



## **VANCOUVER FOOD POLICY COUNCIL**

### **MINUTES**

**July 28, 2022**

A meeting of the Vancouver Food Policy Council was held on Thursday, July 28, 2022, at 6:00 pm, via electronic means

**PRESENT:** Sarah Common (Meeting Chair)  
Miluska Bravo  
Leona Brown  
Emily Burkholder  
Katherine Cooper  
Clare Cullen  
Jyotika Dangwal  
Sharon Dong  
Ben Liegey  
Joey Liu  
Aditi Rudra  
Marc Schutzbank  
Carol White

**ABSENT:** Ivy Leong  
Maggie Mills  
Michelle Reining  
Anthony Sullivan (Leave of Absence)  
Kae Yee Tsai

**ALSO PRESENT:** Caitlyn Harrison, Planning Analyst, Board of Parks & Recreation  
Jason Hsieh, Social Planner  
Rachel Telling, Sustainability Specialist, Staff Liaison

**CITY CLERK'S OFFICE:** Brian Fukushima, Committee Clerk

### **WELCOME**

The Meeting Chair acknowledged we are on the unceded homelands of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh People, stating that we honour the land with our words, actions and lives. The Chair acknowledged the violence of the colonial state, and welcomed guests bringing their various perspectives with the intent of putting words into action.

### **Approval of Minutes**

MOVED by Sarah Common  
SECONDED by Carol White

THAT the Vancouver Food Policy Commission approve the Minutes from the meeting of Thursday, April 28, 2022, as circulated.

CARRIED

## **1. Liaison Updates**

Caitlyn Harrison provided updates on the following and responded to questions and comments:

- The Park Board is working to get the food system action plan adequately resourced;
- Log removal on city beaches; and
- Food framework update.

Jason Hsieh provided updates on the following and responded to questions and comments:

- 2022 Community Services and Other Social Grants;
- Sustainable food program; and
- The food systems section of the Vancouver Plan.

Rachel Telling provided updates on the following and responded to questions and comments:

- Development and implementation of the climate policy;
- Climate emergency action plan; and
- Greenest City Grant program.

## **2. Climate Change - learnings from our presentations and a call to action for city to engage provincially**

Krystine McInnes, CEO of Grown Here Farms provided a presentation and subsequently responded to questions and comments. The Council discussed potentially writing a motion of support, issues of the council's scope and ways to incorporate broader experiences.

## **3. Vantage Point Food Advocacy training presentation**

Mahjobeh Badakhsh, Mariana Borsuk-Gudz, and Karen Giesbrecht provided a presentation and subsequently responded to questions.

Joey Liu discussed the Food Justice Town Hall planning group and topics of food security.

MOVED by Marc Schutzbank

SECONDED by Joey Liu

THAT the Vancouver Food Policy Council collaborate with the Vancouver Neighborhood Food Network in order to put on an election event.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

## **4. Right to Food, discussion**

MOVED by Sarah Common

SECONDED by Leona Brown

WHEREAS

1. Connection to nature is important, building mental health and wellbeing for all, and generating understanding of the impact of our behaviours on the lands and waters of the places we live;
2. Access to land, to nature, is limited in the City of Vancouver, and disproportionately accessed along class/income and racial lines;
3. Deepening relationships with nature, and supporting access to land, builds interconnection, and awareness regarding what are healthy choices for the ecosystem we are a part of, the land and water which are life;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Vancouver Food Policy Council calls on the City of Vancouver to:

1. Prioritise and secure access to land in the City for organisations who are building inclusive garden spaces and urban farms - providing direct access to the land - especially in equity denied communities, and especially in Indigenous led projects;
2. Direct staff to assess how best to support and secure access to land in equity denied communities, that are currently facing insecurity of tenure, on private developer holdings, where Community Gardens are often established in short to medium term ways through Provincial Land Assessments, falling outside of current Parks Board support and outside of direct City of Vancouver support;
3. Advocate to the Province of British Columbia to maintain and further establish green spaces (through tax incentives, purchases, community amenity contributions, other policy strategies explored by staff) in the heart of the city where accessibility, inclusive and cross-cultural sharing, food as medicine and decolonising governance are being practiced; and to embed these spaces in approaches to Health and healing regarding: Mental Health and Wellness, Food Security, Indigenous Food Sovereignty, Right to Food. Spaces such as:
  - a. [Hastings Folk Garden](#), K'em'kem'elay, at 117 East Hastings
  - b. [Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood House Urban Farm](#), at 369 Hawks Avenue
  - c. [WATARI Counselling and Support Services Society](#), at 369 Hawks Avenue
  - d. [DUDE's Club](#), V6A Gardens at 369 Hawks Avenue;
4. Protect these existing spaces which offer access to land with equity denied populations, as a strategy towards Right to Food, ensuring that access to land is for all, and is not tied to income.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MOVED by Sarah Common  
SECONDED by Leona Brown

WHEREAS:

