

FILBERG HERITAGE LODGE AND PARK ASSOCIATION



2010 -2014 BUSINESS PLAN

Submission to the Board of Directors
January 2010

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Executive Summary

Introduction

The Filberg Lodge and Heritage Park is situated on 9 acres of park. This site was the home of Robert Filberg and his family. They enjoyed a magnificent view, beautiful flower gardens and they were able to provision themselves with foods from the garden. These features are still defining characteristics of life in the Comox Valley today.

The Filberg Heritage Lodge and Park Association (FHLPA) will undertake several initiatives that will provide an expanded foundation for operations. These include registration of the site on the provincial and federal heritage site registers; adoption and implementation of governance policies covering code of ethics and conduct, conservation and collections policies, various administration and financial policies; and an expansion of community-based entertainment and educational initiatives that will enhance the public access and profile of the Filberg.

Committees of the board or specific individuals have been charged with responsibility of advancing these initiatives within the scope of the budget.

This document proposes a new mission statement; includes a vision statement and presents five goals that will directly support the mission of the association.

Mission Vision and Goals

Vision

Celebrating our community heritage.

Mission

Through good stewardship, manage the Filberg Heritage Lodge and Park for the community where all can experience unique gardens, fine arts and crafts and community offerings at this scenic landmark.

Goals

To fulfill this mission the association will adopt the following goals:

1. Develop and fund a site management and maintenance plan.
2. Articulate the heritage and cultural values of the site to the public.
3. Support the local community at large through various events.
4. Strive to operate deficit free.
5. To support the related objectives of the Town of Comox.

Strategies to Meet Goals

- 1) **Develop and fund a site management and maintenance plan.**
 - Prepare a statement of significance for the site.
 - Identify defining characteristics of the building and location.
 - Identify maintenance needs in accordance with heritage standards.
 - Plan the maintenance schedule and fund accordingly.
 - i. Objective – To engage local trades and skills to participate in provision of services to the lodge for its care and maintenance.
 - ii. To implement safety features on site to allow greater use through lighted driveway, electrical improvements and safety barriers.

- 2) **Articulate the heritage and cultural values of the site to the public.**
 - Increase the heritage value of the site through interpretative panels, geographic interpretation (names of mountains, Royston, Union Bay etc).
 - Provide guided walks and talks through the grounds.

- 3) **Support the local community at large through various events.**

Develop programming and services to be offered throughout the year.

 - i. Continue to organize and present a summer music series in the park.
 - ii. Increase availability for lodge (including winter) and garden tours.
 - iii. Promote Art Shows during the weekends
 - iv. Continue to organize and present a “Kids Day in the Park” event.
 - v. Increase varied community and educational offerings such as Filberg Readers Circle, Christmas children’s crafts, story telling, sustainability awareness workshops and special holiday events.
 - vi. Support and advise school board work students in various park and lodge operations.

- 4) **Strive to operate deficit free.**
 - The budget for the FHLPA is based on activities and operations that can be supported by the funds raised during the year.
 - The Filberg Festival will celebrate its 28th anniversary in 2010 and it continues to be the major fundraising activity of the association; however, operating costs have increased resulting in a substantial decrease in profitability. Ways to refresh the festival and increase its profitability are being reviewed with anticipated implementation planned for 2011.
 - Seek sponsorship of various events or site maintenance projects.
 - b) Review the demand for weddings at the Filberg and improve the service and revenue potential.
 - c) Partner with other organizations to present community offerings for a variety of ages throughout the year.
 - Continue to engage an operator for the Tea House for the summer months.
 - Review and monitor operating costs to ensure that they are realistic.

5) Support the related objectives of the Town of Comox.

- Maintain the governance framework with supporting policies.
- Partner with other Comox arts and cultural organizations to increase profile of the community.
- Act as host for civic functions or council meetings.
- Prepare materials that will assist the Town in marketing and other initiatives.

Activities Planned for 2010

Grounds Operations

Filberg Festival – 28th Year

In November of 2009, the board approved funding to support the annual Filberg Festival in celebrating its 28th year in 2010. The board is working with Sallan Productions to refresh, in 2011, the festival by focusing on more culinary events and stands along with the traditional craft and music offerings. This interest was expressed by the public through a survey taken in 2007 and is in concert with the nature of profiling the Comox Valley .

Sunday Sounds – Free Public Concerts

A committee of the board assisted by volunteers has secured nine musical groups to perform concerts on the Tea House Lawn on Sundays from late June until September (excluding during the festival).

Kids Day in the Park - 2nd Year

In August 2009 a most successful Kids Day in the Park was initiated with children's entertainers, lunch, face painting, and the trampoline castle being at the ticketed event. This event has been reviewed and been rescheduled for June of this year with similar offerings. It is anticipated that it will in a modest way continue to be a fund raiser for the Association along with meeting community needs.

Lodge Operations

The lodge continues to host the administrative activities of the association as well as raising revenues through booking of weddings, art shows, receptions, memberships and grounds rentals. Lodge staff, including the resident caretaker, is responsible for the public face of the FHLPA as they are in daily contact with renters, visitors and teahouse guests.

The grounds are enhanced by the cutting garden which includes raised beds displaying seasonal flowering plants that are cut and utilized to beautify the interior of the lodge and tables of the Tea House as well as bunches being for sale.

The site has a strong demand for weddings and the needs of these groups and their guests is being reviewed to provide the bridal party with a preparation facility in the lodge at a nominal rate.

