



VANCOUVER FOOD POLICY COUNCIL

MINUTES

MAY 26, 2022

An informal meeting of the Vancouver Food Policy Council was held on Thursday, May 26, 2022, at 6:06pm, by electronic means. The meeting was open to members of the public; 12 were present.

PRESENT:

Emily Burkholder
Sarah Common
Sharon Dong
Ben Liegey
Michelle Reining
Aditi Rudra
Anthony Sullivan
Kae Yee Tsai

ABSENT:

Evan Bowness
Miluska Bravo
Leona Brown
Katherine Cooper
Clare Cullen
Jyotika Dangwal
Ivy Leong
Joey Liu
Maggie Mills
Rasoul Narimani
Marc Schutzbank
Carol White

ALSO PRESENT:

Caitlin Dorward (Social Planner, Social Policy and Projects, Staff Liaison)
Erin Nichols (Senior Project Manager - Zero Waste, Engineering Services)

RECORDER:

Vicky Baker

WELCOME

1. Call to Order

This is an informal meeting of the VFPC. The first portion is a Community Talks panel, followed by a business portion. The goal of the discussion is to build on the great work that is happening in community and by the City.

2. Online meeting reminders

Staff provided directions on using features in WebEx.

3. Land Acknowledgment

Work is needed to address the core meaning of colonization. This includes repatriation of indigenous land and life as true decolonization requires land back and compensation. Residents need to work together to envision a better way, and can use any power and privilege to advocate for and openly discuss how to return decision making power and create solutions.

4. Food Waste WG

- Lori Nikkel, Chief Executive Officer of Second Harvest was unable to join.
- Jamie-Lynne Varney, author of *A "Right to Food" Framework for a Just Circular Economy of Food*

Research focused on food waste and food security. Much food is wasted while 12% of families face insecurity, and current solutions do not address root causes. New approaches need to promote dignity, empower, citizens and reduce food waste. The Right to Food concept states the responsibility of the government to provide food for its people but does not say how to integrate it with food system. A circular food economy is the alternative to a linear system.

Vision – food as a right, minimize resource extraction, prevent waste, facilitate dignified access to food, and support rights and labour of workers. She then outlaid the barriers to achieving this vision, including the low wage economy, high cost of land, limited funding, lack of support for local food procurement and production, affordability, indigenous foodscapes.

Various intervention opportunities were identified and the theory of change was explained, including the assumptions made (i.e. that food waste is a priority) and the policy and accountability measure to be taken by governments to achieve the desired outcomes (robust and just local food system, reciprocal relationships, healthy ecosystems). The report illustrates how a circular economy can support the Right to Food and the insights generated can be used in planning. Full report:

<https://www.vancouvereconomic.com/research/a-right-to-food-framework-for-a-just-circular-economy-of-food/>

- Juan Martinez, author of *Policies, Incentives, and Measurement Protocols for Food Waste Reporting by Businesses* – UBC
Motivated by 2040 strategic plan, the work focuses on the institutional sector (ICI) as a stakeholder. Since 2019 the CoV now sends more food to green bin than garbage (53%) however, food waste is still a key element.
The CoV has a high living standard and consumption, technology and manufacturing,

high population density, and high opportunity cost of landfill. Findings identified potential policy tools, both advocacy and regulations, voluntary or mandatory.

- Adopt a strategy that is in line with goals in timeline with good quality data by 2030.
- Define food waste and diversion, establish best practice for measuring in both retail and hospitality sectors.
- Adopt a reporting protocol. This is time consuming so needs a 3rd party or a change in culture.
- Align with Metro van plan. There has been investment in a regional recovery network.
- Lead by example. Examples - reduction goal for tonnage, track waste streams like businesses.
- Study trade offs. If it's assumed that it is a priority, a true cost of accounting is needed. For example, will the data quality and amount diverted offset the cost of tablets and scales?

