

Vancouver Food Policy Council Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, May 12, 2010, 6:00-8:30pm
Strathcona room, City Hall

Chairs: Joanne Bays and Brent Mansfield

Council Members: Doug Aason, Herb Barbolet, Erika del Carmen Fuchs, Carole Christopher, Trish Kelly, Tara McDonald, Ross Moster, Carla Shore, Yona Sipos, Helen Spiegelman, Kim Sutherland, David Tracey,

Liaison: Wendy Mendes (Social Development, City of Vancouver)

Regrets: Aaron Jasper (VPB), Jane Bouey (VSB), Jeff Nield, Joyce Rock, Janine de la Salle, Mary Clare Zak (UASC/Social Development) Daryl Arnold, Maria Burglehaus, Cale Price, T'Uy'Tanat-Cease Wyss Heather Deal (City Council)

Agenda Items:

1. Opening Round -
 - Doug - Nature's Path will put out a Request for Ideas for community gardens and award two 10k grants. Doug will distribute info.
 - Herb - met with Pemberton Squamish Lillooet Regional District Resilience Committee (only one in Canada), who wanted to know how food fits in. They have an Agriculture Awareness Plan and good organization. [Herb to add contact]
 - Joanne - is the new community nutritionist for Sea to Sky Corridor, Vancouver Coastal Health
 - Carole - very much appreciated dinner and thanks everyone.
 - David - Intercultural Community Garden in which all will be trained in anti-diversity, just signed joint agreement with Providence Health Care to create garden on roof of St. Paul's Hospital.
 - Erika - just transplanted Zapatista corn seeds into garden with three sisters.
 - Trish - Vancouver now has Fair Trade status, thanks in part to VFPC support. Lots of media attention.
 - Carla - created a garden and her office is now composting. Mary Clare Zak spoke at the Board of Trade Sustainability Committee. There was good discussion and resulted in a presentation planned for other influential committees.
 - Ross- First garden workshop with interpreter for Afghani women was a success. Backyard Chicken workshops- 7 scheduled in June.
 - Wendy - Underused Nanaimo Skytrain land has been offered for urban agriculture, plan is for community orchard, may be in this fall.
 - Tara - has sought security for FMs for past 2 years, now Sadhu Johnson (Deputy City Manager) has offered support to create more permanence.
 - Vicky - excited about working with SPEC's School Gardens project.
 - Yona - Chicken Soup Garden at synagogue has introduced full program around garden.
 - Kim - appreciated food basket that she won. New interest in Ministry about food and food security, but much misinformation exists (ex. Dairy Farm film about American situation). Colleague will come up with economic information to clarify situation of farmers. Need more local information. Food secure Vancouver work has been useful in her work.
 - Helen - made fresh sorrel soup at the Dunbar Spring Festival and gave out pumpkin seeds for fall cooking.
2. Motion to accept agenda and April minutes, and requests for leave.
Moved by Helen, seconded by Yona, carried unanimously. Members are reminded of the importance of formally requesting leave for meetings. (Action Joanne to send follow up note to members)
3. Liaison Update(s)
 - Wendy Mendes - circulated written update [Action Wendy to forward electronic copy].
 - 1a. \$100k has been approved by council, \$85k to existing food networks (on June 22, the UASC will recommend allocation of funds). The remaining \$15k will be dedicated to the Greenest City Neighbourhood Small Grants.

1b. \$60k from Canon Canada to begin UA Fund; City will be developing terms of use. Standards around receiving corporate grants is being developed, input is welcome.

2a. Plans are in early stages but moving quickly. Project will connect with Fruit Tree project and UBC farm.

2b. Investment Ag- Lol submitted, IA has suggested changes to proposal. An application will likely be submitted in September.

2c. Food cart issue is complex, has met with stakeholders to develop short and long term strategies for bylaw changes. Short term -more options will be available at special events (self-enclosed units like those at Farmers Markets). Messaging is around public vitality.

2d. GCAT: both internal and external working groups on each of 10 issues have been formed to develop plan. VFPC could be external working group for 'Food'. Members encouraged to review the Action Plan.

2e. Farmers Market policies led by Planning Dept.

2f. Beekeeping - Will look at higher density areas when reviewing and updating guidelines. Want to encourage safe and responsible practices.