Art Shows are the primary attraction to the Lodge on weekends from April to July and from September to December. Artists needs for display space, lighting, promotion and opportunities for collaboration will be identified.

Increased lodge usage has been planned for 2010 through increased community and educational programming some of which involve local partnerships. Also, over the winter months through volunteers lodge tours have been made available along with a general increase in programming.

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It is anticipated that in 2010 the facility will continue to increase in its use and public accessibility through increased volunteer support and more programming.

In 2009 a small section of the lodge adjacent to the upper entry was transformed into gift shop and featured local artist work displayed on a commission basis. It was operated through volunteer help and overseen by lodge staff. This was a pilot project throughout the summer months and though little revenue was generated it was considered a worthwhile undertaking to be established in 2010 but with a more informed selection of stock.

Administration and Governance

Administrative Goals –

Administrative staff is responsible for daily decisions regarding site use and maintenance, booking use of the lodge and grounds, collection of rents and fees, educational information to the public and resolution of public complaints and concerns. This staff also is the liaison with the staff of the Parks and Recreation Department of the Town of Comox.

The board of directors of the FHLPA has engaged in a day and a half retreat to review board objectives and formulate a strategic plan for the future. The Mission, Vision and Goals of the 2007 Draft Proposal were reviewed to be certain that the initiatives of this board in its view of maintaining the property and serving the community appropriately are clearly expressed.

Consequently in response to possible Mission, Vision, and Goals adjustments there may be some administrative changes that better support the association such as cost effectiveness and a focus on increasing the volunteer base in order to offer more community events, educational programming and increase public accessibility.

Systems for managing membership data, event bookings, revenue and expenditure control and computer and data security will continue to be improved.

Board Governance –

The board will continue to review of its constitution and bylaws with any needed changes being presented at the annual general meeting.

Membership will be reviewed for value, impact on other revenue sources, renewal dates, and voting privileges.

The board will endeavor to present its plans to the Town of Comox council on a regular basis.

The board will review its basic governance responsibilities and prepare an annual planning schedule so that reviews of procedures, performance, nominations and other governance matters are attended to.

Committees of the board will operate within their terms of reference and develop a reporting schedule.

Planning for 2010 and forward

Revenue Discussions

The Filberg Heritage Lodge and Park Association currently has limited means of earning revenues from the site. It is not fenced and admission is not charged as is the case for gardens such as Milner and Kitty Coleman. The out buildings are used for storage of chairs for weddings and by the grounds gardener for equipment, bulbs and supplies.

Net revenue from the rental of the grounds is less than \$13,000 annually. The FHLPA expends around \$30,000 for garden support staff depending on availability of Malaspina student interns and staff availability at minimum wage with no grants presently available for summer students. Grounds rental cannot cover the costs of the additional staff provided to the Town of Comox and the obligation to provide any staff is not included in the agreement with the Town.

The gardens are not protected from deer (other than the cutting garden) so planting tends to be limited to deer-proof plants. A perennial border containing spectacular plants is out of the question under the circumstances. This limits the attractiveness as a 'must-see' garden. Although the site is beautifully situated, this does not attract large numbers of visitors nor does it warrant an admission fee.

The festival is the net contributor but the gardens are not the feature attraction and in fact have to be protected and later restored due to the influx of large numbers of visitors.

The net lodge rental revenues and membership sales contribute less than \$20,000 to the administrative costs and membership management and processing is a net expense to the association.

Over the history of the association, many events were hosted. Heritage displays, garden festivals to Strawberry Teas were tried. These events have been developed and implemented by volunteers. Although described as 'successful' from the point of view of entertainment value they did little to contribute to the revenues of the organization and cease when the appropriate volunteers cannot be found.

The Administrator is engaged primarily in management of the membership data and issuing cards, answering telephone calls (many of which are related to the festival and forwarded to the Festival Producer), organizing community and educational events, and booking rentals of the grounds and lodge. Grant and fund raising activities are also within the scope of this position along with other income generating commercial activities. Part time staff is engaged to assist with these duties and support volunteer management; however, the cost far outweighs the revenues generated.

There is little information available on the site about the history of the region, first nations or the gardens. The trees on site have now been attractively labeled and guided tour routings are in place for summer visitors. Although the Hands On Farm attracts summer visitors for 6 weeks

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over the summer it is managed by the Comox Recreation Centre and the sight is dormant the rest of the year.

A comprehensive plan for educational programming that meets school curriculum needs, events that would attract the public to the park, better utilization and rental of the lodge and kitchen have been seen to increase over the past year. However, these events are not always fund generating and place an additional workload on the Administrator and so their cost effectiveness is not always very positive even though the board is most supportive of exhibiting community leadership.

In 2009 a souvenir book, “The Filberg Heritage Lodge and Park” with photographs by Carl Tessman and writings by Paula Wild, was produced. This venture was made utilizing grant funds from Community Futures and books are to be sold at book stores, tourist outlets and the lodge itself. The book that is the property of the Association will over time generate revenue; however, initial production outlay by the Filberg was required to allow its publication to be cost effective.

Revenue sources by site:

Budget Assumptions

Without an increase in sources of revenue or the way in which the site is utilized the increasing costs of garden staff, administration, and repairs and maintenance cannot be covered.

The budget for 2010 assumes a particular profit from the festival and other sources which if these numbers increase would result in a deficit reduction, however, it does not make any provision for funding summer garden staff.