

Commons Coordinating Council (CCC)
www.gabriolacommons.ca
Notes of Meeting of February 7th, 2023

Facilitator: David Lightly for the process Team

Recorder: Robbie Huston for the learning opportunities Team

Present:

Judith Roux	(Farm Team)
Deborah Ferens	(Covenant Team)
Patrick Colvin	(Newcomer)
Bob Andrew	(Property Stewardship)
Shelagh Huston	
Betty Kehler	(Farm Team)
Brenda Fowler	(PHC)
Heather Menzies	(Trails and Green Spaces Team)
Patrick Roux	(Kitchen Stewards)
Doug Scott	(South Gardens)
Cameron Murray	(Trustees Team)

Land Acknowledgment

- Heather Menzies, including a reading of “ Drumbeg Park” by Patsy Ludwick

20 minute discussion

- Storage on the commons, led by Bob Andrew
- A draft policy was offered with the following text:
Third-party storage on the commons [draft]

Scope: this policy covers all physical storage items and all spaces on the Gabriola commons for more than three days.

Application: generally, all items not owned by the commons, shall not be stored [short or long term] on the commons.

Exceptions: organizations who have signed a memorandum of understanding [MOU], lease or rental agreement may store items in spaces contained within these agreements. Requests for storage space outside these agreements must be made to the property stewardship team [PST] in writing.

Points raised:

- The Lions storage container is fine because they have an MOU
- Our locked storage has been used and becomes unsecure.
- There should be a “pack In, pack out“ policy

- One example of a problem is the squash race structure which is used at the fall fair and is too big to be stored anywhere except at the Commons.
- Should PST administer this policy or should the trustees?
- Bookings has a role to play.
- Anything not used on the commons should not be stored on the commons.
- If PST administers this policy it shifts their function towards liaising with outside groups. This is not supposed to be their role.
- Further discussion is needed.

Team reports

SOUTH GARDENS

Registration is done for the year.

The new parking lot is fine and is much appreciated by walkers.

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES TEAM

The first meeting of the newly reconstituted learning opportunities Team will be held tomorrow Wednesday, February 8 at the Commons and it will be a visioning session for whoever wants to come. Coming to this meeting does not mean that you are volunteering to join the team.

BOOKINGS

Bookings Report to Council Feb 7, 2023

Financial Reconciliation Apr 2022 to Dec 2022

Farmhouse rental income \$2357.50

Outdoors

- Timberframe \$418.50

- Reservoir (these funds are reserved for tent maintenance) \$195 (does not include Cultivate)

- Donation dropbox \$8.95

Rental Fees – Review

Bookings is planning to increase the rental fees for indoor spaces and outdoor spaces effective April 1, 2023.

Indoors - the large room \$15/hr, Planning/Conversation/Kitchen will be \$10/hour. (Increase \$5 per hour on each room)

Outdoors – Free Events \$10/hour, \$35/4hrs, \$50/day

Ticketed Event \$20/hr, \$55/4hrs, \$75/day

Port a potties

The business on the island rents porta-potties at \$145/month plus \$25 for pick up and drop off.

Bookings supports an interim solution for bathroom access during the event season (May to Oct) until a more permanent solution is developed.

Outdoor event fees would be used to help cover the cost of the porta-potties. Porta-potties are not a “green option” but might be preferable for use during the busy season rather than the community kitchen toilet.

Indoor Bookings

- Cleaning: Janice will get cost information re: deep cleaning every third or fourth month.
- Deb will contact Celia about added weekly cleaning and how much she is prepared to do.

Outdoor Bookings

- Timberframe Upstairs – Lino confirmed that this space will not be available for rent. It is intended for Farm Team use at this time.

Other

- Bookings received the Draft Third Party Storage and concurs with the intent.

PST

Notes to Council, Feb./2023:

House roof leak: We THINK it is fixed.

Sign at the road: We are considering a sign (similar to the school one) be placed at the roadside to let people know what is going on at the Commons, partly in the hopes in attracting more folks.

Shingling the timber frame: All the open bits will be filled. The door to the deck (incomplete) has been sealed off.

S. wall workshop re siding: It is on the list to try to do this before the wasp season starts again.

House cleaning: Kim K. is the house cleaner for now but we are trying to get a regular cleaner and a regular “deep cleaner”.

New bathroom(s): Is a Council issue. PST thinks this will not happen before this summer and would recommend that a Porta Potty be installed from early May to the fall.

Goat barn: Discussion of having a structural engineer look at the building to see if it is suitable for a public gathering space. PST has contacted Herald engineering and they will come and look when we request. Herald would like some pictures and drawings to save time and money. It was suggested that “Task Force” to recreate the barn would be a step forward, that PST should not be the body to take the project on. This actually is clear in the PST notes that PST believes this to be a good idea. Bob will ask Lino to contact Patrick R. who would like to be on this Task force. Heather Menzies suggested we get a hold of the folks who first look at this project and try to revitalize it.

Upstairs heat: Kim K. is volunteering to monitor the upstairs temperature and adjust the settings as the weather changes. She also will clean the heat pump filters.

