



CITY OF VANCOUVER

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: October 25, 2007
Author: Devorah Kahn
Phone No.: 604.871.6374
RTS No.: 6763
VanRIMS No.: 11-2000-14
Meeting Date: November 15, 2007

TO: Standing Committee on Planning and Environment
FROM: Director of Social Planning
SUBJECT: Vancouver Food Policy Council Terms of Reference

RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopt the draft Terms of Reference for the Vancouver Food Policy Council (VFPC) as outlined in APPENDIX A of the Administrative Report dated October 25, 2007, entitled "Vancouver Food Policy Council Terms of Reference".

CITY MANAGER'S COMMENTS

In July 2006, Council adopted the assessment criteria put forward by the Roles, Relationships, and Responsibilities Review Committee. Subsequently, Council evaluated the advisory bodies based on the criteria and, in November 2006, made several decisions, one of which was to group existing and newly established advisory bodies into four categories. Council resolved that the Food Policy Council (FPC) was to be included as a 'Type A' committee. This category consists of committees that are advisory to Council. Each was assigned a non-voting Councillor Liaison and Staff Liaison.

The proposed Mandate and Terms of Reference (Attachment A) document is put forward by staff after consulting with the current Vancouver Food Policy Council members. It is meant to align the VFPC with the decisions made by Council in July and November 2006. Specifically, the attached document:

- Clarifies the mandate of the VFPC;
- Recognizes the VFPC as being advisory to Council;
- Clarifies the roles of the Councillor Liaison and Staff Liaison;

- Articulates the terms of reference of the VFPC in a manner consistent with other Type A committees; and
- Clarifies the membership composition and appointment process.

The City Manager submits the foregoing for Council's CONSIDERATION.

COUNCIL POLICY

- On July 8, 2003, Council approved a motion supporting the development of a just and sustainable food system for the City of Vancouver.
- On December 11, 2003, Council approved the proposed Action Plan for Creating a Just and Sustainable Food System for the City of Vancouver (Food Action Plan). A copy of the proposed Food Action Plan can be found at:
<http://vancouver.ca/ctyclerk/cclerk/20031209/rr1.htm>
- On November 2, 2006, Council approved roles, relationships, and responsibilities for Advisory Bodies of Council, including the Food Policy Council.
- On February 15, 2007, Council approved the Vancouver Food Charter.
- It is City policy and practice that Terms of Reference for Advisory Committees be approved by City Council.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with Terms of Reference for its advisory committee - the Vancouver Food Policy Council (VFPC).

BACKGROUND

On December 11, 2003, Council approved the creation of a Food Policy Council, as recommended by the Vancouver Food Policy Task Force.

The Food Policy Council's initial mandate was to act as an advisory and policy development body on food system issues within the City's jurisdiction as described in the Policy Report dated November 20, 2003, entitled 'Action Plan for Creating a Just and Sustainable Food System for the City of Vancouver.

As approved, the Food Policy Council had the following structure:

- The Chairs of the Vancouver Food Policy Council report to the Director of Social Planning;
- The newly established Food Policy Coordinator was to report to the Director of Social Planning as well as the Vancouver Food Policy Council; and
- Initial Food Policy Council members were to be appointed by the Food Policy Task Force and subsequent members elected by the Food Policy Council.

The November 2003, Policy Report outlined the proposed roles and responsibilities of the Food Policy Council. Terms of Reference for the VFPC were developed by the Task Force.

In November, 2006, Council conducted a review of advisory bodies as recommended by the Roles, Relationships and Responsibilities Review Committee. At that time, Council approved nine advisory bodies including the Food Policy Council. The mandate of the VFPC remained unchanged. Each advisory body was to be assigned a non-voting Councillor Liaison and a Staff Liaison.

On March 29, 2007, a memorandum was sent to Mayor and Council stating that staff would be conducting a review of the Terms of Reference for the VFPC in consultation with the VFPC.

DISCUSSION

A consultation process was undertaken with members of the VFPC on the Terms of Reference. Members of the VFPC articulated the importance of including the definition of food security and the role of the food system in the mandate for inclusion in the Terms of Reference.

The purpose of the review was to clarify the role of the VFPC . The proposed changes to the Terms of Reference are consistent with the Terms of Reference for other advisory bodies. They are also consistent with the Vancouver Food Charter approved by Council on February 15, 2007. The clarified mandate and Terms of Reference will further facilitate Vancouver's continued leadership role in dealing with municipal and regional food-related policies and programs.

The Terms of Reference attached as APPENDIX "A" are provided to Council for consideration.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications.

CONCLUSION

In December, 2003, Council established the Vancouver Food Policy Council. Since that time, a review of all advisory bodies by Council has resulted in a number of changes - including changes to the Food Policy Council. In light of these changes, staff, in consultation with the Food Policy Council, have revised the Terms of Reference of this body.

