

Vancouver Food Policy Council Meeting

Tuesday, March 8, 2005

Present:

Council Members: Aron Bjornson, Arran Stephens, Barb Seed, Brian Holl, Carol Ranger, Carole Christopher, Corinne Eisler, Herb Barbolet, Karin Schruers, Miriam Palacios, Spring Gillard, Stephen Hall, Sue Moen

Liaisons: Councilor Tim Louis

Staff: Devorah Kahn, Shannon Bradley, Mario Lee

Regrets: Susan Kurbis, Graham Riches, David Van Seters, Heather Pritchard, John Bishop, John Van Luven, Trustees Andrea Reimer & Adrienne Montani, Commissioner Eva Riccius, Shefali Raja

Absent: Councilor Peter Ladner

1. Introductions

2. Review & acceptance of the agenda

2.1 Revised agenda - 5.3.3 changed and Spring Gillard will be presenting "Access to Groceries".

2.2 Agenda accepted with changes as noted

3. Review & acceptance of the minutes from February 8

3.1 Question regarding guests who attend FPC meetings and whether or not they should be on the agenda. Sign-in for guests mentioned as a possible option.

3.2 No name was attached to the ACTION in 5. Devorah stated that 5.1 in tonight's agenda will address this action.

3.3 No name was attached to the ACTION in 6. Devorah stated that staff will be responsible for that.

3.4 Note 1: There were misspelled names in the minutes.

3.5 Minutes accepted as written with changes as noted.

4. Business Arising:

4.1 *Meeting date change update* - Devorah

FPC meeting date and location has been changed. Meetings will take place on the fourth Tuesday of the month starting in April. The meeting place from April through October will be at the Vancouver School Board in Room 120. Devorah will send details of meeting time and place. In November, the meetings will resume in the Strathcona Room at City Hall.

4.2 *E-mail protocol review*

The FPC was reminded of the protocol that was previously developed. If any information needs to be sent out, it should first be sent to Devorah and she will send information via email to the FPC. She will wait until there is sufficient information and then send out bulk emails to the FPC. If information is not included right away, it may be moved until the next mailing, depending on the amount of information to be sent out at one time. If there are no simple links that can be attached to emails, she may send it as an attachment. The FPC agreed that the more simplified the information, the better (e.g. links are fine and titles and date should be included in the email)

5. Old Business & Reports:

5.1 *Review sub-committee written summaries and goals*

FPC sub-committees did not complete these written summaries and goals due to time constraints and failing to remember to complete them. Item tabled until next meeting.

DECISION: Deadline for emailing these summaries and goals to Devorah will be April 12th. These summaries will be available at next meeting for group review.

5.2 *Staff Reports:*

5.2.1 *Food Policy Coordinator*- Devorah described her current work:

- Continues to work with the Food Bank on the Plant-A-Row for the Hungry program;
- Met with UBC Farm staff who mentioned that they would like to have a First Nations garden;
- "My Own Backyard" gardening project has been delayed due to bureaucratic reasons regarding who will own the land. Very little has happened, but hopefully will be resolved soon;
- Meeting with community groups and discussing how the FPC can help them move forward and advocate for community gardens;
- Met with members of the "Fruit Tree Project" and the Mount Pleasant "Urban Diggers";
- Regularly attending "Urban Food Network" meetings. New faces and projects. Mandate of the group is to network. Heather Pritchard, Karin Schreurs and Spring Gillard have been attending and other members of the Council are welcome to attend. Meetings are on the last Monday of the month at 4:30 and Raven shill Community Centre (next meeting - March 28);
- Scoping out urban agriculture programs and projects;
- Working closely with Shannon (Food Systems Planner) on various projects;
- Continuing to manage student intern;
- Spends approximately 40% of time tending to the VFPC.

5.2.2 *Food Policy Planner - Shannon B. described her current work:*

- Continuing similar work that was mentioned at last meeting;
- Presentations to the Annual General Meeting of BC Landscape Architects. Presented background on food policy and specifically about landscape architecture and how more food spaces can be provided within the city. Discussed the role that landscape architects can play in this endeavor;
- Making connections with those involved in SE False Creek - A food systems plan is important in their Official Development Plan.
- Meeting on bee-keeping in the City of Vancouver. Currently it is not permitted in the City bylaw. 25 bee-keepers are currently registered with the City.
- Food access in the city - Mapping of groceries stores and transportation routes to these locations, and seeing where changes and improvements need to be made to ensure access to food.
- Presented to technical team from East Fraserlands (developers, engineers, etc) The site is located in Burnaby and is currently a wooded brownfield site. A direct web link to the project is available on the CofV website. - Presentation included food systems planning and edible landscapes. Provided information and responded to questions. Has been asked to be part of technical team and the charette process.

