



FALSE CREEK
RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

2014 - 2015 President's Report

ADVOCACY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Judicial Review Application

In 2014, the FCRA filed a Judicial Review Application in the Supreme Court of British Columbia. We were challenging the ability of the City of Vancouver's General Manager of Planning to sanction commercial activities on land that is zoned for exclusive park and recreational use. The City's decision to allow the continuance of the Presentation Centre on the park site was based solely on granting special hardship status to Concord Pacific. Concord Pacific was successful in applying to be joined in this action — arguing their hardship status was genuine.

Unfortunately the Court agreed that the Director of Planning's decision was "reasonable". While we lost in Court, we are heartened by a clear victory in the Court of Public Opinion. We received great press and media attention throughout this process — shining a bright light on the sheer lunacy of a decision by the City to grant hardship status to one of the wealthiest land developers in the country.

The Green Light Campaign

We continue to make great strides in our silent protest — every night green lights in our members windows show our demand for more green space in an ever densifying neighbourhood. We have sold more than 1400 green lights. This campaign has inspired the imagination of our community.

The Joint Working Group on Northeast False Creek

For the past 8 years members of the FCRA have participated in meetings with developers, city staff, and other stakeholders such as Science World, Dr Sun Yat Sen Gardens, Dragonboating and paddling community, PAVCO, Roundhouse, Vancouver Open Space Network and others. These meetings provided an opportunity to learn what the staff and developers were planning for our community.

Unfortunately the meetings provided very little opportunity for input. While the city calls these meetings 'consultation' we maintain our position that meaningful engagement is no more than just being told what is planned. We continue to lobby for opportunities to ensure residents' views are taken seriously in the planning process.

The Coalition of Vancouver Neighbourhoods

As a founding member of this association of 27 community organizations, the FCRA participated in a meeting with Mayor Gregor Robertson on the issue of the importance of meaningful citizen involvement.

We invited the Mayor to meet on the eve of his re-election given his campaign promise ‘to do things differently’. The November 2014 invitation was finally accepted, and the meeting took place in July 2015. We are still awaiting the Mayor’s promised response to our proposals for meaningful engagement.

Two of our board members regularly attend the CVN meetings.

Removing the Georgia and Dunsmuir Viaducts

City Council has voted to remove the viaducts. The proposal accepted by the majority of Council includes an additional 2.5 million square feet of density on the remaining land in Northeast False Creek. Members of the FCRA wrote letters and appeared in person to question both the process and substance of the proposal.

With respect to ‘process’, the City did come to the neighbourhood to make a presentation. They allowed for a limited number of attendees at their Science World event. The audience was understandably hostile given that so many questions remain unanswered. Included are:

- Traffic implications for north-south roads, i.e. Quebec, Carrall, Abbott;
- Health implications for children at the new school with an at-grade road network of 63,000 vehicular trips per day.
- Loss of green space to other purposes, e.g. bicycle roads
- The roadway setback for our neighbours in the 100/200 block of Prior who never imagined a 6 lane highway in front of their door

Of course, the biggest issue is the size of the “ new park” space and where that space is coming from. Is it actually new space or just space that is hard surface bike/cycling space conceived from the closure of Carrall St and the Dunsmuir elevated bike way. In reality there is no additional park space at all — just repurposed hard surface. And, of course, the realization that Creekside Park is still at least a decade away. The proposal did not include any sunset clause for park delivery. In fact, it could be delayed well past 2025 as there is no clarity around what exactly will trigger park development. Will all of Concord’s 2.5 million square feet need to be developed first?

We are still trying to get answers to these questions.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Safety on the Seawall

The FCRA continues to work with the City Engineering staff to update and upgrade the pedestrian and cycling pathways in NEFC along the seawall. You will be seeing an improvement in the very near future with separated bike paths more conducive to safety.

Children’s Play Area in the Creekside Meadow

The FCRA has been working with the Park Board as they move forward on the new children's play area in the Creekside meadow. The new play area will be located on the larger green space closer to the laneway access road. We are meeting with Park Board staff on the design next week and we encourage anyone who is interested to participate.

Neighbourhood Parties

This summer the FCRA sponsored two community social events to bring neighbours together and build community spirit.

The Citygate Jamboree was held on the existing Creekside Park meadow next to Science World in June. With active participation from the Dragon Boat Society, Vancouver Community Policing, and Science World, residents were treated to an array of recreational opportunities, free dragon boat tours, games and events with Science World staff, tours of the Eco House, prize draws, and entertainment from the Hard Rock Miners.

The Crosstown Festival was held in September in Andy Livingston Park. Two hundred residents enjoyed displays by Sun Yat Sen classical Chinese Garden, Jack Chow, the International Award Winning Magician, the Vancouver Fire and Police Departments, Red Fox Active Living, and of course, our musical favourites — the Hard Rock Miners. We were grateful to many local merchants for donating great prizes, including tickets for 4 at a Canucks Game, gift baskets and gift cards from Ming Wo, Nesters, T & T, Odeon Theatres, and Katie's Nails.

Our thanks to the Vancouver Foundation for their Small Neighbourhood Grants!

Plaza of Nations

Last year we reported that there has been no progress with this development that includes a community centre, indoor soccer, and ice rink. Again, we regret informing you that there has been no progress made in resolving the issues that stand in the way of this development.

Growing the Association

We continue to reach out to strata buildings and individual members all around the Creek. New members include the Espana in the International Village and the Opus in the Olympic Village as well as our long time strata building supporters. We now have 19 strata buildings who are members. We couldn't do it without your ongoing loyalty and support.

Thank you!

Patsy McMillan
Fern Jeffries

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