

**Minutes of Meeting
Planning and Environment Committee**

DATE OF MEETING: March 2, 2004

ATTENDEES: **Park Board Commissioners**
Commissioner Eva Riccius, Chair
Commissioner Suzanne Anton

Park Board Staff

Piet Rutgers	Director, Planning and Operations
Jim Lowden	Director, Stanley District
Lori MacKay	Director, Vancouver East District
Alison Dempsey	Business Services, Stanley District
Vera Sukopova	Planning and Operations (Recording Secretary)

Delegations

Jim Storie	Vancouver Trolley Company
Alix Mathias	Executive Director, Ecology Society
Jill Cherry	Director, VanDusen Garden
Nancy Dickson	President, VanDusen Botanical Garden Association
Jane Hennessy	Capital Campaign Consultant
Denise Philippe	Evergreen
Ross Waddell	Native Plant Society of BC

SUBJECT: Planning and Environment Committee Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 7:15 p.m.

Commissioner Eva Riccius welcomed all to the meeting of the Planning and Environment Committee and the Commissioners introduced themselves.

The Agenda was presented as follows:

1. Stanley Park Shuttle Donation Fareboxes
2. Van Dusen Gardens Plan
3. Evergreen Foundation Presentation
4. Approval of Minutes of Meeting from February 3, 2004

1. Stanley Park Shuttle Donation Fareboxes

Alison Dempsey explained that the Park Board approved on January 26 the following resolution: It is resolved that staff be requested to work with the Stanley Park Ecology Society and the Vancouver Trolley Company to explore the feasibility of installing fare boxes into the free summer Stanley Park shuttle buses for the purpose of collecting donations for the Stanley Park Ecology Society and that staff report back to the Planning and Environment Committee in March 2004.

She suggested that the Vancouver Trolley Company (VTC) could reinstall fare boxes on all of the shuttle buses to collect donations. Stanley Park Ecology Society (SPES) would provide notices to post by the fare boxes requesting donations or might produce park nature maps which drivers would be giving out in return for donation. SPES would be responsible to empty the fare boxes every day. There are however some issues with the proposal.

Jim Storie explained that he had originally supported the proposal but had since discussed the idea with his staff and drivers who expressed two main concerns. On peak summer days the shuttle buses can be very crowded and having a donation opportunity onboard may delay the service if people stop to check it out while entering or exiting. The second concern was that their tips might decline if there is an alternative recipient of any funds.

He offered that VTC will donate \$1,000 directly to SPES at the end of the season and that they could advertise their Society in the busses for free.

Alix Mathias explained that there are already two donation boxes, one at the Nature House and the other at Popcorn Stand. She has also expressed her concern about drivers losing their tips because that is not Society's intention. She would like to continue to further explore what arrangement would suit best to all parties involved. Eva Riccius suggested that the SPES and VTC continue with discussions to finalize the alternative option as described above.

2. VanDusen Gardens Plan

Jill Cherry gave a history on VanDusen Gardens and briefly summarized reasons why VanDusen Gardens in cooperation with VanDusen Botanical Garden Association (VBGA) want to make their new vision for gardens to be successful in the future. One of their many goals would be to increase number of visitors which now stands at about 150,000 a year.

Nancy Dickson gave an overview of the project itself. In 2002 the Park Board approved this project in principle and out of the last Capital Plan designated \$250,000 to go towards the commencement of a Capital Campaign by VanDusen Botanical Garden Association. In 2003 they applied for Infrastructure Funds. VBGA matched this amount by \$750,000 to make up the City's matching \$1 million. At the federal level, the Committee met with Minister Stephen Owen who told them about a new \$50 Million Western Economic Partnership Agreement which was announced in early December, 2003.

They also hired a Capital Campaign Consultant and Campaign Coordinator to achieve by March 2005 75% of VBGA's goal of \$7 million. The Capital Campaign is well launched. Committee believes that the redevelopment of the facilities not only will increase VanDusen's revenue-generating capacity but it will increase the potential sustainability of the Garden through its increased visibility as a top-of-mind tourist attraction, as a new venue for mid-sized meetings and events and as an educational resource centre. They also now see that the entire garden could be a demonstration model of the principles of sustainability involving the latest green technology.

VBGA's nearly 2000 volunteers contribute inestimable numbers of hours serving the Garden as Guides, Seed Collectors, Master Gardeners, Library and Gift Shop volunteers and in a major way help run six minor and two major fundraising events annually. The spring Plant Sale and VanDusen Garden Show raise approximately \$50,000 and \$40,000 respectively and it is estimated that Plant Sale alone has contributed more than \$1 million over its 27 year history.

As well, the VBGA's Director of Fund Development raises on average \$100,000 annually through two direct mail appeals as well as roughly \$500,000 through bequests and planned giving last year alone. Through all this hard work the VBGA has been able to put aside close to \$2 million to kick-start the Capital Campaign.

In the end Nancy Dickson, on behalf of all, expressed that VBGA would like to receive from the Vancouver Park Board statement of commitment, a Memorandum of Understanding, to contribute its share of the \$14 million.

Piet Rutgers explained that in the next Capital Plans a large portion of the funds will need to be spent on Olympic facilities, but he encouraged VBGA to continue in their fund-raising activities.

Liane McKenna confirmed that the Park Board would be willing to prepare a Memorandum of Understanding, similar to those signed in the past with other organizations such as the Millennium Sports Facility. Eva Riccius agreed that the Memorandum of Understanding is all that the Park Board could provide at this time.

3. Evergreen Foundation Presentation

Denise Philippe gave an overview on Evergreen, a non profit organization founded in 1991. They have over ten years experience working with communities. They naturalize, enhance, rehabilitate public spaces – school grounds, parks, and provide help with obtaining grants. They also host conferences and forums.

She has also introduced Native Plant Society of B.C. founded in 1997. The organization has more than three hundred members who work with, study and enjoy native plants. They focus on native plants and habitats. They offer expertise in:

- Advancing knowledge
- Conducting scientific research
- Creating a public inventory
- Educating the public and professionals
- Conserving and restoring land

She explained what tools they use to protect green space and that the Cities of Saanich, Burnaby, Langley and Seattle use these types of tools. Evergreen is also closely cooperating with the Everett Crowley Park Committee and they together have done invasive species removals and native plantings. Ross Waddell and Denise Philippe offered their services and expressed their wish to cooperate more closely with the Park Board in the future.

The delegation asked the Board to undertake three things:

- To prepare a natural areas inventory
- To prepare natural areas management plans for parks
- Better develop park partner program

Liane McKenna explained that QE district is aware of both organizations and they already cooperate with several similar organizations. Eva Riccius asked Liane to prepare a list of those organizations.

4. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the Planning and Environment Committee dated February 3, 2004 were approved.

CONCLUSION

Commissioner Riccius thanked everyone for coming to the meeting and putting forth their ideas and comments.

Meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.