* * * * *

Mandate and Terms of Reference Vancouver Food Policy Council

Introduction:

The Vancouver Food Policy Council (VFPC) was established by Vancouver City Council at the Standing Committee of City Services and Budgets on December 11, 2003

VFPC Mandate:

The mandate of the VFPC is to support the development of a food system where food is:

- I. safe, nutritious and culturally appropriate;
- II. affordable, available and accessible to all; and
- III. produced, processed, marketed, consumed and waste products reused or managed in a manner that is financially viable, protects the health and dignity of people and has minimum impact on the environment.

VFPC Terms of Reference:

- Advises Council on matters which affect the food system;
- Consults with staff and provides staff with information on matters of concern to food system constituents;
- Provides input on, monitors and contributes to City policies, programs and reports that affect the food system;
- Acts as a resource and works collaboratively with City staff on initiatives/projects to enhance the food system;
- Acts as a resource for City staff by leading public involvement processes and public forums on matters related to the food system;
- Works cooperatively with all City of Vancouver Departments, Boards and Commissions whose activities affect the food system;
- Engages in outreach and public awareness activities to communities in Vancouver on matters related to the food system;
- Acts as a conduit for feedback from community groups, organizations, other government bodies, and business on matters related to the food system in Vancouver;
- Supports groups endeavouring to initiate and develop projects to enhance the food system in Vancouver;
- Attends City-sponsored public forums to receive public input on issues of concern to people interested in the food system;
- Produces an annual work plan and budget with specific objectives each year, in consultation with its Council and Staff Liaison, for distribution to Council and CoV Departments, Boards and Commissions for information;
- Submits an annual report including expenditures to Council describing its accomplishments for the past year, including reference to each objective set out in the work plan and any arising issues to which the Committee has responded.

VFPC Membership:

The VFPC may have up to 21 members. Membership is to consist of the following:

- Fourteen (14) members - two members from each of the following food system areas: a) food production; b) processing; c) access; d) distribution; e) consumption; f) waste management; and g) system-wide.
- Seven (7) seats for members-at-large.

Members are appointed by City Council for a maximum of three years. All terms expire on the date that falls immediately before the first Monday after December 1 in the year of a civic election. A member may serve a maximum of two terms.

Councillor Liaison:

The VFPC will have one Council liaison as appointed by City Council. The Council liaison is not voting. Their role is to serve as an intermediary by communicating the advisory body's work to the rest of Council and reflect the broader context of local government to the VFPC.

Staff Liaison:

The VFPC will have one staff liaison assigned by City Council. The staff liaison provides information and advice on City programs and work that is relevant to the mandate and work plan of the VFPC. The staff liaison may assist the VFPC when it requires specific information or advice related to City programs of work, where it is reasonable and relevant to their mandate. The staff liaison receives direction from the Director of Social Planning.

VFPC Meeting Protocol and Frequency:

- Operates in accordance with the City of Vancouver Procedure By-law No. 8554;
- May create independent operating procedures provided that such procedures do not conflict with the Procedure By-Law. In the event of a conflict, the Procedure By-law will apply;
- Annually elects a Chair and a Vice-Chair; and is
- Required to meet at least four times per year, on a quarterly basis, to a maximum of twelve (12) times per year. The committee normally meets ten times per year.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON FOOD POLICY & FOOD POLICY COUNCILS

3.1 Food Policy¹²

A food policy is any decision made by an institution which shapes the type of foods used or available as well as their cost, or which influences the opportunities for farmers and employees or affects food choices available to consumers. Food policy operates at the global, national, provincial, regional, local and institutional levels. World Trade Organization regulations, welfare policies, farm subsidies and labelling standards are some examples of higher-level policies that influence the food system. At the local level, examples of food policies include:

- The regulatory requirements placed on someone desiring to open a food-based business;
- Food purchasing decisions of institutional buyers and how they relate to the use of locally produced items;
- A decision by school officials whether to allow junk food and soft drinks in vending machines;
- The child nutrition requirements place on daycares that receive municipal funding.

3.2 Food Policy Councils ²

Food Policy Councils (FPCs) are comprised of stakeholders from various segments of a local food system. FPCs can be officially sanctioned through a government action such as a City Council motion, or can be a grassroots effort. FPCs are innovative collaborations between citizens and government officials which give voice to the concerns and interests of many who are interested in the creation of food systems that are ecological sustainable, economically viable and socially just. The primary goal of many Food Policy Councils is to examine the operation of a local food system and provide ideas and policy recommendations for how it can be improved.

There are many reasons why local officials might want to create a FPC. The most significant may be a desire to broaden the discussion of issues beyond simply agricultural production to involve a more comprehensive, food system wide examination. The opportunity to use a food systems approach to examining local issues offers an inclusive process which can bring a broader array of interested parties to the table.

The creation of a FPC can provide an opportunity for a focused examination of how local government actions shape the food system. It can also create a forum in which people involved in all different parts of the food system and government can meet to learn more about what each does and to consider how their individual actions impact other parts of the food system.

