

False Creek South Neighbourhood Association

President's Report

December 7, 2015

Last year's President's Report began with the FCSNA's Statement of Purpose as set out in our constitution and bylaws. As the Association takes the initiative more and more with numerous issues affecting our neighbourhood, it may be useful, once again, to anchor our involvement in that statement, as follows:

Purpose

The purpose of the association is to:

- 1. provide a forum for discussion of neighbourhood concerns and interests.*
- 2. promote an economically, socially, and culturally diverse neighbourhood with a friendly, positive, vibrant sense of community.*
- 3. promote a safe and healthy neighbourhood.*
- 4. promote the maintenance and improvement of the physical condition of the neighbourhood.*
- 5. promote and advocate for the collective interests of the residents and property owners of the neighbourhood.*
- 6. encourage civic participation by residents while remaining non-partisan as an association.*
- 7. assist and represent the neighbourhood in obtaining information, services, and improvements from the various levels of government, while maintaining a constructive working relationship with them.*

OUR WORK IN 2016

This past year the False Creek South Neighbourhood Association continued and expanded our work in line with the Purpose set out above.

1. Support for children's activities

We continued our long-standing practice of providing financial support to various children's events in our neighbourhood that are initiated and organized by groups outside of the FCSNA, specifically:

- the False Creek Elementary School's Bike to School program,
- the False Creek Community Centre's Canada Day programs for children, and

- the combined Community Centre and School Dragon Boat programs for children in False Creek.

2. Neighbourhood Clean-up

We continued our participation with the City of Vancouver's neighbourhood clean-up campaign, *Keep Vancouver Spectacular*, throughout the Creek from our eastern boundary of the Cambie Bridge to Burrard Bridge on the west. For the second year in a row, our delegates from that part of the Creek initiated and organized a follow-up November clean-up in the eastern half of the neighbourhood.

3. Summer Barbeque

After a bit of a false start – or rather, a non-start, when organizational difficulties threaten to scuttle *Grill 'n' Chill On Nine Tree Hill*, our summer barbeque did indeed take place on September 10 in Charleson Park. This is thanks to the efforts of several community-minded volunteers, including resident Christina Norberg and FCSNA delegate Patricia Martin, both of Marine Mews, Peer-Daniel Krause and several others. This year the event included a huge cake to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the False Creek South Neighbourhood Association.

4. Caroling Night

Many residents have expressed their regrets that, unfortunately, our annual caroling night, a long-standing and popular tradition in False Creek South, had to be cancelled in 2016. Difficulties in coordinating suitable dates and times with those who are essential to the process, including the song leader, has shown us the necessity of earlier planning for next year.

5. The False Creek South Seawall

FCSNA delegates initiated several meetings with staff from the City of Vancouver's Engineering Department regarding the changes proposed to the seawall between the Cambie and Burrard bridges. The Association has long advocated for both a separation of bikes from other forms of seawall traffic - pedestrians, runners, dog walkers etc - and for retaining the gardens and greenspace along the seawall. After many months, City Council authorized the proposed plans for change, some of which are now underway.

While the Association has given general approval to the plans, it has also raised some concerns. The question of retaining the flagstones has been, and is, a difficult one. Many in the community highly value these flagstones, which are unique in the city, as an important part of the historic physical and aesthetic character of False Creek South, and also have the effect of reducing the speed of cyclists. Others have raised serious concerns about pedestrian safety,

particularly as these surfaces can be slippery in frost or icy conditions. The FCSNA proposed to City engineering that the flagstones would be removed on walking surfaces but retained in other areas, including the bike path. Unfortunately, despite City Council's direction to work with the community on this question, Engineering's plan is to remove the flagstones on bike paths and replace them with smooth asphalt.

While the approved plan would also see the retention of the main gardens along the seawall, some question has been raised recently about whether this plan may yet be modified with the effect of removing some of these gardens. This is a matter that will need to be closely monitored in the near future.

6. Traffic problems: Spyglass and Commodore and Alder Crossing

Last year we asked the City's Engineering Department to look at the traffic violations that regularly occur at these two intersections. In response, we were informed that the City is prepared to review the situation and, in fact, has been monitoring usage and violations. It is not known whether any changes will be made to either intersection. Since over a year has passed and Engineering has not yet shared its findings with us, this issue ought to be followed up in the coming year.

7. Noise, nuisances and parking fees

For over a year residents in Pacific Cove have been monitoring noise problems associated with the expansion of Mahony's and, to a lesser extent, with the Wicklow pub. Their perseverance in reporting every violation to the restaurants, the City and, on some occasions, the police, has resulted in a moderation of the problems. The FCSNA continues to support their efforts in reducing and, hopefully, eliminating these problems.

The FCSNA protested the "floating billboard" that was plying the waters of False Creek and the garish light it shone onto residents' windows, and applauded the City's very prompt decision to have it removed.

In response to a neighbour's concern, the FCSNA protested the increase in parking charges at the Moberly parking lot. Thanks to delegate Beryl Wilson who intervened on the Association's behalf, these charges were reduced to previous rates.

