

Between The Bridges

Bulletin #17 | October 23, 2020

A publication of the False Creek South Neighbourhood Association

A COMMUNITY HOUSING TRUST FOR FALSE CREEK SOUTH?

At the October 7th meeting of the False Creek South Neighbourhood Association, delegates approved a motion that the FCSNA act as the incorporating sponsor for a False Creek South Community Housing Trust (CHT).

Sometimes known as a Community Land Trust, a CHT is a community-based non-profit corporation that stewards land with the express purpose of providing affordable housing over the long term.

This initiative resulted from a grant to the RePlan Committee of the FCSNA from the Real Estate Foundation of BC and BC Housing, as well as in-kind support from the Co-operative Housing Federation of BC, to explore the feasibility of creating a community housing trust in our neighbourhood.

To administer the grant, the Association created a Community Housing Trust Advisory Committee to explore how a trust might benefit the neighbourhood by helping to implement land use policies in False Creek South that would maintain affordability for Vancouverites.

Delegates decided to proceed with incorporating a CHT both to work in conjunction with the proposed Intergenerational HUB project, and to enable longer-term opportunities to work with existing cooperative and non-profit enclaves in new development or redevelopment.

HOUSING THE HOMELESS: AN UPDATE

Some residents may have seen news stories circulating about the possibility of “managed camps” being set up around the city in an effort to disperse the homeless camp in Strathcona Park. One among several potential sites the City identified was the Olympic Village Skytrain parking lot, next to Margaret Mitchell Place temporary modular housing, managed by the PHS Community Services Society.

However, on October 8, City Council instead approved a motion from Mayor Stewart to lease and purchase empty hotels and apartment buildings in order to house those presently residing in Strathcona Park.

In the meantime, the Neighbourhood Association is reconvening its Working Group (made up of community members, BC Housing and PHS staff) that helped with the successful integration of Margaret Mitchell Place into this community. Any new information will be shared.

THE SEAL SAGA CONTINUES

From the messages sent to **Between The Bridges**, it seems that some of the best minds of our time are trying to educate those among us who couldn't distinguish a seal from a sea lion. (See: "Seal (Or Seal Lion) Makes Itself Heard," **Between The Bridges**, October 9/20). Fortunately, the writers are all adults; notes from pre-schoolers would have been crushing.

Lora Roy (Heather Point) sent a couple of drawings and asked about the seal (or sea lion) "Are they skin or fur covered extremities"? (Huh? Well, it had something like furry feet. Is that close?)

Randy Stroschein was more to the point. "That is a seal", he said, a comment that might have seemed Very Stern, but was accompanied by a friendly, winky emoji. And, he continued, "This is a sea lion", accompanied by a photo AND a video of a sea lion audibly growling, or something.

Bill Cooper said he loved the seal story and found it "droll", adding that he's a winter resident in False Creek South. (Wintering in Vancouver! Has Covid laid us all so low? But then, Bill wrote from Kingston, Ontario; enough said.)

The prize (if there were a prize; there is not) goes to **Isabelle Groc**:

"Some marine mammals—seals, sea lions, sea otters—leave the ocean to come ashore from time to time. The reasons behind this behaviour, known as hauling out...can be a way to rest safely from predators, to warm up, to conserve energy, etc.

"If you see a seal or other marine mammal hauled out, keep your distance. If you approach the animal, he or she will likely be frightened and flee to the water, wasting energy and body heat critical to health. Do not attempt to touch or pet the animal; do not try to get close for a photo. Leash dogs and do not allow them to approach, chase, harass or interact with the animal. Remind others to keep their distance and their pets restrained."

Thanks to all. We are admonished, but wiser.

CANCELLED BARBECUE: OUR LOSS, FOOD BANK'S GAIN

In the Before Times, the Neighbourhood Association has funded our community barbecue - Grill 'n' Chill - held annually on Nine Tree Hill in Charleson Park. In the face of Covid, delegates to the FCSNA June meeting tried to figure out how we could all gather together without actually gathering together. The conclusion: Pandemic: 1. Barbecue: 0.

Money for food should never go to waste, and recognizing that these troubled times hit some of us especially hard, delegates at the October meeting voted unanimously not to carry our budgeted BBQ budget over to next year, but to donate the full amount of \$3500 to the Vancouver Food Bank.