Bob Andrew, for PST

TRAILS AND GREEN SPACES

Trails and Green Spaces Report

by: Heather Menzies

Possible work bee:

- to remove a number of fallen trees from the woods, and cut them into firewood for use as needed through the community.
- A preliminary inventory has located 12 fir trees and 22 alders that could be salvaged; their locations are marked on the trail map.
- There might be enough work here to justify trying to invite the community (through facebook and the Sounder) to become part of a Sat. Morning workbee dedicated to this work. Lunch of soup and bread to follow.
- Details remaining to be discussed: whether to try to line up a log splitter; whether to invite people to bring their own chainsaws as well as work gloves; when to schedule this...

Points raised:

- Will we remove too much? Some downed wood is necessary for the ecology of the forest.
- Maybe we could leave some in place with some signage to say that we've removed in other areas and left this bit so that in the future people can see if there is a difference in the two areas.
- The commons is already divided into mapped zones that individual people have agreed to observe. Maybe those people could be sent an email to encourage them to observe the difference.

TRUSTEES

- The AGM will be next Sunday, March 12.
- A new insurance deal has been negotiated. We get 25% off the previous amount.
- The trustees have met with representatives of the RDN to talk about Huxley Park. The walking trail has been rerouted around the north edge of the skate park. They would like to use the commons west parking lot as parking for the skate park. The trustees have agreed in principle. We may need to add some gravel and we may need some signage and the RDN will probably provide funding for that.

Points raised:

- The commons is already public. It's a public parking lot. Anyone can park there any time.
- There could be a conflict if many people park there, especially when the Commons has a big event on.
- This may need more discussion.

PEOPLE FOR A HEALTHY COMMUNITY

- School children have started gardening. They have done a soil survey with microscope's.
- We have received a mental health and wellness grant which will allow us to recruit 30 reading buddies at the school
- On March 4 the Gabriel Arts Council is hosting an event at the community hall to honor PHC in the school. Event will feature a jazz group that includes Tina Jones.

Commons Review: Report to Council February 7th, 2023

Review Planning Group: Jan Pullinger, Deb Ferens, K. Louise Vincent, Mary Wilson

Note: K. Louise, Deb and Jan plan to be at the March Council for further discussion

On January 14th and 28th, 30 participants gathered to share thoughts and ideas about the next stage of the Commons. The sessions were facilitated by Jan Pullinger and took place at the Gabriola Arts & Heritage Centre and the Commons-

The January 14th session focused on the topics: 1. Values 2. How we care for the Commons 3. What is working 4. What is not working 5. Reviewing the Founding Documents. The January 28th session focused on issues of 1. Governance and Structure 2. Education and Research 3. Sense of Shared Purpose 4. Communication 5. Next steps: moving the Commons forward with positivity and energy.

Some Central Themes That Emerged:

- the nature of Commons governance structure, organization and decision making
- a sense of shared purpose and the difficult nature of communicating how the Commons works.
- the boundaries and edges that affect organizational integrity, personal and community relations
- the role of education and research on the local and global Commons as well as the unlearning of old ways of doing things, including colonialism and corporate capitalism
- the interwoven ecological, agricultural and social purposes that bind together many of the unified daily realities.

- governance, communication and a clear, collective focus are interdependent and interrelated
What also emerged was the beauty and integrity of the land, the original vision and dream to design, the Saturday workbees, sharing food, growing vegetables, tending to the orchards, maintaining the buildings, keeping the space functioning, creation of the covenant, and completing a significant number of projects and goals in the first 18 years.

The Review arose with the hope and understanding that the Commons needs time to pause, reflect and acknowledge this time of transition. There is no doubt more work needs to be done.

The two review sessions were a start with commitments and agreements to move forward.

NEXT STEPS: CALL FOR COMMITMENT AND AGREEMENTS FOR MOVING FORWARD

Please note that the verbatim notes and the emergent themes for each of the Actions below are available to each group as the baseline for moving forward.

1. CLARITY OF GOVERNANCE AND STRUCTURE

ACTION: Jinny, Shelagh, Bob, Heide - March 15th meeting

Undertake a Review Process within a timeline of six months

2. EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

ACTION: Robbie & Jinny

Learning Opportunity Team meeting Wed. Feb 8th, 7pm, Commons Big Room

3. CLARITY OF PURPOSE

ACTION: Robbie, Heather, Maya

Set up another group discussion/session/half day gathering; Jan Pullinger to facilitate

4. COMMUNICATION

ACTION: Communication is central to the work of the Commons and is the funnel where

purpose, governance, community and learning come together. Actions to be determined.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

Budget: \$1500

Expenses:

- \$173.70 GAHC hall rental, food
- \$76.75 supplies – paper, markers, pens, flip chart paper, stickies, etc.
- \$1200 Facilitation (please note Jan is contributing back \$500)
- \$672 Catering Jan 14 (some food left over and taken to Jan 28 session)

Total Expenses: \$1622.45 Donations collected: \$150.00

Council wishes to thank Deb, Jan, Mary and K. Louise for making this event happen.

Next council:

March 7th

Facilitator - David Lightly

Note taker - Robbie Huston