

Vancouver Food Policy Council Meeting
Tuesday, June 28th, 2005, 6:30-9:30 pm
Vancouver School Board, 1580 W. Broadway
Room 120

Present:

Council Members: *Arran Stephens, * Barb Seed, Carol Ranger (co-chair), Carole Christopher, Herb Barbolet, John Van Luven (co-chair), Karin Schreurs, Miriam Palacios, Shefali Raja, Spring Gillard, *Stephen Hall, *Susan Kurbis,

Liaisons: * VSB Trustee Andrea Reimer

Staff: Devorah Kahn, Mario Lee, Wendy Mendes

* denotes absence for a portion of the meeting

Regrets: Aron Bjornson, Brian Holl, Corinne Eisler, David Van Seters, Councilor Peter Ladner, VSB Trustee Adrienne Montani, PB Commissioner Eva Riccius

Absent: Heather Pritchard, Sue Moen, Graham Riches, Councilor Tim Louis

1. Introductions

1.1 Ten guests in attendance introduced themselves and their connections to the food system.

2. Review & Acceptance of the Agenda

2.1 Re-cap of previous FPC meeting: Much of the last meeting was in-camera. Carol and John met with City Staff and went over the issues that were discussed. Next step is to move towards the new agenda that was agreed upon at the last meeting. It is understood that these changes are a work in progress for the FPC. This new format will be reviewed at the end of each meeting.

2.2 Agenda accepted as written

3. Review & Acceptance of the minutes from May 24th

3.3 Minutes from May 24, 2005 adopted. Please note correction to the spelling of the name "Schreurs."

4. Reports for Information

A recommendation was made to reference the objectives of the FPC when they are being spoken to.

4.1 Urban Agriculture Initiatives:

4.1.1 *Grow A Row* (Devorah): Encourages people in the city to grow fruits and vegetables in their own gardens and to contribute some of this food to local food banks and Neighbourhood Houses. The purpose is to encourage urban agriculture and to enhance community development and civic responsibility.

4.1.2 *My Own Backyard aka MOBY* (Devorah): A community garden and children's playground at 11th and Commercial, funded by BC Transit as a community amenity. Due to bureaucratic hurdles, the garden is not yet up and running. Devorah will be managing this community garden to make sure that targets are being met. MOBY is a registered non-profit and the committee is made up of residents living in the community.

4.1.3 *City Hall Childcare Centre* (Devorah): The intention of this garden is to act as model for other daycares in the city. The garden is up and growing, and feedback has been very positive.

4.1.4 *Urban Agriculture Initiatives* (Wendy): A lot of urban agriculture in the city is disconnected...looking at opportunities to work with developers in early design phases before Official Development Plans are written. Looking at the possibility of an overarching urban agriculture policy for the city (e.g. green roofs, community gardens,

rooftop gardens, etc). City Staff are in the process of educating and informing other CoV departments of the role of urban agriculture. Presentations are being made to other departments in the CoV to create a dialogue and to find solutions to obstacles that currently exist for encouraging such initiatives.

- 4.1.5 *Beekeeping* (Mario): Council Report date is July 21, 2005. This is in response to the prohibition to have bees legally kept in the city. Encouraging Council to lift the ban on beekeeping, to create policy guidelines for best practices for beekeeping, and for further instructions from Council as how to put regulations and guidelines for beekeeping within City by-laws.
- 4.1.6 *Federal Department of Public Works* (Susan K.): Opportunity exists to use under-utilized land that is under federal jurisdiction as urban agriculture. More information to follow at a later meeting.

DISCUSSION: Herb B. requested that summaries of initiatives being put forward by Staff to City Council be presented to FPC members in advance of going to Council. Mario suggested that we could review possibilities to do this. For example, Council Report templates have areas where additional comments can be included. When appropriate, commentary from the FPC could be included in these sections of the report. Staff would determine what reports would be appropriate for the FPC to comment on. Further discussion of this item will be tabled to item 6.

4.2 *Food Security Initiatives:*

- 4.2.1 *Emergency Breakfast Program* (John V.): About a year ago the Salvation Army, the Vancouver Food Bank, and St. James Community Services extended the Emergency Breakfast program to set up sites outside of the downtown core, through \$189,000 offunding from The Vancouver Agreement (VA) and Western Diversification (WD). The goal was to prevent people from coming into the DTES if they otherwise would not go there. The food was made and prepared by the Salvation Army. As of July 31, 2005, the Vancouver Agreement and Western Diversification will no longer be funding the Emergecny Breakfast Program as their priorities have moved to economic development opportunities rather than emergency food distribution. At this time the Dugout will be the only emergency breakfast location available in the city in the morning. Approximately \$35,000 that was not used will be returned to the program.
- 4.2.2 *Food Assessment Research Project* (Herb B.): The research looks at the charitable food system within the larger context of the food system. Two versions of a report have been completed. A shorter version of the report will eventually be created; however, a review process is still needed for this report. FPC input would be appreciated. Feedback for this report will be informal. A copy of the report will be circulated to the FPC. Susan K. recommended that the report also be available online, and then readers could update the information on an annual basis. Mario suggested that the terms of reference of the FPC could be reviewed...it is not clear in the current terms of reference how much research activities the FPC should engage in...this could help the FPC to access future funding from the CoV.

