

Vancouver Food Policy Council
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, April 11, 2012
6:00-8:30pm
Town Hall Room, City Hall



Chairs: Brent Mansfield and Trish Kelly

Council Members: Jason Apple, Maria Burtlehaus, Robyn Carlson, Claudia Chan, Zsuzsi Fodor, Kimberly Hodgson, Ilana Labow, Pat McCarthy, Tara Moreau, Ross Moster, Nicholas Scapilati, Shelby Tay, Chris Thoreau

Liaisons: James O'Neill (Social Policy, City of Vancouver), Arzeena Hamir (Richmond Food Security Society), Heather Deal (City Council)

Regrets: Joanne Bays, Helen Speigleman, Paul Taylor, David Wilson, Peter Ladner, Theresa Duynstee, Emme Lee, Aaron Jasper (Park Board), Rob Wynen (VSB)

1. Welcome and Nomination of Co-Chairs

Members were invited to put their names forward to be a co-chair. As there was no new interest, Brent and Trish were appointed as co-chairs by acclamation. Brent reminded members that they could express interest at any time.

2. Motion to Accept Agenda

Because the FPC had not yet been appointed, the February minutes are not official, but will be posted on the website. Motion to accept agenda - moved by Nicholas, seconded by Ilana, carried unanimously.

3. Introductions and Interests

Continuing and new members introduced themselves, briefly describing their interests:

Brent Mansfield - background as teacher, saw food connections, then became Garden Coordinator at Grandview, member of Think and Eat Green at School project. Currently working on FPC role in Food Strategy.

Trish Kelly - worked at Capers before becoming interested in policy. Currently works at Climate Smart. Interested in working with neighbourhoods, food waste, food justice and access (charitable sector).

Nicholas Scapilati - ED of Farm Folk City Folk, a founding partner of the FPC. Background in conservation, new to food policy but recognizes the importance of sustainability of the food system. FFCF has many programs, will be looking for connections.

Heather Deal - 2nd term as liaison for City Council. A biologist by trade, she is an active gardener and is interested in land use in urban areas, including the many benefits of urban agriculture. FPC input helps with Council decisions. Heather is responsible for the food cart program.

Chris Thoreau - background in food production, studied urban agriculture at UBC. Chris is now in his 4th season producing micro-greens, and has founded Your Local Food Pedalers. His interest is in urban farming, and is working to legitimize it. He has met with the City and is looking at policy changes. Chris is also interested in waste reduction and composting, and is the CoV rep on Metro Van Urban Agriculture Advisory Committee.

Robyn Carlson - market coordinator with Your Local Farmers Market Society. Her

background is as a baker, and she new to policy. She has worked with the compost drop-off at markets.

Shelby Tay - studied Environmental Sciences but became more interested in the social side, so became involved with NGOs, and supporting communities interested in relocation. She works to build bridges through food, due to its importance in building resilience and is shared by everyone and so can lead to thinking about broader issues. She is interested in storytelling and education to encourage engagement.

Tara Moreau - trained as a biologist, Tara is now post-doc at UBC studying IPM and solutions related to climate change and mitigation. Tara is the VP at SPEC and the Co-Chair of the Food Committee, which is developing an urban farmer field school. She is interested in policy as a tool to enable transition to a sustainable lifestyle.

Ilana Labow - background in food production and worked with Will Allen in Chicago. Ilana co-founded Fresh Roots Urban Farm, who now has an MoU with the VSB to build small farms to be used by school communities and others as outdoor classrooms and is a partner of Think and Eat Green at School. Interested in policy and engaging youth, and is the lead on the youth food policy steering committee.

Arzeena Hamir - wanted to do 3rd world development work, then returned to Canada and worked for what is now West Coast Seeds. She began her own seed company before starting at Richmond Food Security Society where her job was to connect people. A VanCity grant was received to start incubator farm project. She has now stepped down as Coordinator and will move to Comox Valley soon to begin farming.

Pat McCarthy - having grown up on a farm, Pat sees opportunities to develop the local food system to make it more mainstream to compete with industrial agriculture. Pat owns the Bread Affair and sources locally, and is also on the board of YLFMS.

Jason Apple - has food trucks (Roaming Dragon) and is interested understanding food policy, especially policies applied to street food. He would like to explore urban agriculture and become more involved in the community.

Maria Burtlehaus - 2nd term on council. Maria is a nutritionist with VCH and has worked on food carts. She works with Neighbourhood Food Networks WG, and with community centres to see what they offer and to explore incorporating more local food. She works citywide with many partners, including a program to give small grants to Neighbourhood Houses to bring healthy local food to communities.

Zsuzsi Fodor - has been involved in FPC Neighbourhood Food Networks WG. After witnessing the two-tiered food system at QUEST, Zsuzsi did a degree in Food Action in Hamilton before studying Urban Planning at UBC on the intersection between the food system and community development. She is part of the West Side Food Collaborative, and has interned with the City about the food strategy. She is interested in food access, justice, land use, mobile markets and corner stores.

Vicky Baker - a background in Environmental Sciences motivated her interest in sustainable food systems. She is the Coordinator of the Cambie Demonstration Garden for SPEC and has been taking the minutes of the FPC for many years.