3a. Food Scraps program - Helen and Wendy will liaise.

3b. Oppenheimer Park - Park Board has been involved, funds have been provided, and the community has been consulted.

3c. Wendy will coordinate and ensure that groups are connected with networks.

Goal is to have food network in all neighbourhoods in the city, and see where the gaps are in order to determine what neighbourhood-level food security looks like.

Wendy clarified that her position will continue part-time until the end of November.

Carole noted that there is conflicting information about planting fruit trees on boulevards. The bylaw could be changed to reflect reality.

Heather Deal's update (read by Joanne)

In brief, the Economic Development Strategy is scheduled to come to Council in the fall. I have been assured that there is a food component but don't have any details at this point and have heard that there are some questions about the scale of impact of local food initiatives on the economic future of the city (at a high/large scale).

RE food carts, Wendy is working diligently on this. I don't have an update this week but the media interest in this issue is amazing - there is a media request almost daily. I will let you know as soon as I have a date for that report to come to Council.

We dealt with an issue of front yard gardens. Our staff understand that we want to encourage gardening everywhere. The folks with that garden were asked to tidy it up and they did so. I understand that the landlord had further issues.

MaryClare and I spoke about ensuring that there are good communication channels between the Urban Ag committee and the VFPC.

Updates from other liaisons

Joanne requests liaison to submit a written brief to inform members of what has been happening.

Absences

For liaisons that have difficulty attending FPC meetings, it was suggested that replacements be found. **ACTION:** Joanne to follow up with liaisons.

4. Review and Finalize VFPC's New Action Plan Framework
Joanne followed up with leads of "working groups" to update the action plan presented at the March meeting.

After some discussion on the role and function of the Working Groups, it was clarified that each group will work on focus areas that contribute to the overall objectives. It is expected and desired that there will be some overlap of focus areas as we are working towards the same vision and objectives. Groups are encouraged to work closely together, and to keep the larger objectives in mind when working on their focus. This structure may be revisited at a future strategic planning session.

It was generally agreed that Communications is a priority and that it has not been fully integrated into the work of the VFPC and it is not clear in the current action plan.

Issues such as food carts and backyard chickens are not currently visible in the action plan but would fall under Advisory Functions (an overarching role), and is included in objectives. Other opportunities can be acted on as they arise, but need to move forward. Need to keep larger picture in mind when working on focus.

It was decided that each year, funds for 'core operations' (approx. \$1200 including meeting expenses) and a small contingency fund (\$300-\$400) be set aside at the beginning of the fiscal year.

The following budget was presented for a motion:

Food Event - January	\$1000	spent
Meeting expenses	\$1200	Food, minutes, etc.
Contingency fund	\$400	
Food Strategy/Urban Agriculture Strategy	\$2600	Leverage for more funds ***may be reallocated if needed***
Food Waste	\$0	
FEEDAP	\$100	Printing/Dissemination of materials
Food Secure Study	\$3000	\$2k for communications in communications committee
Network of Networks	\$1200	\$ 400 for facilitation of the June 2010 Network of Neighbourhood Food Networks meeting, plus \$800 to support convening 2-3 meetings to seed new Neighbourhood Food Networks.
Communications	\$5500	FSV study communications plan and broader plan - \$2000 Maintain blog and Twitter feed - \$1500 Media relations - \$1000 Community relations - \$1000 (brochures, backgrounders, fact sheets)
TOTAL	\$15,000	

It was clarified that the funds proposed for the Urban Agriculture group will be used for leveraging funds from other partners (CoV, VSB, VCH) and shows commitment to the issue. City Councillors encourage the use of funds to be leveraged, as the Food Secure Study did. From the UA proposal, there is now interest from the Economic Development Committee to include food system issues in its strategy.

Communications - A consultant is needed for the FSV and overall plan. Trish will be working with Barbara for the FSV study in the coming month, and will help look for a consultant. Yona will draft a posting seeking student help with the blog, etc.

MOTION: To approve the budget as presented, with the understanding that \$2600 may be reallocated from Urban Agriculture if needed. Moved by Carla, seconded by Helen, carried unanimously.

10. Motion to Adjourn
Moved by Carole, seconded by Tara, carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm