

Article that appeared in the Rainbow Bridge on 1st October 2021

What is DevCom and what are they plotting??

Dear Community (Submitted by John Talbott)

Time for an update on the work of the newly formed Development Committee. I found that name very seriously boring so shortened it to DevCom, just to humour myself and for no other reason. No one objected. Some of you may make the connections to other crisis related acronyms.

So, this is the remit that we're working to:

- i. Completion of a master plan to provide a guiding direction for decision making enabling future development of The Park.
- ii. Drafting of a brief for the Sanctuary & Community Centre rebuild.
- iii. An inclusive consultative process of representatives from the Community.
- iv. Review of service provision within The Park and develop strategies for how it can be improved. Park services management & maintenance.
- v. Cooperation with Nature 60 years on; how can we weave this in, how does it inform what we want to achieve and demonstrate?
- vi. Review of how all Foundation owned land (including solum/common land) at The Park is currently being used/not used and maintained/not maintained.
- vii. What future needs can be identified now and what strategies can be put in place to achieve these needs over time, including funding.
- viii. Drafting of policy, decision documents, and research on what FF assets can be handed over to a separate organisation for development and management of those assets.

And who is this DevCom? So - we have representatives from the major Park stakeholders: THA, NFA, FF, DL, NFD, PET, FHT & Greenleaf; myself as chair and one Mr JR Fulton, special emissary from the US of A. (Points awarded for knowing all the acronyms above btw). It's a big group and we've already been meeting for a couple of months.

JR was the first to offer his services post arson event and will be arriving in two weeks for two months, with a view to coming for longer next year. By way of introduction, JR lived here for 4 years in the early 80s and was instrumental in early days of the ecovillage. He & I lead the major reconstruction of Traigh Bhan in 1984. He's an architect and has specialised in project management of large construction projects, the most recently being multistorey student housing that included commercial kitchens and food services. I think he told me he's done like 9 of these. Oh, and he did a design for a new Park community centre in 1985 after a major community consultation process (which we didn't build). Sort of déjà vu all over again(?) though not wanting to be the designer but to facilitate the actual building this time.

And where is this DevCom to be located? Well up to the present moment we have been located in the cloud where everyone else has been meeting virtually for the past year and a half, BUT thanks to the generosity of the FF we have now been allocated the middle room of

what used to be the publications building more recently known as Big Sky. 'We' have reconsecrated said room as SKYLAB - which will be the situation room of DevCom where important matters will be discussed and plans drafted (see above remit) and meetings held in a face to face manner (as long as we are able, hopefully sans masks). 'You' may speculate as to why this name Skylab was chosen.

And what has this DevCom been up to so far? So, the mostly we've been gathering information, importantly trying to produce a comprehensive map of The Park from many different sources – which has proved to be harder than 'one' imagined. But we have made progress of late the results of which 'we' hope to be able to share with 'the community' quite soon. What 'we' most want to identify is what we're calling 'the commons' which is basically everything that doesn't have a building or structure on it, ie roads, footpaths, gardens.

The second thing we've been investigating is finding an organisational structure wherein these so called 'commons' might be held, in an actual community owned fashion. Currently they are owned by either FF or DL and neither are attached to remaining owners. There are a number of reasons why 'community owned commons' could be a good thing which will be shared and discussed more widely before anything is done.

Both these activities are related to having a basic masterplan for The Park – which seems to have only existed on the etheric level and known only to the Angel of Findhorn and related Unseen Beings. Generally it was felt that it might be quite handy for the rest of us mere mortals to know what this plan looked like and even get involved in its Emergence. Oh, and also the Moray Council have been banging on about needing one for years.

Now the other major thing DevCom is thinking about: the rebuilding of the Community Centre and the Sanctuary after the dreadful events of earlier this year. To that end DevCom is preparing a survey to go out to the community asap to consult all of you reading this and others far and wide as to what these two iconic buildings should be. Form function location, colour choice etc. with a view to bringing them back to physical form as soon as we are able. And thinking about it, it's a pivotal moment.

Both the old CC and Sanctuary existed for the last 50 years. What will the community need for the next 50 years?? The crisis of covid and losing these two faithful and functional structures have also provided an amazing opportunity to think about the future and co-create it together.

And finally: the above important 'work' (sometimes referred to as 'love in action') is intended to be collaborative, consultative and comprehensively FUN. Because - and I hate to have to remind you all – 'if it's not FUN it's not SUSTAINABLE'.

Another thing: 'joy is the sure sign of the Presence of God' – so it would be really nice if we could all have a wonderfully joyful, fun and deeply moving experience in the process of all of the above.

Oh, and Humour. Or for the benefit of the Americans among you: Humor.

So stay tuned and be prepared to be consulted and collaborated with. It will not be painful. Your input will be valued and essential in this whole exciting process.

(John Talbott)

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