Full report: <https://sustain.ubc.ca/about/resources/policies-incentives-and-measurement-protocols-food-waste-reporting-businesses>

- Jake-Zeljko Pavlovic, VP of Procurement and Merchandising, Freshlocal Solutions Inc. (SPUD.ca)
Retailers are good at measuring waste, and meetings are held on how to reduce. The online platform allows: 1) Demand prediction/forecasting - with ecommerce, actual real time demand is used 2) inventory management – state of the art technologies, 3) control points – analyze process to learn better, 4) food donation - uncontrollable waste is donated.
- Erin Nichols, City of Vancouver Senior Project Manager – Zero Waste - [Vancouver.ca/food-innovation-lab](https://vancouver.ca/food-innovation-lab)
Circular food innovation lab – testing solutions on the ground.
In Vancouver 25k of food was wasted in 2019, and CoV. To get to the root of problem, CoV partnered with the Vancouver Economic Commission (VEC) and Emily Carr to help businesses reduce waste and test solutions to avoid waste.
Working with funding and partners, the design team and food business have been recruited. The first session was held and onsite visits are happening now. Prototype solutions are co-developed and field-tested May – Aug. From Sept – Jan, the team will refine 3-4 solutions. The 2040 Zero Waste strategic plan guides the work, and will result in tools, materials, and methods for 4000 food businesses. The food waste landscape includes community food hubs, food recovery, increased business ownership of zero waste, changing role of the City to co-convener / co-facilitator / co-educator, job creation, and policy directions to measure and report. The CFIL is one piece of this landscape.
- Danielle Todd, Founder and Director of Make Food Not Waste (*video presentation*)
Work focuses on urban food streams, with an upcycling kitchen to take surplus food and make community meals by professional chefs available at no cost. Another initiative is a pledge on food waste for restaurants and they also act as a resource for local municipalities. Their impact is through expanding the idea of reducing waste from donations and composting to also prevention and source reduction. Local governments can 1) lead by example in city facilities and events, and publicize, and also provide a market for compost, and 2) work with food service businesses to ask or require they go

though food waste reduction requirements. This is also an economic driver for restaurants, who will be trained and certified for little cost. Diners can be encouraged to support those restaurants.

Discussion

- Pledges may work to elevate a restaurant's reputation in the community in Vancouver. There is a growing interest from consumers in sustainable restaurants and a recognition that especially with rising costs, there is a need to reduce waste. When restaurants approach CoV to participate, what is their goal? For many, they are already active and want to do better. Some because of sustainability, some are small and want to scale up, and some because of rising costs due to the pandemic and supply chains.
- How to raise these concerns, how do we call to attention? What is VEC relationship to the City – what can we learn from how it was built? How does the VFPC position itself to support implementation of the reports' findings? Work is ongoing and Erin can help to put members in touch with those at VEC. VEC is a separate entity. It has a close relationship but have some of same accountabilities and is involved in many initiatives. Governance of VEC as a non-profit, has a BoD that includes the city manager, deputy city manager, and manager of finance. It cannot be assumed that food is a priority. The report needs to be communicated to community organizations and the types of projects that are funded should align with community need. There is an opportunity to provide a centralized network for those from the City working in this space.
- How can the public engage more meaningfully with food sovereignty/ governance/ security?
- The City works with Love Food Hate Waste Canada to avoid kitchen waste in the home, with the Innovation Lab focusing more on ICI sector. Neighbourhood food networks are a good place to get involved in programs.
- Restaurants have been through a lot in the last two years and many companies are prioritizing what they see as the essentials just to keep their head above the water. How do we incentivize and prioritize food waste issues when businesses are focusing on short-term survival more than ever? Third parties can ensure costs are recovered in medium term. Lessons from businesses through are being shared.
- Has much thought been given to reducing food waste at household level? For e.g. Incentives for under quota, penalties for over quota. Much has to do with culture and individual relationship with food. Food is not a priority for most. CoV has begun exploring neighbourhood-level options.
- Getting ICI involved in mitigating food waste is great, but wouldn't dismantling the commercial meat/ dairy/ agricultural industry as we know it (not small farmers, thinking dasanto, etc) make a bigger difference? Is/ What work can be done there? There needs to be more of a sharing community with urban agriculture. For example, Lettuce Harvest and City Beet Farms use donated yards to grow food.
- In the UK, incentives like "buy one get one later" or selling half loaves of bread at grocery stores try and limit over consumption for the sake of sale prices. Are there tips from SPUD to apply to brick and mortar stores? More planning is needed at the store level to know how much food to buy, and to adjust layout and department size according to sales.
- This discussion brings up the complexity of the issue, and that ideas needs to be explored from diff angled; the conversation needs to continue. The VFPC can advocate for food waste to be included in the Climate Emergency Action Plan, as most food is not