1. Glyphosate, the main chemical used in the spray of the understory, is toxic for bees, pollinators, birds, amphibians, mammals and all life. This spray not only removes important vegetation (food and habitat) but also persists in the environment and is toxic over the course of time;<sup>1, 2</sup>
2. The City of Vancouver banned the use of Glyphosate in 2006<sup>3</sup> as part of its Health Bylaws;
3. Currently, spraying of the forest with Glyphosate is happening in our Province on the lands of Stó:lō, St'át'imc, Nlaka'pamux, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh territories by BC Timber Sales to increase so called productivity - as well as spraying happening all across Vancouver Island, the Peace, around Prince George, and elsewhere, though many areas like the Kootenays and Hazelton and Fort St. James have banned spraying altogether;
4. Indigenous knowledge keepers, teachers, experts have warned that spraying the forest will contaminate waters, poison food and medicine, and do continued harm to all life, impeding Right to Food, including:
  - a. Angelina Hopkins Rose, St'át'imc Nation in a recent article in the Vancouver Sun underscored the lack of prior, free and informed consultation with the Indigenous peoples of the lands “ who rely on salmon, berries, and medicinal plants that could be negatively impacted by the potentially carcinogenic chemicals”;<sup>4</sup>
  - b. Leona Brown, Independent Indigenous Cultural Facilitator and Gitxsan and Nisga'a mother of three children, shares in a recent article via Vancouver Food Runners, the direct link between colonial violence, poverty, food insecurity, deforestation and the pollution of waterways: “Our foods are in the forests, in the mountains, in the rivers, in the oceans, and on the lands”;<sup>5</sup>
5. Forestry experts and researchers have demonstrated the direct link of eradicating “competitive” understory shrubs and plants and “non-market” trees to catastrophe including pine beetle infestation and subsequent forest fires, erosion, and flooding, and studies show<sup>6</sup> no benefit to “productivity” for industry:
  - a. Suzanne Simard, author of “Finding the Mother Tree” writes, speaking to the health resulting from intercropping and diverse understory, and the interconnection of life in the forest: “Grown intimately together, this forest had almost twice the productivity of the strands where we'd trenched between the species two decades earlier. This was opposite of the usual foresters' expectations”;<sup>7</sup>
6. Environmental experts at David Suzuki Foundation are making calls to hold National

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<sup>1</sup> [Glyphosate harms Honey Bees](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Glyphosate harms Bumble Bees](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Pesticide Free Lawns in City of Vancouver](#)

<sup>4</sup> <https://vancouversun.com/news/b-c-government-urged-not-to-spray-herbicides-over-fears-they-will-contaminate-indigenous-food-source>

<sup>5</sup> [FoodRunners Article](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Stop the Spray BC](#)

<sup>7</sup> “Finding the Mother Tree: Discovering the Wisdom of the Forest”, Suzanne Simard, p281

- and Provincial Canadian governments to implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), underscoring that “the impacts of the biodiversity and climate crises are most heavily borne by Indigenous and other racialized peoples”;<sup>8</sup>
7. In the Vancouver Plan, a “strong economy where people and nature thrive” and a goal to “Advance Reconciliation, equity and resilience initiatives through land use planning and development decisions” are centered; acknowledging that this city is built upon “the natural beauty surrounding our city – the mountains, rivers, wetlands and the ocean”;<sup>9</sup>
  8. Both the Province of British Columbia and the City of Vancouver have made commitments to Reconciliation and to implementing UNDRIP;<sup>10, 11</sup>
  9. The UN General Assembly declared a Right to Healthy Environment is a Human Right, July 28, 2022;<sup>12</sup>
  10. The Vancouver Economic Commission in October 2021 published a report entitled “A ‘Right to Food’ Framework for a Just Circular Economy of Food”<sup>13</sup> which states that “Governments have a responsibility to provide dignified access to healthy, culturally appropriate foods at all times for all people” and that the City of Vancouver “continue to advocate for provincial and federal governments to implement policies that enact the ‘right to food’”;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Vancouver Food Policy Council calls on the City of Vancouver to:

1. Sign the “Stop the Spray” petition<sup>14</sup> circulated by the Stop the Spray BC campaign;
2. Advocate to the Province of British Columbia to ensure appropriate length of time for consultation with Indigenous nations and peoples of the lands, building systems of land governance that respect Indigenous rights, title and law, and incorporate Canada’s commitment to implement UNDRIP;
3. Direct staff to explore how the City of Vancouver would move funding and support from a charitable model towards *Right to Food*, implementing interventions outlined in the Vancouver Economic Commission’s report “A ‘Right to Food’ Framework for a Just Circular Economy of Food” - reporting publicly on implementation.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

## ADJOURNMENT

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<sup>8</sup> [David Suzuki Foundation](#)

<sup>9</sup> [City of Vancouver](#)

<sup>10</sup> [City of Vancouver](#)

<sup>11</sup> [Province of British Columbia](#)

<sup>12</sup> [UN](#)

<sup>13</sup> [Vancouver Economic Commission](#)

<sup>14</sup> [Stop the Spray Petition](#)

MOVED by Sarah Common  
SECONDED by Marc Schutzbank

THAT this meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

**Next Meeting:**

DATE: Thursday, September 29, 2022  
TIME: 6:00 pm  
PLACE: WebEx Online

The Committee adjourned at 8:39 pm.

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