Food Policy Councils can address a variety of issues, not normally examined or implemented from within government.

¹ Based on the Iowa Food Policy Council, <http://www.iowafoodpolicy.org>

² Based on the Iowa Food Policy Council, <http://www.iowafoodpolicy.org>

- Food Policy Councils can bring to the table a broader array of interests and voices.
- Food Policy Councils can examine issues which often go unexamined; such as the effectiveness of food services and the causes of hunger in a society.
- A Food Policy Council can employ a more comprehensive approach to analyzing issues which recognizes the inter-relation between different parts of the food system and the need for coordination and integration of actions if policy goals are to be achieved. For example, if a key objective is to increase markets for locally produced food, a FPC can be a vehicle to consider how the decisions at all levels of a food system - not just farmers or governmental officials- but also food buyers, wholesalers, retailers - must also be considered in the equation.

FPCs are a valuable resource for developing and implementing risk management activities designed to serve the needs of traditionally under-served populations. FPCs are able to identify and implement effective strategies to improve opportunities for small and non-traditional farmers, for consumers, and for others interested in how a local food system performs.

Examples of issues that other FPCs have addressed³ :

Transportation: The City of Hartford Advisory Commission of Food Policy assisted in the creation of a direct bus route from low-income neighbourhoods to affordable food stores.

Economic Development: The Toronto Food Policy Council initiated a commercial kitchen incubator to aid the development of small food businesses.

Farm to Cafeteria: The Connecticut Food Policy Council encouraged the University of Connecticut to switch to a wholesaling method that would allow local businesses to win bids.

Education: The Onondaga Food System Council (NY) held a "Food Systems Dinner."

Land Use: The Connecticut Food Policy Council initiated the purchase of development rights for 12 farms (1,350 acres) in the year 2000.

Low-income access: The Knoxville-Knox County Food Policy Council recommended the implementation of the School Breakfast Program to serve low-income students.

Skills Training Program: The Kamloops Food Policy Council helped to establish the Gardengate Project, a training facility which promotes a healthy lifestyle by teaching participants the essentials of food cultivation and preservation. Last year around 8,000 pounds of fresh produce was grown and donated to charities in the Kamloops area.

3.3 Links to Other Food Policy Councils

In addition to Vancouver, a number of other North American cities have food policy councils. Some are affiliated with municipal governments (e.g. Toronto; Hartford, Connecticut; Portland, Oregon), while others exist as community organizations (e.g. Berkeley; Knoxville, Tennessee). These links are also available through the Food Policy website.

³

³ Based on Lane County Food Coalition, <http://www/lanefood.org/content/foodpolicycouncils.htm>

References

Borron, S.M. 2003. Food Policy Councils: Practice and Possibility:
<http://www.lanefood.org/PDF/VFPCreport.pdf>

Dahlberg, K. 1997. Strategies, Policy Approaches, and Resources for Local Food System Planning and Organizing. A Resource Guide:
<http://homepages.wmich.edu/~dahlberg/ResourceGuide.html>

Canadian Food Policy- Regional/ Municipal Food Policy Councils

City of Toronto Food Policy Council
http://www.city.toronto.on.ca/health/tfpc_index.htm

Kamloops Food Policy Council

Ottawa Food Security Council
<http://www.spcottawa.on.ca/ofsc/>

U.S. Food Policy- State Food Policy Councils

Connecticut Food Policy Council
<http://www.foodpc.state.ct.us/>

Iowa Food Policy Council
<http://iowafoodpolicy.org/>

Regional/ Municipal Food Policy Councils

Berkeley CA Food Policy Council
www.berkeleyfood.org

City of Hartford Advisory Commission on Food Policy
Information available at
http://www.hartfordfood.org/programs/food_policy_survey.html

Hartford Food System
<http://www.hartfordfood.org>

Knoxville TN Food Policy Council
<http://www.kornet.org/kfpc/>

Tacoma WA - Tahoma Food System
<http://www.tahomafoodsystem.org>

Regional/ Municipal Food Policy Statements

Some cities such as Prince Albert, Saskatchewan and Merritt, BC do not have food policy councils, but have passed Food Charters or food policy statements.

City of Merritt Food Policy Statement

Information available at <http://www.agr.gc.ca/misb/fsb/FSB2eng.html>

City of Kamloops Food Policy/ Social Plan

Information available at <http://www.agr.gc.ca/misb/fsb/FSB2eng.html>

Prince Albert Food Charter

Information available at

<http://www.ryerson.ca/~foodsec/Documents/princealbertcharter.pdf>

Saskatoon Food Charter

available at

<http://www.ryerson.ca/~foodsec/Documents/saskatoonfoodcharter.html>)

Thompson Health Region Food Policy Statement

<http://www.agr.gc.ca/misb/fsb/FSB2eng.html>)

Toronto Food Charter

www.city.toronto.on.ca/food_hunger/food_charter.pd