

Free Store Design Group Meeting
Hornby/Denman Health Care Society Building
March 20, 2013

Present: Jan Kennedy (Chair), Ilze Raudzins, John Howard, Barbara Baird, Jon Isfeld (CVRD Waste Management), Stani Veselinovic (Depot Manager), Judith Walmsley, Ruth Fortune, John Machell, Katherine Ronan, Judith Lawrence, Lynn Nunley, Reina LeBaron, (Recording Secretary)

Regrets: Kathi Sauve, Phyllis Victory, Phil Bailey

Call to order: 2:02pm

Jan gave an introduction. The budget for the Free Store rebuild is very small for the size of the project. There is \$50,000 available from Function 360 (Hornby Island Waste Management) reserves, with the possibility of further \$10,000. Certainly, there is no more than \$60,000 available.

John Isfeld clarified that the regular annual operating and maintenance budget for the Recycling Depot is \$158,000 and that some funds for infrastructure expenses have come from Function 391 (CVRD Solid Waste Management). Hornby pays a fairly high rate for Waste Management because islanders have requested extra services. Detailed information is available online at ComoxValleyRD.ca.

There was a question about whether the CVRD could lend money for the Free Store upgrade. This would probably require a referendum and certainly would need more research.

The CVRD is very clear that the Free Store upgrade needs to happen this year and cannot be further delayed. The CVRD has acknowledged the value of the Free Store in diverting material from the waste stream. If the community wants to, the Recycling budget could be increased over the coming years to build a reserve for future Free Store upgrades.

It was noted that the manager does a great job with the budget.

There are always a lot of island projects needing funds. Fundraising for the Free Store would require some organizational effort and it is unclear how much money could be raised. It was noted that often when people donate a lot of money they also want a lot of control over the outcome.

Judith Walmsley has talked with Annie Fearman and Eleanora Laffin about fundraising possibilities. Several people seem interested in donating money to the Free Store project. Judith also talked with some of the young island men and several are willing to volunteer to work with Ian Maclean on the project.

Jan has talked with Chris Weix about organizing volunteer workers. Having such a tight timeline and budget are distinct challenges. One possibility would be to build a very basic structure “to code” and then upgrade it with future donated funds and labour.

A small group (Jan, Barbara, Ilze, Jon Isfeld, John Howard, Janet LeBlancq, Lynn Nunley and Ian Maclean) met at the Free Store to look at possibilities and options for upgrading the existing building. Ian Maclean has a connection with an engineer who may donate some of his time.

ACTION: Jon Isfeld will research whether the CVRD could cover the engineering costs.

There was a question about what level of building code was needed for the Free Store. It would need to be up to Commercial Building standard.

There seems to be broad support for upgrading the existing Free Store building. It was noted that this would be a demonstration of “Re-use”. Getting the roof up to code would give a large covered area that could then be finished and upgraded over time. Upgrading the existing structure would work best for the ease of the workers if the Free Store were shut down for a few weeks in the Fall. It was noted that lots of the interior stuff is moveable and if the outer roof were worked on first then there would be covered space to store things during the upgrade. Jon Isfeld showed a sketch of a possible direction for upgrading the Free Store.

There was general agreement that the parking spaces directly in front of the Recycling building should be marked as an “unloading zone”. It was noted that angled parking would encourage people to keep going in the same direction (one way traffic).

There was general agreement that the upgrade should be designed so that the Free Store can be expanded in the future if needed.

The down-side of upgrading the existing structure is that it is still fairly far from the Recycling building.

It was noted that having a smooth clear pedestrian path between the Recycling and a south entrance on the Free Store would significantly improve the connection between the buildings.

There was a suggestion to move the gardening supplies to the area near the compost. The area between the power shed and the Free Store could also be “greened” into a pleasant central garden space.

There was general agreement that the best place for the new Product Care building would be next to the Depot with a door at the east end of the Depot for easy staff access.

It was noted that the Depot building is very cold. It was suggested that there be ceiling sheathing added to keep more of the heat in and to possibly improve the noise dampening.

The Recycling Committee has done lots of research on costs for shipping containers, steel buildings, prefab buildings and standard stick frame construction. All of these options are expensive and time consuming and would likely not increase the final square footage of the Free Store.

The process for upgrading the existing Free Store building would be:

1. an engineer would look at the building and give recommendations
2. the engineer would work with Jon Isfeld to develop a plan
3. the Committee would review the plan and approve it or request changes by June
4. the project would be put out to tender and fundraising could begin.

Katherine is willing to work with Jon and/or the engineer to create a draft plan. The "Free Store Building Team" (not a sub-committee) at this time consists of Jan Kennedy, Katherine Ronan, John Howard, Barbara Baird, Stani, Phil Bailey and Judith Walmsley.

There was general agreement to get the plan set before summer and to then pursue fundraising ideas. It was noted that tax receipts are available from the CVRD for larger donations.

ACTION: Jon Isfeld will e-mail details about tax receipts to Jan.

There was general agreement to upgrading the existing Free Store building and to having the Product Care building next to the Recycling building. It was suggested that there could be a place in the future for workshops or classes in reusing and repurposing materials found in the Free Store.

Jan expressed appreciation for the wonderful process and the thoughtful input and fore everyone's efforts.

Adjourned: 3:15pm.