

Vancouver Food Policy Council
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, February 19, 2014
6:00-8:30pm
Town Hall Room, City Hall



Chairs: Tara Moreau and Zsuzsi Fodor

Council Members: Anna Cavouras, Trish Kelly, Kimberly Hodgson, Pat McCarthy, Ross Moster, Nicholas Scapillati, Helen Spiegelman, Chris Thoreau

Liaisons: James O'Neill (Social Planning, City of Vancouver)

Regrets: Jason Apple, Joanne Bays, Robyn Carlson, Ilana Labow, Peter Ladner, Emme Lee, Brent Mansfield, David Wilson, Heather Deal (City Council), Theresa Duinty (MetroVan), Aaron Jasper (Park Board), Rob Wynen (Vancouver School Board)

Agenda Items:

1. Opening Round

Members introduced themselves, and noted why they joined the council and what they hope the council will achieve in the next year. Fifteen guests were present.

a) Changes in membership

Maria Burglehaus has stepped down from the council, as her position at VCH has been cut.

2. Motion to Accept Agenda and Previous Minutes

Moved by Trish, seconded by Chris, carried unanimously.

3. Staff Update - James O'Neill

a) CoV [Food Strategy](#) - ([presentation available online](#)). Strategy was approved one year ago (Jan 2013) with the goal of aligning and integrating disparate food policies. It has since received much positive attention due to its ability to galvanize and leverage resources by providing goals and actions, distributed across many departments (engineering, waste, planning, sustainability, parks, etc.). James gave an overview of the five key goals - 1) support food friendly neighbourhoods, 2) empower residents to take action, 3) increase access to health, affordable, culturally diverse food, 4) make food a centrepiece of Vancouver's green economy, and 5) advocate for a just and sustainable food system with partners and all levels of government. Seventy-one key actions resulted, spread across the food system.

Achievements - actions were analysed as 'complete', 'in progress', 'ongoing' (no end date), or 'pending' (have not yet started). The results show that there are 11 complete, 19 on-going, 26 in progress, and 15 pending actions. Highlights were presented with the following results - 452 new garden plots, 3 new farmers markets, financially supported 3 new community food markets, financial support to food system projects through new granting stream (\$200k of \$5 million Community service grants - per year), supported Vancouver Incubator Kitchen, piloted program at beach concession stands to include more local food, Sustainable Large Development Policy (at least 5000²ft floor space) to require food systems plan and assets, and discussing emerging urban farming policy directions.

Discussion

- Garden plots that are lost are also recorded on a master file.
- It was confirmed that the FPC can apply for the Sustainable Food System Grants in the fall. Each grant is approximately \$10k-\$20k.
- It was suggested that the grant recipients present their ideas at future meeting.
- Regarding large developments, a CoV employee works with developers to ensure they have capacity to maintain food assets.
- There are currently two applications for the SLDP with new requirements. Policy is applied at the rezoning stage, not at the visioning stage.
- Pending items are mostly items that staff has not yet had opportunity to address. The FPC can help advance system-wide goals (advocate for ALR preservation, support provincial government to anti-poverty program linking food, health and income, facilitate transition from charitable food

system to one based in dignity) through advocacy. The Food waste working group can help the help City navigate the food waste issue. While it has not been done in the past, the City can provide a list of issues of concern to the City where FPC input would be valuable.

- City staff will work with non-English speakers in Vancouver and will begin looking at community gardens and immigrant serving agencies for specific pieces related to non-English speaking residents and food justice. NFNs also liaise with other underrepresented groups.
- Food security in the event of a natural disaster is not included in the food strategy and there has not been a dialogue with the City's Emergency Preparedness group. This is a gap.
- The goal is that all actions in the food strategy are complete by 2020.

Goals for 2014 - increase community garden plots while improving existing ones (with infrastructure upgrades) and increasing ethno-cultural representation. Continue with urban farming policy, support local food infrastructure, continue to support food related organizations and projects through sustainable food system grants, scope healthy corner stores program, and continue to advance opportunities to increase percentage of local and sustainable food purchased by city.

4. Updates and Discussion

a) January meeting debrief and discussion

There has been a response in the community about a comment by a panellist that made some feel uncomfortable and unsafe and was labelled racist. The Chairs have responded online and have promised a dialogue this meeting, as some feel they did not respond as they should have.

There has been an assumption that everyone attending FPC meetings embraces social justice, but as the FPC aims to increase participation from diverse actors, that assumption cannot be made. Everyone is responsible for making the space safe and all have a right and responsibility to ensure that.

