

Vancouver Food Policy Council
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, May 13, 2015
6:00-8:30pm
Town Hall Room, City Hall



Chairs: Zsuzsi Fodor and Tara Moreau

Council Members: Veronik Campbell, Anna Cavouras, Andrew Christie, Larry Copeland, Rebecca Cuttler, Caitlin Dorward, Antonietta Gesualdi, Dirk Gibbs, Chashma Heinze, Kimberly Hodgson, Will Jung, Gabrielle Kissinger, Ilana Labow, Emme Lee Stephanie Lim, Pat McCarthy, David Speight

Liaisons: Adriane Carr (City Council), Janet Fraser (VSB), Michael Wiebe (Park Board)

Invited guest: Lindsay Cole (Park Board)

Regrets: Heather Deal (City Council), Theresa Duynstee (MetroVan), James O'Neill (Social Policy, City of Vancouver), Orlando Schmidt (MoAg), Nicholas Scapillati, Colin Stansfield, Corinne Eisler (VCH)

Absent:

Agenda Items:

1. Motion to Accept Agenda and Previous Minutes (April 2015 Minutes)
Moved by Will, seconded by Caitlin, carried unanimously.
2. Introductions
Members introduced themselves. Three guests were present.
3. Park Board 101 - Lindsay Cole
Lindsay is a planner with Park Board, working with Jason Hsieh. She gave an overview of the history of the Park Board, noting that it is independently elected and operates separately from the City. The Park Board has been actively engaged with food issues for at least 30 years, including the recent creation of the [Local Food Action Plan](#) and contributions to the [Healthy City Strategy](#).

The Local Food Action Plan is a 5 year plan, and we are now 2 years in. It includes 58 actions, of which 22 are complete, 21 are in progress, and 15 have not yet started. The plan was guided by the task force which included three working groups, each with FPC representation. This co-planning model was successful model and has been replicated. Priorities in the plan include: increasing physical food assets, supporting sustainable and local food economies, and also engaged, capacity-rich food networks, and lastly, increasing soil generation. Recently, there have been increases in community gardens and fruit trees on Park land, as a result of the action plan, and encouragement for these spaces to be collaborative, include public art, or designs to attract pollinators.

The Park Board also supports food programming in community centres (e.g. sustenance festival) throughout the city, and works to increase local and healthy food choices at beach concessions, food carts, and through farmers' markets improvements. Research and asset mapping in an open data catalogue is being done with a Greenest City scholar. The Park Board works closely with Engineering and Social Policy.

This year will see new community centre kitchens, an outdoor bake oven, field house residencies, and secure farmers' market tenure. Lindsay emphasized the benefits of working with partners such as the FPC and welcomes ideas and input.

Discussion

- Process for developing plan - the idea came from Commissioners Sharma and Jasper, with encouragement and support from the FPC. The Task Force was created through a motion, and worked for a year to create the Local Food Action Plan. Two staff worked on it, with support from three working groups including community representation, FPC, Social Policy, and Engineering. The new Board has been informed and updated. Establishing the plan was not difficult, relying heavily on the Food Strategy. The challenge currently is implementation with limited capacity. Actions were prioritized using feasibility criteria, then categorized into the short (0-2yrs),

medium (3-5yrs) and long (5+yrs) term actions.

- Work with City departments - the PB works with Engineering on community gardens, and also plan budgets collaboratively with Social Policy. For community gardens, a request for Expressions of Interest is released in August and evaluated collectively.
- Role of FPC - individual members could support specific actions. A meeting with the new Board was suggested. Park Board motions pertaining to food could have FPC input or support. Community centres have untapped potential and could be an area of focus. It was clarified that while the FPC has a formal role to advise City Council, that the Terms of Reference include working with other levels of government, including other entities, that play a role in improving the food system.
- Public Engagement - there may be funding available to support this, working with other advisory committees, potentially through community centres. The City's budget process will start soon with consultation over the summer. Requests from advisory bodies that would like resources set aside should come by June.
- Community Centres - some challenges for implementation include the need for more staff, better connections to food programming, or not having been previously involved in food issues. It is important to cultivate relationships with specific centres to do an analysis of needs.
- Community Gardens - Expressions of Interest from community groups are jointly evaluated. Support for design, site preparation, and water access is available, but not for operational aspects. The Park Board does not get involved in the governance of gardens. At one point, there was a network of community gardens, but it is no longer active.
- Procurement - while having local food in concessions will continue, it is unclear if it will be expanded. Challenges include obtaining a steady supply of reliable products at an acceptable price. The Park Board has contracts with operators, but supplies the food. Ideas are welcome. Cafeterias have the potential to provide a powerful economic base for the local food system. There is opportunity for procurement of local beverages with the end of the Coca Cola contract in November. The tender will be released in approximately one year. The FPC could provide input. There was a network of buyers from large public institutions but seems to have fizzled out. James may have looked into procurement. It was suggested that other cities with successful initiatives could be contacted.
- Next Steps - **A meeting will be convened to follow up on how to work together to move issues forward** (Emme, Kim, Pat, Stephanie, Antoinneta, Will, Janet, Caitlin, David, Chashma, Zsuzsi)

