

## **Yacht Club purchase finalized**

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The proponents of the Gibsons Public Market completed purchase of the former Yacht Club property in Gibsons Landing on Friday, December 20. The owners of the building include the Town of Gibsons, Community Futures, the Sunshine Coast Community Foundation and three families from the Sunshine Coast. Over the last three months the proponents successfully raised over \$275,000 in donations for the Town of Gibsons that provided the Town with the necessary capital to become the largest owner of the building. The objective over the next three to five years is for the Market to become totally owned by the Town of Gibsons.

The recently-registered non-profit Gibsons Public Market Society will lease the building from the ownership group and be responsible for the development and operation of the Public Market.

“In January various Committees will be formed to work on the various economic, cultural and educational components that we plan to have in the market,” said Nicholas Sonntag, the President of the Society. “We are working on the operation of the current space and designs for the renovated building which will eventually serve as the expanded permanent home for the Market. Elements of the Market will include local produce and other locally made goods, a community kitchen which will offer fresh and prepared delights, a marine education center, and entertainment profiling local music, arts and artists. In January, a number of volunteer work parties to clean the current building with the intent of making it available for limited use by the end of March 2014.”

“Our plan is to make the current space available to groups who may wish to rent the facility for events like weddings, group meetings, celebrations, etc. as early as possible,” said Gerry Zipursky one of the main Market proponents.

“Although we have some operating capital for our startup phase, we want to generate revenue from the space as soon as possible. Making it available for public and private events will help us get there. We are also looking to start up some partial market related activities like a weekend farmers market and special events as soon as possible.”

“This last year has been quite an adventure for all of us and we have had the benefit of ideas, time and donations from almost a thousand people along the Coast – from Langdale to Pender Harbour,” said Brian Smith, Executive Director of Community Futures. “It has been a wonderful statement of public support from more than the Gibsons Community. We really want this to be seen as a Sunshine Coast initiative and so far we seem to have done that.”

“There is clearly a lot of work to be done to get the current site transformed into a fully functioning public market,” said Sonntag. “Next year will involve a detailed design and engineering study with the hope we can start the renovation in early 2015 and have the final building structure available by the start of 2016. We plan to keep the community informed of our progress on a regular basis and will also be seeking volunteers to help us with the many challenges we face. In addition we will be launching a fund raising campaign to help cover the costs of the renovation. From all of us on the Gibsons Public Market team we would like to thank the coastal community for their support and donations. We wish you all a wonderful and safe holiday season and we are looking forward to working with you in 2014 as we embark on this exciting next chapter.”

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