

Vancouver Food Policy Council
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, May 16, 2012
6:00-8:30pm
Town Hall Room, City Hall



Chairs: Brent Mansfield and Trish Kelly

Council Members: Jason Apple, Joanne Bays, Claudia Chan, Theresa Duynstee, Zsuzsi Fodor, Kimberly Hodgson, Peter Ladner, Emme Lee, Pat McCarthy, Tara Moreau, Ross Moster, Nicholas Scapilati, Helen Speigleman, Shelby Tay, Paul Taylor, David Wilson

Liaisons: Heather Deal (City Council), Aaron Jasper (Park Board), Rob Wynen (Vancouver School Board) Claire Gram (Vancouver Coastal Health), Theresa Duynstee (Metro Vancouver), James O'Neill (Social Policy, City of Vancouver), Thien Phan (Social Planning, City of Vancouver),

Regrets: Robyn Carlson, Ilana Labow, Chris Thoreau

1. Welcome and Opening Round (with introductions of members not at last meeting)

Paul Taylor - DTES Neighbourhood House, with a focus on Right to Food. Helped draft the food charter for DTES, is on the Board of Directors for Daily Bread, and a member of Raise the Rates. From Ontario, and having grown up in a low-income household, Paul recognizes the transformative value of food and works for a just food system and society.

Mary Clare Zak - Director Social Planning at the City of Vancouver, is drawn here because awareness of larger food system issues has changed both her professional work and personal life.

Thien Phan - Social Planning with the City of Vancouver. Thien has been working on the Food Strategy, particularly with multicultural communities.

Emme Lee - student at UBC Faculty of Land and Food, studying sustainable food production. She is interested in food waste management, and is working on a vermicomposting project for the new Student Union Building. Emme would like to strengthen the connection between universities and the city.

Joanne Bays - National Manager of Farm to Cafeteria Canada, works to redesign systems to get local, sustainable food in hospitals, schools, and universities, and has also been approached by other municipalities.

Claire Gram - Regional food security lead with VCH. Works across the region and in Vancouver her work primarily centres on Neighbourhood Food Networks. She also works on a provincial initiative, Healthy Families BC, and the relationship with local governments and healthy food. Participates in FPC meetings because they are inspiring, a key policy place, where great connections can be made.

Rob Wynen- School Board Trustee. Began gardening in the West End, then helped create community gardens, and now lives on East Side. VSB has 110 large properties, a new project with Fresh Roots Urban Farm, and hears a lot of interest from schools.

Peter Ladner - Former City Councilor and liaison to FPC. Drawn into food after he left politics, Peter worked at SFU on a project Planning Cities as if Food Mattered, which resulted in a book. He is interested in taking action, has expertise at policy level, interest in food waste, and connection with Metro Van.

Helen Speigleman - Has used a non-profit food waste collection service in Montreal, and would like to explore different models of food waste collection.

David Wilson - As Produce Operations Manager for Choices Markets in BC, David has seen food gain importance exponentially.

Aaron Japer - Park Board liaison. Began growing food in the west end and saw resistance to a community garden in Nelson Park. He has witnessed a culture shift at the Park Board, and now looks for opportunities to apply FPC work to Park Board work. Aaron will bring a motion to the Park Board that it create a Local Food Assets Task Force, comprised of representatives from various sectors. Emails and letters of support welcome, as well as speakers. Aaron will send details to Brent for circulation.

Theresa - Agrologist with Metro Van, Agriculture and Policy planning program, and co-author of Regional Food Strategy. Theresa is interested in how Metro Van can get involved with, support, and advocate for food projects. Trained in soil science, Theresa is also a horticulturalist.

27 guests were present.

