

Vancouver Food Policy Council
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, November 13, 2013
6:00-8:30pm
Town Hall Room, City Hall



Chairs: Brent Mansfield and Zsuzsi Fodor

Council Members: Joanne Bays, Robyn Carlson, Claudia Chan, Kimberly Hodgson, Trish Kelly, Ilana Labow, Peter Ladner, Emme Lee, Pat McCarthy, Tara Moreau, Ross Moster, Helen Spiegelman, Shelby Tay, Chris Thoreau, David Wilson

Liaisons: James O'Neill (Social Planning, City of Vancouver), Theresa Duynstee (MetroVan), Aaron Jasper (Park Board)

Regrets: Jason Apple, Maria Burplehaus, Nicholas Scapillati, Heather Deal (City Council), Rob Wynen (Vancouver School Board)

Agenda Items:

1. Opening Round
Members introduced themselves. Twenty-two guests were present.
2. Motion to Accept Agenda and previous minutes
Moved by Trish, seconded by Tara, carried unanimously.
3. Staff Update - James O'Neill
 - Grant season - an overwhelming number of applications were received for the new stream of Sustainable Food System grants (under Community Service Grants). They are under review, with interviews and adjudication happening in December and results expected in February. There are also Social Innovation projects which are able to support some food projects related to community food markets.
 - Urban farming - while the policy revision has been slightly delayed, the City is supportive of urban farming and will participate in the upcoming Urban Farming Forum. The delay is due to difficulties meeting with senior management, who have many competing priorities.
 - Expressions of Interest for Community Gardens - about a dozen applications were received, of which about half will move forward to next stage. It was noted that most are proposed on Park land, and Social Policy is working with Engineering to support them.
 - Local procurement - a second meeting of large institutions (UBC, Hospitals, municipalities, etc.) was convened to reach agreement on definitions of 'local' and 'sustainable', and emphasize the importance of signing contracts that use appropriate language. Joanne noted the positive energy generated at the first meeting. The idea of purchasing from a food hub was also suggested.
 - Food Strategy - enabled sustained and normalized food system funding, and allows for the local, sustainable purchasing discussion to continue.
4. Updates and Discussion
 - a. Working Group Budget Proposals
City is able to provide funding to support: FEDAP to move forward work plan, Food Waste working group - evolving donor guidelines and recovery, and Indigenous food-related discussions.
 - b. Membership Update
Paul Taylor's spot (Access) has been vacated. Updates on filling the position will come by email.
 - c. Council of Councils
Members are encouraged to attend but is optional. It is a good opportunity to hear from other working groups; FPC will not have presentation.

- d. Co-chair
Brent will have co-chaired for four years come January. Terms will be ending and one year of transition is beneficial. Kim had expressed interest but is since too limited. Tara Moreau has put her name forward. If others are interested, submit names to Brent and decisions will be made within one week by email. There is no process in the terms of reference. Brent will follow up with those who have stepped forward. Members were reminded there is no meeting in December.
5. Metro Van Agricultural Impact Assessment: Darrell Zbeetnoff
Darrell is an agricultural consultant and has done agriculture plans for municipalities. In order to talk about local community food, agricultural land and the ability to grow crops needs to be discussed, as critical areas of farmland are being lost. Metro Vancouver would like Agriculture Impact Assessments (AIA) and consults with local stakeholders. Many questions remain - What criteria would trigger an AIA? Which impacts are most significant? Should AIA be different for different types of development or impacts? What would process look like? Should Vancouver be consulted with for development of the guidelines? Who would use it? Who would pay? There are 15 categories of concern listed. Tools are being developed for planners to be used when assessing projects. There is currently no structure, with limited examples of AIAs in Canada.
6. Intercultural Food Literacy: Hua Foundation - Claudia and Kevin
The foundation would like to launch a food security program in the spring to address a gap in action. The group evolved from Shark Truth, an organization that encouraged ethnic Chinese to pledge to not serve shark fin soup at weddings. This was done in a culturally-sensitive way that created a basis of education and understanding to allow people to make positive decisions around sustainability and food. The new parent organization is Hau Foundation, which bring together cultural heritage and environmental action for culturally appropriate solutions. The foundation is now in the process of fundraising and designing and Asian produce chart (with a database of traditional ingredients). The goal is to create an iPhone app, complete a market feasibility survey, explore business solutions (e.g. labeling), conduct community intergenerational cooking workshops, and localize food (working with local farmers to develop an Asian CSA for 2014). They have a small staff working with a small group of advisors, and are seeking feedback on their ambitions and approach.

Specifically, they would like endorsement through a letter of support, and are looking for information on market access points to consumer, common shortfalls and challenges, how to scale up impact, long and short term infrastructure needed as program expands, as well as if there is support (financial or otherwise) for this kind of work.

Discussion and suggestions:

- Contact Thien Phan at CoV regarding her work on Asian food supply chain
- Explore alternate models to CSAs (e.g. corner stores)
- Andrea Carlson has a CSA (multiple farms) with some Asian produce on Union Street. Suggestion to work with various farms (e.g. buyer's club)
- Partner with ethnic Chinese gardeners in the city using backyards
- Use food to connect to culture - connect to intergenerational engagement
- Short term desire is to work with Chinese community, but will not exclude anyone and will support cross cultural dialogue (both ways) to work with other communities that want similar things
- Explore educating without words so any language can understand
- There could be opportunity to cross-educate growers who are not organic
- Focus on cultural discussion as part of food systems definition
- Include element of food waste
- Connect with NFNs and Christian Food Security group at churches
- Could be education piece for new immigrants on choices
- Engage with all aspects of the food system, not just producers and distributors
- Build on what exists to reduce redundancy

- Engage with Chinatown Business Improvement Association
- Producers/distributors can be engaged on labeling (e.g. China uses colour scheme for different produce)
- Doris volunteered to champion working with the foundation
- City is pleased that this gap has been identified and that outreach is happening
- Look at app by Foodtree, although current status is unknown
- Fresh Roots is speaking with different community groups and centers
- Community asset food mapping - use established communities as entry point
- Explore Afri-can basket in Toronto as a model
- Engage both rural and backyard gardeners, and acknowledge history of Chinese market gardens. How does it get scaled up to the local economy and how does it connect to an understanding of food insecurity in ethnic Chinese communities?
- There is no process regarding providing letters of support, so FPC will investigate and advise on this issue
- Vancouver Farmers Markets are aware the markets skew white, have done efforts in Chinatown and Main Street market to encourage growers to grow Asian greens. Offered support for connecting with farmers
- Living Oceans Society does labeling for sustainable seafood, has translated material and would like to get more involved in Chinese community in hopes of creating a community supported fishery
- Think of strategic relationships, knowing scope of work and networks that FPC members are involved in
- As farmers markets are bringing more ethnic produce into markets, consider a guide to farmers markets if CSA project is too big
- Investment Agriculture Foundation has funding if there are matching funding and partners

7. Motion to adjourn meeting

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm