

May 26th SCASCC Meeting Notes



SUNSHINE COAST ALLIANCE FOR SENIORS' CARE CO-OP · SUNDAY, MAY 31, 2020 · READING TIME: 12 MINUTES
22 Reads

JOHN RICHMOND's PRESENTATION

Land Acknowledgement: we are on the ancestral and unceded lands of the Tla'amin, Shishalh and Skwxwu7mesh Nations. We hope to partner with them in our project.

About Us

An alliance of individuals and organizations working together to build multi-stakeholder, cooperative programming and delivery of all levels of seniors' care, on the Sunshine Coast.

Why are we doing this?

-COVID-19 pandemic highlights the risk that seniors and health care providers face

- Provide better care delivery and health care outcomes for seniors and health care workers
- offer an alternative to both for-profit and non-profit “charity” models of senior care
- a new model that gives all stakeholders a role in governance

What will this involve?

- adult day programming
- assisted living
- respite care
- long-term care
- community supports
- providing respectful, compassionate and participatory care to an aging population on the Coast

Where we are at

- Published article in the [Tyee](#) and interview in the [Coast Reporter](#)
- Meetings and calls/emails on the Coast

- Creating a Steering Committee
- Developing partnerships with seniors, families, health care professionals and front line health care workers
- Reaching out to everyone to with a stake in senior care (labour movement, faith groups, seniors groups, etc)

Objectives

1. Welcome any ideas or suggestions related to seniors' care on the Sunshine Coast from Port Melon to Lund.
2. Develop and promote projects designed to enable aging in place for seniors who wish to remain at home as long as possible
3. Create assisted living projects designed to promote seniors' wellness and independence.
4. Promote Reconciliation through new and innovative partnership senior care projects with the Shishalh and Tla'amin First Nations.
5. Educate seniors, families and allies in senior health and social policy, and in the governance of long-term care and assisted living facilities.
6. Empower seniors, families and allies to develop self-help and self-care programs.
7. Design, build and co-manage with other stakeholder groups, community service co-operatives on the Sunshine Coast that provide the highest-level quality of care and degree of inclusion and autonomy possible, to support mutual respect and self-help

How to get involved

- Email: coastltccoop@gmail.com. Join our email list!
- Facebook: Sunshine Coast Alliance for Seniors' Care Co-op

MINUTES FROM DISCUSSION BEFORE AND AFTER PRESENTATION

John Richmond: This began with the Trellis Saga, and many folks on Coast with strong feelings about a for-profit long-term-care and assisted living and hospice facility - lots of people very concerned. My family is originally from N Van, family on Coast back and forth since WWII, some family moved here few years ago. I live in Toronto, I go back and forth. Hoping to move here sooner rather than later. We've been opposed to Trellis but know we all know we need more LTC beds here on the Coast.

A year and a half ago, we started talking to folks on Coast about an alternative to Trellis. Paula and I are healthcare workers. I started off on the DTES years ago in supportive housing and harm-reduction. "Never underestimate the power of a small group of committed people." I worked with Dave Murray, learned a lot. Thinking outside the box pays off - sometimes not right away, down the road.

Article today on CBC: Canadian military's report on long-term care (LTC) nursing home facilities where they were brought in. 82% of deaths from coronavirus in Canada have died in LTC facilities. <https://www.tvonews.com/article/covid-19-read-the-canadian-forces-report-on-long-term-care>

A lot of coronavirus response to deaths in LTC is "Oh they would've died anyway." John shared screen from study in The Economist, showing even 90 year olds would have lived at least one year longer. Octogenarians would have lived at least five years longer. <https://www.economist.com/graphic-detail/2020/05/02/would-most-covid-19-victims-have-died-soon-without-the-virus>

The other issue that comes up is the for-profit LTC system that is the problem. A lot of BC's horrific stories were in for-profit LTC facilities. Unfortunately the nonprofit facilities have their own problems.

John shared story in the National Observer about COVID disaster at Northwood LTC facility in Halifax, NS. <https://www.nationalobserver.com/2020/05/14/opinion/northwood-blueprint-how-covid-19-raged-through-long-term-care-homes> It was a nonprofit facility and story highlights unique to that sector. Some of the worst LTC homes in Quebec were in nonprofit or government sector or municipal sector.

The social co-operative long-term-care facilities in Italy have done very well with the virus, from early reports; we'll know more later. In general there are still few of coop LTCs in the Western world.

What is the solution for the Coast and to Trellis? A Co-operative Seniors' Care facility.

We moved from focussing on Trellis to focussing on seniors' care in the Coast, because feedback from Coast locals thought we should take a broad approach. We want a cooperative that includes everyone - residents, families, health care workers, as members.