2. Motion to Accept Agenda and Minutes
Both the Agenda and Minutes are circulated and posted before meetings. Paper copies will no longer be distributed at meetings. Motion to Accept Agenda and Minutes - moved by Nick, seconded by Joanne, carried unanimously.
3. Food Strategy Presentation - James O'Neill and Thien Phan
James and Thien presented the overall goals of the food strategy for general discussion. This will be followed by a more focused discussion of the key actions in the next month.
 - 1 Context - the food system is under pressure at many levels (global, national, local).
Food brings social (builds community), environmental (reduce CO₂ emissions), and economic (sales and revenue of farmers markets, contribution to economy) components together.
Goals and targets - to increase the number of community garden plots, urban farms, orchards, farmers markets, pocket markets, community kitchens, and community composting sites by 2020.
Integration - now discrete food policies and broader sustainability policies exist, and there is a need for coordination between them. City policies over the past decade allow creation of a food strategy.
 - 2 What it will do - provide road map for action, create an integrated policy framework, identify gaps and prioritize actions, provide input to neighbourhood planning processes.
 - 3 Consultation - Two rounds of internal (City) and external (community groups and key stakeholders) consultations have taken place since spring 2011. Stakeholder engagement on specific actions using multiple formats will continue until summer 2012. Input to date has highlighted the following priorities: supporting innovation, improving access, expanding urban agricultural priorities and opportunities, ensuring broader participation, and providing neighbourhood level opportunities and involvement.
 - 4 Components of Food Strategy: Vision and principles (come from the food charter). The food strategy will consist of five goals 1) Support food-friendly neighbourhoods, 2) Empower residents to take action, 3) Use food to create a healthy and equitable city, 4) Make food a centerpiece of Vancouver's green economy, 5) Advocate for just and sustainable food system with partners and all levels of government. It will also contain a framework for decision-making and actions, with 24 action areas encompassing 60+ actions.
 - 5 Next steps - internal consultations happening now, key stakeholder consultations will take place in summer, corporate management team summer, will go to City Council in fall.

4. General Q & A

Monitoring and evaluation - some metrics and targets are tied to the GCAP, and other elements are included in the implementation plan.

Public consultations - may be considered over the course of the summer.

Weight of document - the Greenest City Strategy gives credibility to move forward. Support within the City is there, and public demand exists, although no formal funding will be attached to it.

Key stakeholders - include community garden coordinators, urban farmers, farmers market operators, pocket market operators, multicultural groups, and Neighbourhood Food Network coordinators.

5. Break-out Groups on Food System Topics for Discussion and Feedback

How can the City, VFPC and community achieve the goal? (5 breakout groups, one to discuss each goal)

6. Report Back

Two priorities for each goal were identified.

Goal 1: Asset Mapping - identify people, resources (incl. financial), available land (private and public). Best Management Practices for practitioners - sustainable production, interactions with partners.

Goal 2: Making Food Happen where residents already are - use existing spaces and resources, encourage translation, block parties, facilitating networking, improving access to assets. Get funding for neighbourhood food animators (links to green economy).

Goal 3: Programs - many programs exist for vulnerable populations, food should be embedded into these existing services. Asset mapping - food access perspective (incl. transportation, language access) and how they overlap with other factors (e.g. disease, obesity, car ownership). Policy - Green Waste collection for multifamily dwellings, pocket markets with clear regulations. Food procurement in schools.

Goal 4: Supply - how are jobs provided, what is being produced, and what is needed to get goods and services to market (e.g. land availability, local processing capacity). Demand - market for local food is increasing but can be a barrier, how can individuals, business and institutions be educated about that market.

Goal 5: Formal liaison between levels of government for communication and accountability. Evaluate and present support for innovative models of procurement.

James and Thien will take this feedback and incorporate it into actions. James will coordinate a date with Trish and Brent to gather feedback on the specific actions.

7. Upcoming VFPC Activities

Next meeting June 13 will look at work plan, and revisit working groups. Members encouraged to consider where they would like to put their energies. Email will be circulated with meeting dates until the end of 2012. Gathering for past and current FPC members suggested for August at Joanne's home.

Mary Clare Zak - is happy to hear feedback about the food strategy and thanked this and previous councils, noting that the City relies on FPC input. The budget previously allocated to the FPC has been cut, a difficult decision. The City is under pressure and has many budget constraints. Part of the rationale comes from the creation, with the Vancouver Foundation, of the Greenest City Funds, which the FPC is encouraged to apply to for project funding once its strategic planning is complete.

Applications open July 15, with funds released in the fall of 2012. Meeting costs (food and minutes) will still be covered by the City.

8. Motion to Adjourn

Motion by Zsuzsi, seconded by Maria, carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 8:12 pm.