8. RePlan

The 2015 President's Report described the work of RePlan as follows:

Our planning committee continues into its 6th year of work toward the renewal of our community. False Creek South, with its mix of incomes and housing types,

parks and gardens, has become one of the premium urban neighbourhoods of the world. Our RePlan committee is focused on working toward both the retention of what is a success story by any standards, and the advancement of such City goals as environmental sustainability and increased affordable housing.

These are ambitious undertakings with enormous complexities related exactly to the very factors that make this such a desirable community, especially the land and housing tenure mix.

In the past year RePlan has continued its work through regular meetings with City staff and through further developing its own internal organization. Whereas previously the housing co-ops in the Creek had little to do with each other, they now have a structure wherein co-op representatives meet regularly to discuss and develop common approaches to non-market lease renewal.

Similarly, representatives of leasehold market stratas now meet monthly in the Strata Leasehold Sub-Committee (SLS) with the focus of developing and/or considering options in the renewal of their leases with the City.

In the past year there have been significant changes in senior City staff. Along with the appointment of Sadhu Johnston as City Manager, Gil Kelley has now been named Director of Planning. At present, RePlan representatives are meeting regularly with him and other senior staff toward developing a work plan and agreed objectives involving lease renewal that will inform the staff recommendation to Council. This staff report is expected next month and would be made in the context of a broader community plan for the whole of False Creek South and adjacent land.

In September the FCSNA sponsored an enormously successful two day conference exploring “alternative governance models for housing on publicly-owned land”. Applications by RePlan resulted in funding through grants from the Real Estate Foundation and BC Housing. Organized by former FCSNA consultant Peer-Daniel Kraus, the well-attended conference focused on community land trusts and other ways of creating and managing affordable housing. That the False Creek South Neighbourhood Association was front and centre in this endeavor was both gratifying and appropriate as we continue our efforts to find ways and means to retain and create affordable housing in our community.

9. Refugee Sponsorship

Last year the FCSNA passed the following motion:

That the FCSNA pursue the sponsorship of a refugee family from Syria under the auspices of a local Sponsorship Agreement Holder (SAH) and authorizes the Refugee Sponsorship Committee to lead the implementation of the initiative.

The Refugee Sponsorship Committee immediately set about fundraising. While the Association authorized its work, all monies needed for this sponsorship were to be – and were – drawn entirely from fundraising efforts led by the committee. Thanks to the generosity of our neighbours, these efforts succeeded, as did the very difficult effort of finding appropriate affordable housing in the community.

However, while in January, 2016 we had every reason to believe the family's arrival was imminent, as of today's date this family of four still languishes in a refugee camp in northern Iraq. Faced with the disappointing news of a lengthy delay, the committee agreed to place a government-sponsored "interim" family in the pre-arranged co-op unit. Time has shown that the members of the present family have been well-supported by our committee and our neighbours and have every opportunity to succeed in their new country. At the same time, through the committee, the FCSNA has continued to advocate for the processing of the original family's application and hopes that this mom and dad, their pre-schooler and baby, will make it to our shores and our community early in the new year, and that housing in our neighbourhood will be found.

10. Granville Island 2040

The principal actors in the plans to renew Granville Island have been consistent in reaching out to our community for ideas and involvement in the Granville Island 2040 project. A special delegates meeting was held in November to hear Michael Stevenson set out plans for the Island. These plans are generating a great deal of interest in our community, as are ideas for proposed changes in transit, new access points to Granville Island and new amenities. Further public meetings are scheduled in the near future.

Changes

Very recently the community lost one of its long-time activists when *Anne Pearson* passed away, leaving her many friends and neighbours to mourn their loss.

Earlier this year two of the Association's most active and dedicated participants, *Diane Darch* and *Dennis McCann*, moved to Victoria. Both were always front and centre in all of our activities. While their presence is certainly missed their many friends in the community wish them well in their new home.

Peer-Daniel Krauss, former RePlan consultant who provided enormous support to the Association - and who is probably the most familiar face in the Creek - has

moved on to other work, although he remains a volunteer in the community as time permits.

In his place, we have welcomed *Daniel Ward* who is working alongside RePlan consultant *Nathan Edelson*, and look forward to the continued work of both with and on behalf of the Association.

Accolades to:

Kathleen MacKinnon, Wes Knapp, Evan Alderson, Charlie Richmond and *Susan Wright* for the incredibly long hours they have spent and continue to spend on behalf of our refugee sponsorship, and to *Kathleen* and *Wes* for their involvement in almost everything the Association does.

Delegates *Wendy Herdin, Jim Woodward, Richard Marchant, Marta Goodwin* and past delegate *Richard Evans* for their continued work and devotion of many, many hours to RePlan – and special kudos to *Marta* for taking on the financial reporting for both RePlan and the FCSNA.

Mats Tholin and *Gordon Watson* for their work on the seawall issue, and to *Gordon* for his continued interest in Granville Island 2040.

Kathie Cornes, our intrepid and, unfortunately, outgoing secretary for consistent and reliable work these past three years.

Finally, a special thanks to all those delegates who were and are always willing to participate in the many ventures of our Association.

Respectfully submitted,
Sharon Yandle, President
False Creek South Neighbourhood Association