Activity Week 1: Environment & Sustainability Walking Tour

False Creek Flats

Background:

This area was originally inhabited by First Nations people. The sandbar (present day Granville Island) provided convenient fishing and hunting opportunities. Many streams flowed through this area, which provided ample habitat for elk, beaver, bears, cougars and a variety of birds while flowing through old growth forest.

Industry then moved into the site with the growth of the timber industry. Eventually the growth of industry necessitated bridge construction to fulfill the need of transporting more lumber. This resulted in a bridge over False Creek, now known as Main St.

This area continuously rose in value over time, as it became such a convent location for industry. Industry presence moved beyond sawmills to brick plants, ship and rail yards. The Canadian Pacific Railways is what laid the foundation of what we see today. They owned much of the land and eventually as they saw the marshy sandbar fill with debris and waste from industry, thus becoming an eyesore, made the push to have it filled.

Now much of what we see of the False Creek area is man-made. The streams that once flowed through the area mostly flow underground through pipes. We rarely see whales come into False Creek as they once did, salmon have no streams to return to and of course, what was once old-growth forest is now residential and light-industry development.

However, throughout the False Creek area (specifically south False Creek) there are references to its roots. In the Olympic Village development for instance, much attention has been paid to reconnecting the area to the environment through bioswales, Habitat Island, and creative management of stormwater flows.

Activities:

* Based on your walk, analyze what remains of the area’s roots.
* Visit either Brewery or China Creek and consider the benefits these areas once/do have on the surrounding environment
* Suggest one “green solution” for the area.

Background reading: (You should all read up to page 10 but I suggest skimming through the entire report prior to heading down to do your walk)

<http://vancouver.ca/files/cov/statement-of-significance-false-creek-flats-2013-april.pdf>