

# Climate-12 Action Team Convenors meeting #1

Thursday, September 21, 2023

## Notes

Steve Earle started this group's first-ever meeting with a land and water acknowledgement. Then introductions around the circle — 17 in attendance.

Gerry Bowes opened with a reading of his chapbook, *Funny Kind of Species*. Indeed!

Fay Weller welcomed all to the meeting and outlined the Climate 12-12-12 project, a Sustainable Gabriola initiative for community dialogue around climate change and local action. It launched in Sept. 2022 and culminated in Aug. 2023 with the current formation of Action Teams and the launch of this next phase, **Climate-12 Action**, to start putting the generated ideas into local action. She introduced the “steering committee” (Fay Weller, Steve Earle, Joan Johnson, Susan Swift, Greg Blee), who will help all groups with high-level support for organizing, advocacy, fundraising.

Then the six Team Convenors shared the activity already under way, even at this early stage. Here's a summary, team by team, along with notes and questions from the group.

### **Buildings & Energy** — Team Convenor Rob West

- Currently 5 team members, in contact via email
- Rob is leading an energy-efficient renovation (case study) of the late John Switzer house, originally built about 1973 (around the time the building code was implemented on Gabriola), with an extension added in 1979. The property was bequeathed to the Society for Nature—Gabriola, and is in similar condition to many older houses on Gabriola. Once fully renovated, it will house a farming family.
- The house is far from airtight, and has many other issues. Renovation has begun, with contractors including a Nanaimo team from Shoreline. Energy Canada has been utilized for select materials.
- The house should be ready for spring 2024. The case study will include monitoring energy use for a year after occupation, along with a full accounting of renovation costs.
- The study will be presented to the public, and renovation workshops offered. Suggested: tours (or video) of various stages of the renovation.
- Alison is leading an campaign to limit maximum house size in the upcoming OCP review.

### **Agriculture & Food Security** — Betty Kehler

- 5 team members
- Lots of uptake for gardening information; neighbourhood gardeners could share expertise, seeds, plants, and work. Opportunity for a mentorship program (possibly neighbourhood-based) on gardening and preserving.
- A food tour of established gardens and farms is being discussed.
- Course on meadow-making? A low-water workshop?

- Support for the Agi Co-op for local food sales.
- Important to spread knowledge about low-water plants.
- It's a busy time of year, as all gardens and orchards are full-on.
- Tie-ins with neighbourhood development, Biodiversity; GaLTT is already providing seeds and native plants.

### **Health & Well-Being** — Dyan Dunsmoor-Farley

- 5 team members
- Lots of climate anxiety, especially with all the forest fires this summer.
- The team met yesterday to form priorities. People coalescing around themes of neighbourhood and community building, emergency planning.
- Emergency planning has been taking place, but centralized in the RDN. People want to feel some autonomy.
- Upcoming PHC workshop (31-Oct) on connectivity, "social snacking."
- Over 4,000 completed surveys from last year's health survey are being compiled into a final report in the near future, to inform priority actions.

### **Transportation** — Steve Earle

- 6 team members
- Focus on more active transportation, less driving, especially in the ferry-Village area.
- Discussions about bike and pedestrian paths, especially in the ferry area.
- Islands Trust is possibly making progress on updating rural road standards, now based on 1992 agreement with Ministry of Transportation that considers Gabriola roads to be highways. Gabriola is considered the island best prepared to work on this. Could lead to more crosswalks, reduced lane widths, lower speed limits.
- Recent win with a 30 kph speed limit in the Village area.
- Looking at other transportation options, e.g. trails.
- Gabriola Rideshare group is getting active on Facebook. [426 members]

### **Water** — Jennie Shillingford (+ Joan Johnson)

- Cisterns are a priority, and a purchasing co-op for water collection and storage is forming. Arbutus has agreed to discount price and delivery of cisterns. Several orders already, a dozen expressions of interest. There are also rebates available.
- Working with Rainwater Designers and Coastline Contractors.
- A short workshop may be useful, as the concept of cisterns is new to many.
- Three priorities: interest-free loans; water-system sharing; greywater recycling.
- We have approached an artists to paint the new Commons cistern, to help address aesthetic objections.
- Discussion on having someone come from Victoria to discuss greywater collection; it has been usable there for 20 years! Also rainwater collection, approved for multiple dwellings just 4 years ago.
- Discussion on large-scale water collection, e.g. ponds, for agricultural use. Several big ponds on the island: near Community Hall (4-acre), Davison farm, Eik, Windecker farm, Bolton, near apple cider business.

- Gabriola once had many creeks and wetlands. Suggested that bringing back beavers could help rebuild a healthy ecosystem.

### **Economic Change** — Fay Weller

- Group will be meeting soon (26-Sep). New Chamber of Commerce ED has joined the group.
- Looking at other forms of economic measurement than GDP, e.g. Happiness Indicators.
- Re-thinking forms of exchange: shifting to a sharing/cooperative/circular economy, buying local, buying and wasting less.
- Researching baseline info, to measure where we were, are now, and how we are progressing; revisiting reports from 2010.
- Ideas floated re turning yard waste into wood chips for agricultural use, also biochar production. Discussion about a wood-chipper: Arbutus no longer has one for rent.
- Tie-in with neighbourhood building.

### **Art & Culture** — update from Steve Earle

- Steve approached writer, they are talking about planning projects, events or workshops that relate to climate change.
- Talking with Gabriola Players about staging a climate change play.

### **Indigenous Ways of Knowing** — Joan Johnson

- Should be incorporated into all our team actions — e.g., the suggestion of adding beavers could be a way to create natural ponds to store and filter water. We don't always need more technology to repair our damage; when possible, we can encourage a natural restoration of ecosystems.

### **Other stuff**

Announced events: Regenerate Cascadia tour with Joe Brewer, at the Surf 6:30 on Wed-Oct-25.  
Steve Earle's book presentation at the library, 1:00 on Sat-23-Sep.

The Climate-12 Action steering committee — Fay Weller, Steve Earle, Joan Johnson, Susan Swift, Greg Blee — is developing a website for the project to help with communication and info sharing. Anyone interested in joining a team can email [Climate12Action@gmail.com](mailto:Climate12Action@gmail.com) and we'll put you in touch with the Team Convenor.

**The next monthly Convenors meeting will be Thursday, October 19<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 at the Commons building.** We will include a discussion of the group's preferred time to meet, given impending winter darkness.

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