

Commons Coordinating Council (CCC)

www.gabriolacommons.ca

Notes of Meeting of Nov. 1, 2022.

Facilitator: Gloria Filax (for Finance Team)

Recorder: Heather Menzies (Sharing the Commons Team)

Present: Mary Wilson, Robbie Huston, Bob Martin, Bob Andrew, David Lightly, Brenda Joy, Patty Mertz, Max Cosette, Brenda Fowler, Medwyn McConachy

Next CCC meeting: Dec.6 at 7 pm.

Facilitator(s) for next meeting: Learning Opportunities Team?

Recorder for next meeting: Process Team

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Welcome & Agenda

2. Acknowledgements: Deb Ferens read from TRC report

3. Following Up from previous meetings

A. Jinny Hayes stepping away from Communications Team: Mary Wilson reported this on Jinny's behalf, calling her "our guiding star in communicating about the commons," valuable for overseeing the preparation of council notes, stressing "the need to ensure accuracy in the minutes. She has that historical memory. It will be a loss," she said, though added that Jinny might stay on looking after the website.

B. Feedback re. Timberframe and booking of Goat Barn:

Bookings team seeking confirmation that the now-enclosed upstairs of the Timberframe is reserved for the Farm Team's use; bookings prefers it be a non-bookable space.

-discussion confirmed that it's currently being used to dry beans for shelling for workbee lunch soups; however, there seemed to be some openness to flexibility here although a preference for usage to be food related. Note that it's not insulated space.

Bookings team also seeking confirmation that Goat Barn not bookable space for time being. Note: it too is not insulated. Discussion about future of the Goat Barn as performing arts and community meeting space and need for it, with mention of files from meetings about Goat Barn held before Covid available for sharing with people trying to revive the project
Comments: "We need to review our priorities so we don't get sidetracked by a big new project."

"It's important to keep moving forward so people aren't discouraged."

"Consideration should be given to the difference and distinction between the public using the space versus just teams within the Commons using it."

4. 20- minute Discussion Topic: Commons Accessibility – Judith – Deferred to next meeting.

5. Team Reports:

Trustee Team (Mary Wilson, Deb Ferens)

- AGM will be held on Nov. 20 @ 2 p.m. at the Commons.

Have to be a member of the Foundation to vote. Forms available online and handed out at meeting

There will be an ad in the Sounder.

Bookings: See 3.B. above.

Communications: See 3.A above.

Covenant Team (K Louise Vincent)

After many years exploring the possibility of The Land Conservancy (Victoria, BC) holding the covenant, the team has decided to step away because it's only prepared to focus on the ecological aspects of the commons. But to separate one feature would be counter to what the commons is all about: integrated ecological, agricultural and social/cultural. See attached letter.

The team is now reaching out to other possible covenant holders and exploring another plan for a new group to hold the covenant.

Event Planning (Max Cosette)

- The team enjoyed doing the Fall Fair & now wants to get the Spring Fair going again.

They're talking with someone at the Ag. Co-op about partnering in a seed share.

They see it as a fund-raising opportunity for the Commons, and want to book music as part of it.

Thinking of a mid-May date. Thinking of keeping it small, though using Facebook for outreach & looking for volunteers.

Farm Team (Bob Martin)

Made a pitch for getting solar-powered weed whacker and even a lawn mower for use at the Commons.

Will research cost ready for the team to submit a budget

South Gardens (Brenda Joy):

The re-surfacing of the parking lot and connector pathway, an in-kind donation to the Commons by Bob Rooks, has been completed except for some final compacting.

One outstanding detail is the 'swail' (ditch) for runoff that runs beside the fenceline of the gardens is a bit of a safety issue, but is being address; the plan is to plant some shrubs and in the interim, to move fallen tree trunks into place to prevent accidents.

Registration for returning gardeners being held Nov. 2 and 13.

There are 13 people asking for a plot. To create more possible plots, they're considering dividing some of the existing 400 sq.ft lots in half. Easier for starter gardeners too, perhaps.

The sweet peas and dahlias project made \$3,718 this season. Money being divided between the PHC lunch program and the museum's McRae mortgage fund.

Finance (Mary Wilson, Gloria Filax):

Costs around \$65,000 a year to run the Commons. Insurance has gone up considerably; it's \$11,000 now.

We spent \$7,000 more this year than we brought in. (See attached fin. Statement)

Fund raising has been helped by having big projects; we often get new long-term donors that way.

Trustees are involved in a conversation about fund raising

Labyrinth Group (Heather Menzies)

- Bob Martin, who bought and created 8 solar torches for the Sept. 21 event he organized, has left them in the farmhouse storage closet for anyone to use, and proposes people donate a toonie each time they borrow one / them. We hope to use them for a Dec. 21 Solstice event. There was some discussion about using bookings as a way of keeping track when people borrow the torches (though this wasn't resolved).

We are also gathering some large stones and hope that one Sat. workbee in the next month or so might be devoted to upgrading the stonework marking the labyrinth paths.

It was suggested that the Communications team could put a notice about this in the Sounder. The team will do this.

Property Stewardship Team (Bob Andrew)

- Maintenance at the Commons is huge!

Lino Vella Gregory has pulled together a small group of people interested in getting the Goat Barn project going again. It is a community project, important to include more people, because it will be the largest project yet undertaken at the Commons, and will have an impact on the whole community.

Discussion about importance of establishing need. Also, activities like food-security presentations can occur in that space; it's designed to be flexible.

Heather mentioned notes she typed up from a large meeting (in 2019) of interested parties (good representation of user groups and the community, including GAC), and also some briefing notes on design considerations. sHe will forward these to Lino for the new group. •

Share the Commons Team (Heather Menzies)

- We haven't been able to do the kind of pro-active work we'd hoped to do under our revised mandate because we're down to two people who are already committed to other teams. We're thin on the ground; so much so that it's a strain to take on regular commitments like note taking for council meetings.

The Process Team (David Lightly)

- The team wants to revision what its purpose is, and return it to something positive, even contributing to the Commons review.

The team is getting old and thin on the ground.

We need a code of conduct, but everyone has to be involved.

People having trouble being able to bring up any subject and have a safe conversation. What we hear is "We don't feel safe."

Discussion involved a request for clarification on what process the process team used in approaching conflict, and another asked if there'd be a team rep to ensure the code of conduct is followed.

6. Affiliate Reports***People for a Healthy Community*** (Brenda Fowler)

Nov. 1 was the first soup social. Held at the Fellowship Centre. Marked the return to face to face gatherings since Covid.

Friday lunch program at the end of the week at Christ Church. (chek) This is part of PHC moving beyond Commons space

Starting to plan already for the annual Spirit Feast, with 150 in the Community Hall and 150 pickups.

The board wants to thank the Commons council for input into its long-range strategic plan. The liaison team continues to meet. Ended with a thought: "There is a renewed confidence in our shared values."

7. Additional Items Arising:

Commons Review:

Moving toward holding this over two days in January (the 8th and 22nd.) Saturdays.

It's intended as a self-reflection and for people who have been involved in the Commons for a while (even if they've stepped away)

First day will focus on what makes the commons a commons, and what's working and what's not working.

Second day will focus on what we might do so we function better and more in keeping with being a community commons.

A trained facilitator will be hired, not involved in the commons.

Venue still up in the air; possibly Agi Hall or Community Hall, depending on numbers of registrants.

So important to RVSP.

Discussion largely around question of who should and should not attend. Eg. PHC. Agreed that PHC should be involved in discussions about future of farm house and its use. But having another institution involved in an inward-looking reflection on another institution (the Commons) not really appropriate.

8. Closing (Name)