After much discussion, it was decided to create a preamble that is said before each meeting (and post online) which would make people more comfortable stepping forward in the meetings, and can acknowledge the First Nations. The preamble could be included in invitations sent to speakers.

Other suggestions included:

- Anti-oppression and/or de-escalation training.
- Using a signal to alert the chairs a disrespectful comment was made.
- Speak to other councils to look for best practices.
- Respond in the moment with key phrases, and then move on.
- Changing meeting venue, to include a different sector of the public. It was noted that some of the public may be lost if unaware of changes in venue. Venue could be dependent on meeting theme.

The Chairs were thanked for speaking openly and for their handling of the situation.

b) VFPC Terms of Reference

Mandate and Terms of reference were reviewed.

Actions available to us - public meetings, part of public

Policy - reports to council

Tools - proclamations

Research - Food secure Vancouver - most is out of date and could be updated.

Joining coalitions, letters of support

c) Working group updates

- Communications and engagement - this important committee needs a new Chair.
- FEDAP- explores the question 'how do we move away from fossil fuels in the food system?' The group is in its third year and works collaboratively with Village Vancouver and the Museum of Vancouver. Past events include 'From here to there', and the closing of the 2013 Sustenance Festival. New themes include permaculture and brown bag sessions targeting specific organizations to talk about climate change and how it affects the food system. They are also working with UBC Geog 419 and an environmental science group. Looking to 2040, what would a food-resilient Vancouver look like? The group would like to do more research around this, and is always looking for more members.

- Policy landscapes - Kim - handout distributed. This group provides policy support to the FPC and the City to achieve a just and sustainable food system, identifying policy opportunities and barriers to achieving FPC goals. In the past year, they have teamed up with the food waste group and with funding from PICS, hired an intern who presented in September. While there are many active volunteers, and a great framework in place, they do not have the capacity to input all data. A methodology has now been decided - to identify local, provincial, and national level policies that affect our food system and whether the impact positive, negative, or neutral. One idea is to begin with Vancouver food policies to identify gaps. They will also look to groups working on similar issues (e.g. Kwantlen). It was noted that a policy alert system should be set up, in the case of a pressing policy issue. For example, there could be a form that the public could fill out or they could do a brief presentation to council so issues can be addressed effectively.
- Food waste - Emme was not present, but a group member (Will) noted that the group met and spoke about consumption and how consumers view food, to discourage over-purchasing. The group needs support; Will to follow up with Emme. FFCF has a grant to hire someone to continue work on food waste, and West Coast Naturals can also support. A pilot program at Choices explored ways to reduce food waste, including developing consumer friendly information.
- Neighbourhood food assets - Ross, Trish, Zsuzsi are members. Group has been focused on Neighbourhood Food Networks and how the food strategy, the community and the FPC can work together. Two NFNs have formed from that work, and they continue to build a common vision and strategy. [iBook](#) is on City website.

It was noted that the Communications and Membership are in need of members. FFCF has staff time to do a partnered fundraising event as part of the Sustenance festival. It was also noted that FEDAP started as an extension of Food Secure Vancouver (FSV is baseline, FEDAP goes to future).

5. Introduction of Topic - 2014 Planning for VFPC

Members were reminded that because this is an election year, the FPC will be dissolved on Nov 15th, and the City will reappoint a new council, with input from the current FPC chairs. Vacancies will be filled when new council is formed. Members are invited to think of meeting topics/themes, working group activities, administrative tasks, city events, or other items that could be added to a timeline.

Funds - City has allocated funds to three working groups. Funds must be spent by the end of June, and if those projects are not going forward, reallocation is possible. The chairs will follow up with Brent on collaboration with the indigenous working group, and also with Emme. FEDAP has also received funds.

Suggested meeting themes:

- March 2014 - diversity in the food system. Helen to lead, working with Hanna and Thien. Chris has a colleague that can address migrant worker issue. Irena, Leo Ramirez also volunteered to help.
- June 2014 - Charitable Food (at an alternate location). Anna to lead.
- September 2014 - farm tour (perhaps on a Saturday), could address the urban-rural continuum and right to farm while exploring creative solutions.
- October 2014 - collaborate with Sustenance festival
- November 2014 - FEDAP

Other suggestions:

NFN - group will check with networks to determine best date.

Water - Anna to lead.

FEDAP/Emergency preparedness for natural disasters- Ross can help liaise with contacts in the City.

Urban agriculture

James to discuss with team to determine issues where FPC can advise.

Rights: right to food, right to farm, right to water

6. Motion to Adjourn 8:30

Moved by Trish, seconded by Anna, carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30pm