4. VFPC Admin

a. Google group

Invitations to the Google group have been sent; some members have not yet accepted. **Members are encouraged to sign up for better communication.**

b. Gordon Neighbourhood House request

The FPC has been asked to sign on to a project proposal as partners, with a deadline the next day. The partnership would entail hosting food advocates from the Gordon Neighbourhood House annually to listen to food justice issues from the west end as part of a larger plan with the Greater Vancouver Food Bank on the Food Hub project. Specifically, users of the emergency food program would be trained to listen to other users' experiences and be hired by GNH to collectively discuss and determine a list of priorities for the community, in an effort to changing circumstances. While the FPC is supportive of the proposal in principle, it would aim to incorporate a broader representation from the community, perhaps in a 'day of dialogue' or inviting different groups to each meeting, or taking the meetings into the community. It was noted that this would align well with the Engaged City Task Force.

There has not been a formal process to date outlining how FPC can support such requests and concerns were expressed that the lack of clarity creates inequality for other community groups. Members would have liked to have seen the proposal in advance to have a clearer understanding of the project and the commitment. After much discussion, due to the lack of clarity on the proposal, the FPC concluded that it is not comfortable being listed as a formal partner, but actively supports the objectives of the proposal and will work with the Gordon Neighbourhood House and other partners.

c. Past and future events

Tabled until future meeting.

d. VFPC volunteer time commitment

Members were asked to estimate their availability in how many hours per month to give a sense of the potential capacity of the group.

5. VFPC Roles and Responsibilities

a. Break out groups into food system present back on the top 3 issues

What policy tools are at our disposal? Kim provided an overview of the types of Policies and what it means for the FPC. The Cities Terms of Reference indicate that advisory groups both raise new issues from the community and respond to existing ones by providing advice on specific policy issues but also stakeholder consultation issues. Existing food issues include the Food Strategy, and examples of emerging ones are the False Creek Flats, Urban Agriculture regulations, and Neighbourhood Food Networks. A 'Food Policy Council Toolbox' was presented with several options for actions.

Members were then tasked with listing the food policy issue they are most passionate about, and identifying the networks that they can be effective.

The following food policy passions were identified:

- Climate change
- Children and food
- Making sure that food, social & environmental solution are economically sound
- Zero waste food service and restaurants
- Small food business support and development
- Urban/regional food system
- Food access as an income inequality issue
- Sanctuary City movement
- Raise the Rates! Income, cost of living, food access as part of broader intersecting policies
- Diversity in representation in food policy leadership/policy cornerstones (race and class)
- Meaningful active engagement of public in policy making process
- Food access equity
- Food policy is a fairy tale - we're talking about economic policy when we talk about food policy!
- Covering the city with small-scale public access food gardens
- Move from charitable reliance to right to food
- Rethinking school food + kids access to nutrition
- Bridge the gap between GCAP goals and regulations may get in the way of implementation
- Disaster preparedness.
- Defining what food security really means
- Reduction of food waste
- Climate change adaptation & mitigation + quality local, affordable food
- Improve COV public consultation process - transparent + equitable
- Local food contracts w/city, schools, cafeteria, park board
- Access of food - homeless

The following networks were identified:

- Food industry networking
- Procurement (local)
- Global food research organizations + national levels + global commodity sustainability companies, investors, etc.
- Grassroots E-NGOs
- UBC
- Neighbourhood food networks
- Government
- Vancouver School Board
- DTES food providers and community
- Academics: social work
- UN FAO
- Local government across North America
- Renfrew-Collingwood Neighbourhood
- Neighbourhood food network working group
- Academia
- Political
- Small food business
- Academic
- West End seniors
- DTES

The notes will be compiled and sent over email, and will contribute to the work plan.

The June meeting - James will be back and will discuss the FPC role in implementing the food strategy. All members were invited to take on a piece, and lead a conversation on process gaps.

Ilana invited those who are interested in helping to define process to contact her.

Members were reminded that funds can be requested for specific activities.

6. Motion to Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 8:30pm

Moved by Zsuzsi, seconded by Ilana, carried unanimously.