Kim Hodgeson - with a background as an environmentalist, she studied pre-med then became nutritionist with a degree in Food Policy and Nutrition. She has worked in the Bronx on community engagement, which led to her interest in food policy. She has worked on food policy at local and national levels in US and has a consulting business on healthy communities. She is interested in cross-sectoral collaboration, transportation, food strategy implementation and evaluation, and micro-breweries.

Ross Moster - second term on Council. Ross has a family history in food, and a background in food cooperatives in the US. Founded Village Vancouver (Transition Town initiative), a grassroots organization, and is most active around resilient food systems in the context of climate change and peak oil and the economic system. Involved in SPEC, Car-Free Vancouver, Neighbourhood Food Networks and is the lead on the FEDAP (Food Energy Descent Action Plan) WG.

James O'Neill - works at Social Policy at CoV, and has a background in urban planning and community development. Works with community gardens in Vancouver and explores how food can be a catalyst for community development.

Claudia Chan - background in civic engagement. Has recently become interested in food and food policy, and has an urban garden plot.

Sixteen guests then introduced themselves.

4. Brief Orientation to VFPC
a. History of VFPC (Trish)

New members received information to access historical documents. Returning members will also have access. The aim is to create better archives give the changes in co-chairs.

Efforts to create the FPC began in 1993, and in 2003 the City agreed to strike a task force. The process came out of the community with 70 organizations involved with members having expertise in the food system and connections with community. Actions included city-wide food assessment (accomplished through Food Secure Vancouver and now Strategy), rooftop and community gardens, policy changes for farmers markets, coordinated food processing and increased access for low income people, and coordinated effort for food recovery. The archives contain the Food Strategy backgrounder, a list of social media links which members are encouraged to use, Social Policy links, Vancouver Food Charter, Greenest City Food Goal, expense form, historical document, WG template which will be revised. Members requested to send bios for posting on the City website and FPC blog. The FPC is very action-oriented - highlights in recent years include changes to the backyard chicken bylaw, Food Secure Vancouver, the Food Charter (which led to the Food Strategy), and contributions to the GCAP food goal. Brent is the liaison on the City's inter-departmental steering committee on Food. Thinking around food has evolved, and using food in social contexts brings focus to City conversations. Opportunities have increased, the FPC has a voice with council, there now is a request for Metro Van liaison position, and the Park Board wants support for food policy for their department. Eighty-four applications were received for 21 spots.

b. Civics 101 (James)

James provided an overview of the local government's role in food. Much of what the City does intersects with food. For example the Parks board -manages community gardens and community centres. The City receives many calls requesting information about Vancouver's food system on multiple scales including food access, urban agriculture, and waste management. Urban Farming is now being explored at a policy level.

Food Policy was given more legitimacy with the Greenest City Action Plan, and is now on the same level as Transport. The Healthy City Strategy (under development) will also include some food issues. Food Policy is housed under Social Policy in the City has three staff and is hoping to bring in two summer interns.

Main points from the presentation (*to be available in Dropbox*):

The City is now working towards strategies that support food system:

Production - community gardens, urban farming, beekeeping, hens

Processing/distribution - support New City Market, farmers markets, food business incubator feasibility study, community kitchens, municipal local food purchasing - (consultant has been hired, 109 locations identified).

Access/consumption - neighbourhood food networks - support with grants, pocket markets, street food.

Waste - food scraps drop off at Farmers markets, food scrap collection pilot - may roll out in the fall.

Some pocket markets were closed due to competition. The City favours those that support vulnerable populations. The policy is related to, but different from the farmers market policy, which stipulates that farmers must grow and sell the products. The City is looking at ways for the pocket markets to happen as a way to encourage more access to local food.

5. VFPC Communication

Addressed in other sections.

6. Further Orientation and Planning

Monthly meetings - the FPC meets 10 months per year (not in Aug or Dec) on the 2nd Wed of the month. There is opportunity to change the schedule. The FPC has been exploring how meetings can be more engaging, and is considering separating the administrative items from the rest of the meetings.

Working Groups - work between meetings and report back. They are member-initiated but non-members can participate.

Liaisons - City of Vancouver, Parks Board, VSB. Two-way communication provides opportunities for FPC and also seeks the advice of the FPC. The FPC provides solutions and support, and act as catalysts for community. It brings together different groups to talk food, using food as both an end and means (e.g. as a tool for community development, ecological services, social and cross cultural aspects).

Budget - FPC has used its budget to cover meeting costs, allocated for actions through the working groups, and for leverage through other partnerships. The budget has been reduced to 2k, which was not a political decision but a budget exercise. Social Policy will cover meeting costs. It was suggested that the advisory committee type A

may not be the best option, and a meeting with Heather Deal will be scheduled to discuss opportunities.

Governance sub-committee - related to Terms of Reference, sectoral representation, liaisons.

Requests for leave - email chairs if you cannot attend a meeting. If four consecutive meetings are missed without requesting leave, you will be removed from council.

Meeting Room - Town Hall room is not available every month on the 2nd Wednesday, options are alternating between 2nd and 3rd Wednesdays or alternating rooms. Brent will follow up by email.

Strategic Plan - planning to meet from 10am-2pm on a Saturday. Brent will circulate 2 dates by email - May 26 or June 2.

7. Motion to Adjourn

Moved by Kim, seconded by Ross, carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 8:33pm.