Discussion around making links between the work of the FP Staff and the FPC followed:

DISCUSSION: Barb S. suggested that at the next meeting there should be a 30min. discussion about how to make these links between the FP staff and the Council sub-committees - Objectives and goals should be mapped out in a more intentional manner. It was mentioned that as the objectives and goals are mapped out, it will all come together.

ACTION: Devorah will give notice of her and Shannon's public speaking engagements to allow FPC members to attend, given that these engagements are open to the public.

5.3 Sub-Committee Reports:

5.3.1 - 5 min. "check-in" from sub-committees not presenting

Purpose it to "check-in" how things are working within the committee, not what kind of work is being done. Mini-report be given even if the sub-committee presented a loner report at a previous meeting.

Institutional Food Purchasing Policies - no meetings since previous presentation, but members are communicating via email, and the work appears to be advancing. Work and activity is being supported by volunteers.

Food Purchasing Polices - Devorah suggested that since the Ethical Food Purchasing Policy has been passed, several purchasing staff are sensitive about the process, as they were not involved to their liking. Devorah suggested that FPC invite high-level staff involved in purchasing to attend a FPC meeting to do a presentation about purchasing processes in the CoV. This would help policies to be more easily accepted by staff. The purpose is to involve the staff in the decisions that are made.

ACTION: Issue was tabled and will be discussed at the next IFPP meeting.

Food Waste - The committee is active and working on what they would like volunteers to do. Actions have been identified and tasks have been assigned to committee members. Meeting was productive and they are in the process of reporting back to one another.

5.3.2 - Food Charter

Corrine E. - Handouts circulated. Provided an overview of Food Charters and the context of Food Charters as summarized from an article by Kenton Lobe. Food Charters are becoming a vehicle to engage citizens and communities to develop good food policies.

Carol C. - Handouts circulated. Examined six Food Charters from around Canada - how they are organized, and the key elements from each of the charters. Food security and food as a human right is common in all of the documents. Summarized her conversation with Kathleen Gibson from the Capital Regional District in Victoria BC about their approach to develop a Food Charter. Kathleen suggested that the committee should move forward, and it is not necessary to do additional grassroots work.

Barb - Overview of points from the article by Kenton Lobe - It is important to have community groups working on food charter recommendations. The Food Charter group raised questions for discussion with FPC regarding a Food Charter development process, timelines, funding, staff time, and consultants. Group will reconvene and then request presentation time for a later meeting.

(Hand-outs are attached as an Appendix to the minutes)

5.3.3 Increasing access to groceries - Spring Gillard

Spring G. - Committee has met 2-3 times in addition to phone meetings. They have 4 volunteers working with them including a UBC Master's student whose thesis is focusing on food policy. Still trying to define what "access to groceries" means. Would appreciate input from FPC. Interested in accessing demographic studies done in the Social Planning Department so that they may be able to determine target groups - Hoping to attach identifiable issues to target groups. Completing a literature review in Vancouver and other cities around the world on the issue. Working with other groups and sharing information. Advising Council as to where gaps exist in access to food in the city and making policy recommendations to close those gaps. Raised questions regarding how to narrow the parameters (selecting a target group).

Karen S. - Looked at covenants and found that the covenant for the Kingsway & Knight Safeway project has been removed and it cannot easily be challenged. Discussion followed regarding covenants and future research on their impact on providing access to groceries. Barb S. mentioned that "groceries" could refer to access to fruits and vegetables. Devorah mentioned that when a grocery store leaves an area, it does not necessarily negatively impact access to groceries, as other stores may step in to fill the gap. This is why the mapping of grocery stores is important. Corrine E. suggested making a linkage between promoting BC produce, providing access to food, and encouraging local agriculture and produce. Corrine E. mentioned the idea of a subsidized local market as was done in Brazil.

6. New Business:

6.1 Creating a strategy for receiving outside presentations

Devorah mentioned that she has been approached by community organizations and graduate students who would like to present to the FPC.

SUGGESTIONS: To create a process to receive outside presentations. It was suggested that presentations take place at the Urban Food Network where some FPC members will be in attendance. It was also suggested that presentations be made in a more public setting where FPC members and the public can attend (FPC would have to make a commitment to support and attend these presentations). Discussion followed on how often to have the meetings and how many presentations per meeting.

Devorah suggested that she would take on the responsibility for coordinating and organizing these presentations.

DECISION: Tentative date for initial presentations would be in mid-June.

6.2 Strategies for including former FP Task Force members

SUGGESTION: Continue to respond to those members who are interested and then invite them to an FPC anniversary gathering. It was suggested that a poster could be developed for this gathering. Arran S. offered the use of Nature's Path graphic services (Thank you Arran).

6.3 Last minute additions to the agenda

Devorah will send information regarding the time and place of the design exhibition for the Arbutus Corridor.

Meeting adjourned at 9:27pm