We also want to offer a broad range of services: adult day programs, respite care, assisted living, LTC, community supports. The Coast has one of the fastest-aging populations, Port Mellon to Lund.

FUNDING: there is a fair bit of funding out there for community co-ops. To access that funding, we need a steering committee of a broad range of folks from the Coast. Funders want to see that to fund you. Then we can develop a business plan, then we can seek larger pools of funding to go further. And that's what we need if the opportunity arises to take over the Trellis project, or offer a real alternative to it.

Questions:

1. Will Trellis be offering for-profit hospice?

John: Yes it's now official that Trellis will be offering that.

Hospice Society Board member (Donna) said, We're negotiating with Vancouver Coastal

Health (VCH) to double number of hospice beds on the Sunshine Coast. We currently have two at Shorncliff, operated by VCH. VCH proposes there could be a wing adjacent to Trellis that could have 4 hospice suites, IF the funds to construct it are raised by public community. Hospice Society would lead fundraising. We're still negotiating with VCH to find a solution acceptable to the community, that builds the required number of hospice suites. Currently there's no agreement between Hospice Society and VCH as to precise location of hospice beds. Is a proposal, not something that's assured to happen, though we've been actively working on this since 2016. VCH has committed to fund four hospice suites. They will only do that if they're connected to another health care facility as four is not big enough for standalone: shared staffing, food, laundry, etc. We want to see an increase in number of hospice suites and we share the concerns in the community about for-profit.

2. What about the significant overlap between the Seniors Community and the Disabled Community?

John: We haven't yet reached out to the disability community, that's a great suggestion.

3. Is End of Life/Hospice care on the list for the co-op?

John: Curiously, that hasn't come up here yet. I have professional experience in it. It's only come up in context of Trellis. But it goes without saying that it would be a component of the co-op. Sechelt Nation has asked about hospice. If we include hospice/end of life, we're much better placed for fundraising in the private/nonprofit community. Multi-stakeholder co-op with organic links on the Sunshine Coast would be more successful than for-profit outfit.

Paula: Cooperative model, where everyone makes decisions together, promotes more of a home-like environment. I'm a social worker. Residents from LTC who come to acute care and are looking at palliative - if they're coming from home-like environment in LTC, they want to palliate there. Otherwise, if they don't feel at home at LTC they want to go somewhere else for end of life. Part of asking the question is, how could the model look differently for aging in place? Including palliative care?

Trellis is having a public hearing on June 3 and one of the points will be hospice care.

<http://trellis seniors.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Public-Information-Meeting-Notice.pdf>

4. Is SCASCC co-operating with [Protect Public Healthcare Sunshine Coast](#)?

Gail: Protect Public Healthcare is still trying to get rid of private ownership of Trellis. COVID gave us so much data, we're meeting soon. It's not that we disapprove of anything John's said. He's talked to several of us. I can see collaboration down the road. But our goal is specifically to make Trellis into a public organization.

John: I personally have lobbied Simons, Dix, Horgan. I belong to BC Health Coalition, and am supportive of the PPHSC group. We all share same objective of stopping the whole concept of for-profit LTC and assisted living.

Paula: Stakeholders should be seniors, not private enterprise. Seniors care should not be for profit. People have made a lot of money providing seniors care but it's come at a very high price for the residents, families, and workers in the facilities. COVID has blown lid off this. It's great that questions are being raised. Accountability is being promised by for-profit, but the starting point is that we need to end making money out of seniors care. From there we can look at various options and partners. But the basic principle is

to take away making profit as it can only happen with poor hygiene, part-time staff, cutting corners. That's where things get out of control and residents lose dignity.

John: What went wrong at LTC in Halifax? One thing is the beaureacracy. They were accountable to government of NS who were intent on cutting and saving money - doing some of the same thing as the for-profit sector. How do we address that? Empower all the stakeholders equally: residents, families, and workers.

5. How will the co-op get financing? All stages of seniors care will be very expensive.

Where does the money come from? Operating costs?

John: Good question. I was director of a credit union, and interested in social finance.

If province is doing right thing, they need to pony up a lot of the costs. But we all know why previous govt signed deal with Trellis, now owned by a Chinese insurance company, because they don't want to put the capital costs for a facility like this on the books.

Before COVID I was assuming this would be same. I was talking to a variety of stakeholders across western Canada to find capital for LTC as well as coop housing for workers who work there. I am hopeful that now, after COVID, the province may be more willing; e.g. they assisted Baptists to buy Inglewood, the facility where my grandma lived and it used to be an awful place. My mum's volunteered there for 25 years. I'm hopeful the province and feds will come to the table with the majority of the funds necessary. But we will still have to raise some of the funds ourselves, and find partners and stakeholders to do that. For that we need a business plan.

