house kitchen mean that no kitchen will be available during workbees. CTF suggests that lunches be maintained using alternatives such as sandwiches catered by Roberts or Nesters, etc.

ATTACHEMENT B

COM Report to Council June 2, 2020

We have not met in person, but continue doing a few things electronically, especially Jan Pullinger

Next in-person meeting: TBA.

Members still needed, as we are down to three functioning members

As we understand that tonight's agenda is quite full, this report will be selectively presented but attached in full to the Notes of Council for tonight.

1. Website: Colleen McCarthy has just about finished the design and though she has uploaded all the present content, this needs significant updating as we all know. We are always seeking ideas about content and photos, please, so please get these to Jinny at communications@gabriolacommons.ca.

We understand that there's a concern about changing the website host to SiteGround, with administration and storage in the US and multiple storage sites worldwide, and welcome the Trustees' raising their concerns tonight.

2. COM Mandate: We've redone ours but know there are other teams' ahead of us. When will we do these at Council?
3. Commons Messaging Guidelines (*Talking about the Commons*) and overall Communication Plan (*Building a Strong Commons Identity*): We now have good drafts to discuss, so are in the process of planning a distanced meeting among 3 of us. Will table these for general discussion next Council.
4. Kim and Jan have had good meetings-of-minds about both historical and informational posters for the house; these will have a "theme" to integrate them. In addition, Kim has some good ideas about how to decorate the walls somewhat.
5. Jan has drawn Nola Johnson into the design of these posters, rackcard and brochure (think we'll end up having both brochures and rackcards for different uses); they have the same great software. We are really lucky to have them both working for the Commons!

Anything else?