

Location Committee Report – SJFM 2013 AGM

The Location Committee has had a productive year. We have been focusing on two goals: 1) Building on our relationship with our current hosts at the Lion's Club Chalet, and 2) Actively seeking a semi-permanent or permanent home for the SJFM.

In our work towards the first goal, I (on behalf of the committee) have met with the Executive and Board of the Lion's Club. These meetings were very helpful, in that they provided an opportunity to discuss our current needs and our wish-list for the Lion's Club Chalet. We also discussed the possibility of hosting the SJFM at the Lion's Club Chalet as a permanent home, though at the moment this does not appear to be a realistic possibility.

Finally, in our meeting with the Lion's Club Board, we agreed to establish a Working Group, with representatives from both organizations. This group is intended to facilitate ongoing discussions aimed at improving our time at the Lion's Club by keeping an open door, and discussing and researching minor renovations. The full Location Committee has met to discuss what issues can be addressed at meetings of this Working Group.

In our ongoing search for a permanent home, the Location Committee has continued to visit and research facilities around the city. To date, we have not been able to identify any existing facilities that meet our current and future needs. This means, there is no place in the city that we could simply move to without first performing significant renovations.

As we realized that any upcoming move would likely require expensive construction work, we have focused on engaging and building relationships with potential funders. These have mainly been representatives of all three levels of government. These discussions have been on-going for the past few years, but in the past two months they have become quite productive.

The SJFM is now participating in a formal working group with representatives of the City of St. John's, and the federal Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA). This group has been mandated to work towards finding a new, appropriate home for the SJFM. While some recent media attention has focused on the possibility of the market moving to the former Bus Depot on Freshwater Rd, this group is not limiting itself to researching just one potential location.

The group plans to advance in 3 phases. The first will be to commission a study that will engage many stakeholders to determine what the long-term goals of our Market, and the subsequent needs of its space, will be. This is similar to the 5-year plan our Co-op was intending to perform. By pairing with government on this research, however, this study will now be better financed, which allows for more in-depth analysis. The second phase will be to assess potential future market locations based off of the needs identified in the first phase of the project. This may be the former bus depot, or other locations. Third, if an appropriate location is identified, the group will work on establishing a funding agreement to facilitate the implementation of the plans (including construction work) established in the first 2 phases.

Of course, we will keep the membership engaged throughout this process, and the decision of where to host the market will ultimately be made by the membership at a general meeting such as this one.

Respectfully submitted,
Dave Jerome