Operating costs from government funding and residents' fees, and funds we raise ourselves. This would be same even if the facility was run by VCH directly (which is unlikely) - they'd do the same thing, charge residents. Remainder of costs recovered in various ways, including BC Government.

6. How close is Trellis to getting the approval?

John: that's the big question. Everyone I talk to has a different view. WE don't really know yet.

Donna: this public info meeting Trellis is holding is a requirement, and they have to do that before they go to public hearing etc. It won't happen right away.

John: Yes. The elephant in the room for Trellis is, what will happens post-Coronavirus and the provincial and federal governments look into what happened at LTC facilities? Are there going to be recommendations or policies to end for-profit LTC? I really hope so and would like to think so.

7. Timeline for SCASCC project?

John: it has to come from us as a group. We need a critical mass. Cooperatives First asked this. SK has a cooperative retirement home as they went to Coops First and said, we'd like a coop seniors home and are willing to do the groundwork if you'll help us with funding.

My hope is by June or July we will have a group of people on the Coast who can go to various organizations like [Cooperatives First](#) who would be willing to fund a business plan, as they believe this co-op project is viable. Then, if something happens with Trellis, we have something to take to the table with VCH. That may well include housing partners like Christensen, BC Housing, BC Co-op Housing Federation, etc.

8. Trellis failed a couple times. Why is it back?

John: Sechelt Council is willing to play ball with them. At various times, people in Roberts Creek & Gibsons talked about hosting Trellis. It's become a bit of a joke, where will they go now?

9. What is the Co-op Seniors' home in Saskatchewan?

John: <https://carehomes.ca/homes/furrows-and-faith/> I'm talking to their organizers next week, I'm very excited.

10. If Trellis goes ahead, is Co-op still a potential? Number of beds in Trellis is already too few, and with the aging population we'll need even more. They could potentially run in parallel, not that we want Trellis at all.

John: A lot of feedback, especially from Sishalh Nation, is that they don't want a single LTC facility like Trellis. They think we should have smaller facilities, spread out. Sishalh Nation said this is not traditionally how we lived or cared for our elders, and we don't want our elders living like that; we want something completely different. They love the idea of multi-stakeholder model, as they like being involved from the beginning and being a stakeholder.

Let's say Trellis goes ahead, will we go ahead too? Yes. That's the feedback from the folks. But there's also feedback saying let's wait and see if Trellis dies naturally as their business plan is no longer viable, OR if VCH shuts them down and is looking for other partners. Those are all good ideas. But let's just keep going, as a grassroots project. That's why I reached out to the Tla'amin Nation as well.

Healthcare workers are a piece of the project too. Eventually I'll be aging on the Coast and may need this facility too. But as a healthcare worker, I'm interested in how can healthcare workers have a stake in healthcare delivery. We will create a subgroup of this group for the healthcare workers to discuss further.

Paula: It's exciting to get together to see how many people on the Coast are interested in a multi-stakeholder model. It's not dependent on Trellis. The Coast needs more LTC beds, but also all the programming that could come out of it. How many are or were healthcare workers? [Many of us put up our hands!] We're a great group to get started.

John: there is a lot of funding for coops out there now, including from federal government. There have been great meetings between BC Cooperative Housing and federal government, especially around funding new innovative models, "community" and "community social" cooperatives.

Paula: Trudeau says he won't kill for-profit senior care but will leave it to the provinces. How profitable will LTC be in the future? There will be thousands of lawsuits for liability in future, which will cut into their profit margin. We have an opportunity here.

John: The woman who owns Trellis was in BC Retirement Concepts when there were a lot of suits against it, about 15 years. What happens to Trellis if they're successfully sued? Good question to ask at their Public Information Meeting on June 3.

John: Halifax LTC facility is a horrible huge building! We want a human-scale, ecological approach to seniors care, broadly speaking, including architecture.

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Janice Iverson Thank you for the thorough notes. I applaud you for pursuing a cooperative model. Please keep in touch.

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Sunshine Coast Alliance for Seniors' Care Co-op Thanks, Janice! Please join our email list by clicking Send Email above, or emailing coastltccoop@gmail.com and ask for the Zoom info for our next meeting on June 9th. <https://www.facebook.com/events/249425379643537/>

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Phyllis Gilchrist "the woman who owns Trellis" but earlier it was said it's a Chinese Corp.?

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Sunshine Coast Alliance for Seniors' Care Co-op @JohnRichmond could you Please clarify this?

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