GET READY FOR HALLOWE'EN

More than 80% of students at False Creek Elementary are back in school full time. Right now, they're creating Halloween costumes to wear in their classrooms or cohorts on Friday October 30, and for local trick-or-treating and small group gatherings (6 people) on Saturday, October 31st. Some of the usual haunts are planned. If you're handing out pre-packaged treats, you might use tongs or slides, wear a face mask and remember to social distance.

For more information on safe trick-or-treating, visit <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/social-interactions/halloween>.

CENTENNIAL ROCKET SHIP

Continuing with noteworthy art in False Creek South, we can't ignore the Centennial Rocket Ship in the newly-designated Barbara Howard Plaza at the south exit of the Cambie Bridge.

Originally designed by Lew Perry in 1936 and located at the Vancouver Air Terminal, the Centennial Rocket Ship was scrapped in 1972 because of rust. Rebuilt in 1985 with more durable materials by Terminal Sheet Metal, Local 280 metal workers, it's "a symbol of the role played by craftsmanship and transportation in the growth of Vancouver." (from the plaque at the base). It was exhibited at Expo 86 and then donated to the city. Buried beneath the rocket: a time capsule scheduled to be opened in 2036, fifty years after Expo.

Placing Centennial Rocket Ship in an urban location beside a bridge's off ramp hasn't been without some controversy. Considering the original artwork was located at the Vancouver Air Terminal (as it was then called) on Sea Island, many felt that is where the replacement should go. However, municipal boundaries prevailed, along with the fact that it was rebuilt for Vancouver's Expo, with the result that it now resides in our neighbourhood.

Coming up next: Who was Barbara Howard?

- *Wes Knapp (Regatta)*

A "BEAT COP" AT THE MARKET

If you've been at Granville Island's Public Market Courtyard recently and were astonished to see no seagulls or pigeons, chances are there was a raptor around - and it was there for a reason.

Perched and contained on the shoulder of one of "The Raptors" - a group of biologists and falconers based originally on Vancouver Island - the Harris' Hawk in this photo keeps other birds at a watchful distance. Engaged by the management of Granville Island to prevent seagulls, in particular, from becoming a nuisance to patrons, this bird of prey doesn't actually have to do anything more than just be there. Think of the hawk as a police officer taught to calm a situation by just showing up. That, it seems, is enough.

LEAVE THOSE LEAVES!

Good news for us lazy gardeners: According to the Nature Conservancy of Canada, False Creek South residents can use environmentalism and conservation as excuses to not rake their courtyards this year.

Many species of butterflies and critters find piles of leaves comfortable for hibernation. Random Acts of Green posted on their Instagram account: "By completely cleaning up our gardens, we can be removing important wintering habitats for native wildlife".

In addition to supporting native fauna, fallen leaves provide a natural mulch that can improve soil. According to the David Suzuki Foundation, "Decomposing leaves make healthy soil! Leaves are natural mulch and fertilizer."

Clear leaves away from pathways and sidewalks, but instead of packing them in paper bags and transporting them away (expensive and energy-consuming), just pile them on top of your garden beds, tucking them under shrubs, bushes, and flower beds. The layer of leaves and air adds thermal insulation, minimizing freezing in the roots through the winter months.

If the look of piled-up leaves is too wild for you, a lawn mower run over the leaves several times or the mulching extension of a leaf blower will create a tidier mulch from that valuable organic material.

According to Casey Werfl, a master gardener working at the city's Sunset Nursery, leaves are a better ground cover than bark, straw or soil amender. The best leaves to leave as ground cover for winter are Oak and Birch. Other leaves are good too, although they break up faster, and he would advise avoiding the leaves of black walnut, horse chestnut and dogwood.

If you have any questions please let me know yael@invivo-design.com.

More info still at: <https://globalnews.ca/news/7381043/leave-fallen-leaves-dont-rake-backyard/https://davidsuzuki.org/queen-of-green/how-to-leave-the-leaves/>

Yael Stav (Spruce Village) is the False Creek South Neighbourhood Association's chair of its Sustainability and Resilience Working Group.

Your story ideas and news items are always welcome at newsletter@falsecreeksouth.org. Find this issue and all previous stories at falsecreeksouth.org/betweenthebridges.