4.3 *Public Outreach:*

- 4.3.1 *UBC Farm Aboriginal Community Kitchen Garden* (Devorah): A large contingent of aboriginal people have come together from the Downtown Eastside to work on this project.
- 4.3.2 *World Urban Forum (WUF & IRDC)* (Wendy): IDRC is an Ottawa-based NGO that has been working on urban agriculture initiatives. A meeting was held to talk about urban agriculture sessions that will be held at the WUF (June 2006). An urban agriculture tour will be created as well as a presentation. This tour will take place as close to the downtown core as possible. Susan K. can email a draft of the tour to those FPC members

that are interested. There may also be options for self-guided tours. FPC should decide by the end of July how they would like to contribute to these sessions. Contact Wendy if the FPC is interested in submitting recommendations for these sessions.

DISCUSSION: Herb B. suggested that the FPC could be presented as part of the urban agriculture sessions. Devorah suggested that local food products could be show-cased at the WUF for the urban agriculture sessions. Karin S. & Spring G. expressed interest in pursuing this idea.

4.4 City Hall Liaisons:

- 4.4.1. *FP Reports to City Council (Wendy):* The Staff progress report will go to Council on July 21, 2005. The report is very general and focuses on the work of the FP Staff. Devorah stated that a separate VFPC report is booked to be presented to Council on October 20, 2005. The draft of this report would be sent out for the September 27, 2005 FPC meeting for review and that it could be ready for submission by October 4, 2005.
- 4.4.2. *Office of Sustainability partnership (Wendy):* A working relationship was created between the FP Staff and the Office of Sustainability. There are many projects that the two departments could collaborate on in the future. Devorah - the OoS is still determining how they want to set up a task force on sustainability.
- 4.4.3. *Internal Staff Presentations (Wendy):* People have been very supportive within the CoV. Some of these presentations included audiences within Social Planning, CityPlan, Association of Landscape Architects, and informal meetings with colleagues in Engineering Services. Future presentations include the Housing Centre, the Office of Cultural Affairs, and the Office of Sustainability. These presentations have been well received. Recommendation that this presentation be shared with the FPC.

5. Follow-up of Items Requiring Action

5.1 VFPC Forum debriefing:

The VFPC was a huge success. Approx. 130-150 attendees; 8 presentations; 15 display tables. Based on the evaluation forms 30 out of 34 people found it very informative. Networking, presentations, and displays were the top three items of the Forum. Some people asked to hear about the work of the FPC, and others recommended shorter presentations and more of them. Every request to present was accepted.

5.2 Reports from 4 priority area sub-committees:

- 5.2.1. *Institutional Food Purchasing Policy (Miriam P.):* the committee did not meet during June but there was email communication. A report has been put together to help guide the work of the committee. At present, the committee is organizing and summarizing the report.
- 5.2.2. *Access To Groceries (Spring G.):* the committee has halted their current research in order to review the work of the Food Assessment Research. Once the report is available, they will re-group and determine how to proceed.
- 5.2.3. *Food Charter (Carole C.):* the committee has been working on the Food Charter and refining it. The text has been re-worked to be more concise and effective. Working on creating a one-page document. Needs to be accessible and well organized to identify the problem that the process is attempting to address.
- 5.2.4. *Food Waste Systems (Susan K):* need to engage Staff to assist their work. Solid waste management - would like FP Staff to liaise with the Solid Waste Management committee at the CoV. Want to talk to local food processors to hold meetings on solid waste production. Asking CoV Staff to attend FPC sub-committee meetings to provide input on the work that the committees are doing.

6. New Business & Inquiries

6.1 Review & evaluation of evening's agenda process

Herb B.: pleased with the new agenda format. Recommends that the agenda need not focus on events that have happened in the past but rather that higher priority be given to reports going to Council or policies being considered...highest priority would be items that are taking place in a month or greater from the date of the meeting, so that the FPC can prepare to address these items.

John V.: the intent is that this section will eventually focus on more strategic actions, as the FPC becomes familiar with this new format.

Miriam P: requested that objectives of the FPC are being addressed by the items in the agenda.

John V: suggested utilizing section 4 on the agenda for strategic items that relate to the goals and objectives of the FPC.

Andrea R. illustrated how this agenda format is utilized by the Vancouver School Board and may be used by the VFPC (as below):

	Action By Staff or FPC	Report needed	Public Consultation	FPC Action Needed	City Council Decision Needed
August					
September					
October					
November					
December					

DISCUSSION: Herb B. requested that summaries of initiatives being put forward by Staff to City Council be presented to FPC members in advance of going to Council. Mario suggested that we could review possibilities to do this. For example, Council Report templates have areas where additional comments can be included.

6.2 VFPC input into Staff reports.

Mario suggested that the VFPC revisit its Terms of Reference to add making recommendations to Council reports, when appropriate. This suggestion could be included in the VFPC annual report scheduled for the Fall. This would give the VFPC a formal mandate to comment when a food-related topic is being considered by City Council. FP Staff could circulate Council reports with food-related topics to the FPC for comments.

7. Meeting adjourned at 9:25pm