produced in Vancouver. It was suggested that because that plan is not up for renewal, it may be best to include it in an updated Greenest City Action Plan.

5. Liaison Updates

- a. City Council - Councillor Wiebe- no update available.
- b. School Board - Trustee Gonzalez - no update available.
- c. Park Board - Caitlyn Harrison - no update available.
- d. Social Policy - Caitlin Dorward
 - Displacement concerns – one action in the Employment, Lands and Economy review (led by economic development planning staff). Under this program, one action is to develop a commercial tenant assistance program that supports relocation planning for commercial tenants. Designed to be widely available and particularly suited for small and vulnerable businesses. Links to Councillor Boyle's motion on intangible assets. www.vancouver.ca/CTAP . Part of the approach recognizes that it is difficult to prevent displacement but City is mitigating impact.
 - Heatherlands rezoning was approved for a 22-acre parcel south of BC women's hospital. The land is owned jointly by a crown corporation and MST development and will be handed over to MST when complete. Amenities provided usually become city assets but, in this case, MST will provide the amenities and remain the owners. Sustainable large development policy was triggered the requirement of 3 food assets; 4 are being provided – an MST cultural centre with kitchen with some public access, plaza with community food markets, north parcel with indigenous garden and orchard, and all residential buildings will have garden plots.

6. Discussion

- a. Reflections from WG Climate Adaptation
 - Heard from a variety of panelists. Venue was hard to find. Eleanor and Christine are willing to come speak again. Main takeaway – food strategies do not include climate. There is a need for political will to include this in all strategies, discussion and plans. Local farmers need to be supported better, and a local emergency food strategy is needed.
 - A question was raised about how to pass forward learnings from speakers to future terms. SARAH offered support to turn this into a motion. A summary can also be posted on the blog.
- b. Grocery report from Anthony

Prices have increased about 10% over the last year due to the impact of Covid, inflation, supply chain issues, and theft. Downtown stores are suffering - cannot find labour and sales are down. Training at stores to reduce food waste and requires institutional knowledge. With high turnover, staff are not invested and/or don't have the knowledge. Supply chain issues are caused by shipping container prices. Weather shocks in BC - floods have caused an organic poultry producer to be wiped out, so prices have risen. Many local soft fruit crops were lost in the heat dome, so they charge more to recover losses. The current weather affecting strawberries, which are delayed by about a month. There are labour issues on farms. Dairy, poultry, pork expected to increase 15% due to increased fuel and feed prices. "Shrikflation" is happening – manufacturers provide less product for same price. Big stores are also taking over means of production which restricts competition and changes the power dynamic. The VFPC has not explored this issue; there could be space in an upcoming meeting. On a positive note, food literacy has increased over the pandemic. This is a part of food

system that folks don't know much about, and the role of the City is not clear. CAITLIN to follow up with ANTHONY

c. Working Groups: TABLED TO NEXT MEETING

1. Food Charter Update
2. Food Policy Questionnaire
3. Budget/Policy VFPC

(to be discussed further in June 30 meeting)

7. Closing

Meeting ended at 8:34pm