



# COWICHAN GREEN COMMUNITY

2020 Update

## Funders and Partners:



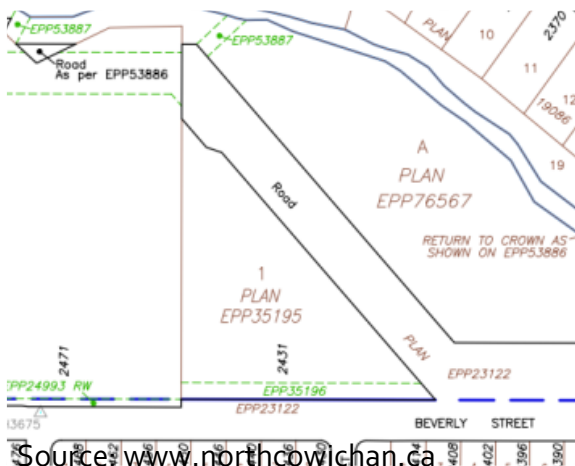
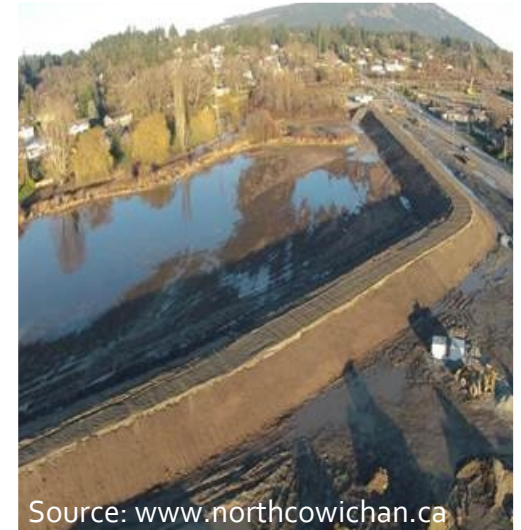
# Outline

- Short history of CGC and Beverly St. site
- 2020 and the Garden Education Center
- In the works?
- Looking Forward....



# History

- Former farmland cut in half by construction of dyke in 2009
- Resulting property at 2431 Beverly a brownfield site
- CGC has a Licence of Occupation with North Cowichan since 2015
- Funded mainly with grants for job creation, community building, and food security.





# History

2015

- Property fenced and well drilled
- Start of seed production



2016

- Incubator Seed Farm model adapted to community needs



2017

- Portable Classroom donated by SD 79 for office space



# History

2018

- Agricultural Equipment Library established with support from North Cowichan



2019

- Ross Wristen Inclusion Garden added
- Small greenhouse built





# 2020

- Two programs began early 2020:
  - Inclusive Farming Program
  - A Job Creation Partnership (JCP) with WorkBC
- Provided work opportunities for several summer students from all over Canada



# 2020 – Inclusive Farming Program

- Funded until June 2021 by grants from:
  - Island Health Community Wellness
  - Victoria Foundation
- Goal of making gardening accessible to people of all abilities
- Create an inclusive space to celebrate diversity
- Weekly host to:
  - Summer camps
  - School groups
  - Volunteers
  - Seniors groups





# 2020 – JCP Program

- Jobs for supervisor and 3 participants
- Objective of starting a retail nursery for Native and Medicinal plants
- 100' Greenhouse built
- Second shed built on site for Tool Library
- Community space created for groups





# 2020 – Garden Education Center

- Complete makeover since March
  - Improved relationships with neighbours
  - Curious customers
  - Tour groups, volunteers, customers, etc.
- Rebranded site as Garden Education Center
  - Includes Inclusion Garden and Seed Hub
- Retail space and online sales through CowOp.ca
- Building relationships within the community
- Workshops and group events ongoing



# 2020 – COVID-19

- Seedy Saturday and Grand Opening cancelled
- Volunteerism halted
- Planning/funding uncertainties
- Virtual life at CGC
- New supervisor hired April 8
- Food!



# COVID-19 and Food Security

- Disruptions in supply chains cause food shortages
- Gardening at all-time high
- Supplies impossible to find
  - Soil and amendments
  - Pest control
  - Seeds
- Vegetable starts became unexpected best seller
- Fall gardening more common





# In the Works?

- Applied for funding to adapt site for food production
  - Food crop greenhouse
  - Cold storage
  - Kitchen and processing area
- Developing school programs for farming and environmental education
  - Outdoor classroom
  - Native plant display gardens
  - Constructed Wetland



# Looking Forward....

## Goals:

- Become an established community space
- Become a leader in community involvement and farming education
- Improve food security by growing local and supporting local people
- Integrate more food production and processing into existing food programs





# Looking Forward

## Next Steps:

- Extend lease with North Cowichan
- Permitting, etc. for developments
- Hydrologic Survey
- BC Land Surveyor
- Funding?





# Summary

- 2431 Beverly St leased from North Cowichan since 2015
- Site has evolved from a brownfield site to a bustling community space, organic seed farm, and retail plant nursery
- 2020 has been a year of uncertainty, demonstrating imperative need for a more resilient local food sector
- CGC hopes to expand operations on the site to include:
  - A second greenhouse for food crops
  - Expand building to include a new commercial kitchen, washroom, and cold storage.
- CGC plans to continue to build food security in the Cowichan Region through partnerships with government, non-government, and other non-profit groups.

***THANK YOU***

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