

Vancouver Food Policy Council
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, November 26, 2014
6:00-8:30pm
Town Hall Room, City Hall



Chairs: Zsuzsi Fodor and Tara Moreau

Council Members: Trish Kelly, Peter Ladner, Brent Mansfield, Pat McCarthy, Ross Moster, Helen Spiegelman, Dave Wilson

Liaisons: Heather Deal (City Council), James O'Neill (Social Planning, City of Vancouver), Aaron Jasper (Park Board)

Regrets: Orlando Schmidt (Ministry of Agriculture), Corrine Eisler (VCH), Robyn Walters

Absent: Jason Apple, Anna Cavouras, Theresa Duynstee (MetroVan), Kimberly Hodgson, Ilana Labow, Emme Lee, Nicholas Scapillati, Chris Thoreau, Rob Wynen (Vancouver School Board)

Agenda Items:

1. Motion to Accept Agenda and Previous Minutes (September 2014 Minutes)
Moved by Pat, seconded by Trish, carried unanimously. 16 guests were present.
2. Staff Update - James O'Neill, Social Planning & Jason Hseih, Park Board - Community Garden Policy
 - Council of Councils - meeting will happen Dec 1. All members encouraged to attend, both to be recognized and to learn about the work of other councils. Members were reminded to complete survey sent by the City.
 - Community Garden Expression of Interest - submissions were received in October, and deliberations resulted in five projects, all at various stages, moving forward to next round.
 - Sustainable food system grants - This is the 2nd formal year that these have provided for both programming and core funding. The submissions are currently under review and will go to council for official approval in the new year
 - Video - 4-5 minute promo celebrating achievements of the city will be ready in the coming weeks.
 - Urban farming policy - updates are forthcoming, with progress is expected in the new year. There is an urban farming forum on Sunday Nov 30 at the Croatian Cultural Centre.

Heather Deal recognized the achievements of the year, including the food strategy, and noted the valuable input received from the public and FPC members on the Local Food Action Plan. Food is a theme that is crossing sectors in the City. Food was a strong theme in Vision's platform and they are committed to moving forward. The FPC was congratulated for providing the necessary tools to move forward with policy actions. Heather was presented with a small token of appreciation for her contributions, and thanked for her work.

James was also thanked for helping to move issues forward. He in turn thanked members for their accessibility, teachings, resourcefulness, and energy.

Jason - Parks Board Policies

Urban Agriculture policy - this will replace the community garden policy from 2005. There are now many more models of urban agriculture (e.g. orchards, collaborative, arts and culture, edible landscaping) and the proposed changes include a broader definition. Guidelines will address both design and operation. The new policy is in draft form and consultation will begin soon. The policy is aimed at meeting the food goals in the food strategy and food action plan, including increasing local food assets. Members will be notified soon when the online survey has been posted www.vancouver.ca/communitygardens. Questions can be sent to pbgreen@vancouver.ca

Discussion

- The guidelines will state that gardeners are not to use synthetic pesticides, and that organic fertilizers are preferred over synthetic. If there is no reference to discourage the use of GMO root stock, then it will be included. The guidelines cannot 'ban' actions, but can discourage.
- Gardeners will still be required to partner with a not-for-profit entity.
- It was suggested that the Park Board plant herbs as clipping gardens as part of normal operations.

3. Roundtable Reflections and Visions

A roundtable ensued with the listed themes emerging for each question.

- What were our accomplishments?
 - ✓ Food Secure Vancouver study
 - ✓ Local Food Asset Plan (Park Board)
 - ✓ Food strategy and resulting actions
 - ✓ Supporting the formation of the Youth Food Policy Council
 - ✓ Engaging in difficult discussions (e.g. ALR, living wage, UN Rapporteur on Right to Food)

- What are you are most proud of?
 - ✓ All members, and particularly the chairs, were competent, energetic, and made efforts to make new members feel welcome.
 - ✓ Work of previous members was acknowledged, as current work builds on a solid foundation.
 - ✓ Food policy is now embedded in many city departments, which demonstrates the value of the FPC and its connections, and is evidenced by various policy pieces.
 - ✓ That a City Councillor and citizens from the community show up to meetings, further demonstrating the importance of the FPC's voice and role as a bridge between the community and the City.
 - ✓ The ability to network with other solutions-oriented citizens.
 - ✓ The FPC is a catalyst and a convener for many conversations. The ability to bring diverse voices into a safe space to discuss difficult issues is well-respected, and is why it is seen both in the region and the province as a strong voice.

- Where should we focus in the future?
 - Remove barriers to participation by aboriginal/diverse voices (e.g. by providing a meal, bus tickets).
 - Follow up on requirement that new developments need a food strategy, and provide guidance where needed.
 - Advocate for a New City Market, or hub with same functionality.
 - Deepen relationships with staff to increase direct collaboration.
 - Make connections regionally and provincially.
 - Examine related policies at all levels.
 - Consider impacts of climate change and the role of community resilience.
 - Understanding the true cost of food.
 - Be a resource for the region, and invite non-profits to events.
 - Ensure new Park and School Boards stay on track with childhood hunger, addressing through community and schools
 - Focus on connections between people and also projects

- Who are we missing in our membership to think about recruiting for the next term?

Suggestions: diversity, food industry (distributors, wholesalers), food tourism, food waste/recovery, large scale producer, those that have a major role in feeding the city at small and large scales, representatives from Neighbourhood Food Networks.

4. New VFPC Membership Discussion

The FPC is comprised of 21 members - 2 each for the following sectors: Production, Processing, Access, Distribution, Consumption, Waste, and System-wide, and 7 members-at-large. Members can serve a maximum of two terms, and with some members leaving, the FPC will have gaps in both Access and Waste. There was some discussion about whether the current structure needs to be modified, in order to account for other elements that need to be considered (e.g. diversity, youth, neighbourhood food networks, tourism). Due to the difficulty in revising the Terms of Reference, it was decided that both lenses be used when reviewing applicants, and that targeted promotion may help attract the relevant people.

Individuals, including those currently on the council, must apply to both the City and the FPC. In the past there has been confusion regarding when the FPC is officially dissolved, which impacts the FPC's ability to recommend individuals from the applicant pool. It is currently understood that the FPC is dissolved after the new Council is

sworn in, and that the FPC is able to review applications and provide recommendations prior to that. It was noted that with new four-year terms, that the City will need to explore a process to handle inevitable attrition.

Other suggestions to consider when reviewing candidates include: BC Food Processers Association, production/distribution at both small and large scales (e.g. those on Malkin Ave), people who are willing to attend each meeting and engage fully with the work of the FPC, to ensure the waste sector is represented, BC Produce Marketers Association. Members were reminded that members are at the table as citizens, not representing their place of work.

Brent, Trish, Ross, and Dave agreed to participate on the Membership Committee.

The Town Hall room has been booked for 2015. Most meetings will be on the 3rd Wednesday of the month, while some are on the 2nd Wednesday. The schedule will be circulated in the new year.

There was a suggestion to host an 'alumni event' and invite previous members of the FPC.

5. Outgoing VFPC Member Thank Yous

This was the last meeting for Trish, Brent, Helen, and Ross. Each was thanked for their individual contributions to the council.

Aaron Jasper thanked the FPC for caring and contributing to policy-making. Aaron noted that he found FPC guidance invaluable, and has always been impressed by the energy and enthusiasm of the members, which inspired him to see how these principles could be adopted at the Park Board. Aaron was impressed by the uptake by Parks staff on working groups. Eventually, a Task Force was created and a Local Food Asset Plan was passed. The principles are now embedded in their strategic planning process. Aaron is unsure of the implementation of the LFAP under the new Park Board. He encourages the FPC to reach out to the new commissioners, as the plan is too important not to prioritize. Trish noted that the two Park Board Commissioners elected from the Green Party were at the all-candidates meeting and have publically supported the LFAP.

6. Motion to Adjourn

Moved by Tara, seconded by Dave.

Meeting adjourned at 8:09PM