

Minutes of Dover Heights Precinct Meeting

Feb 28, 2017

Body Express, 157 Military Road, Dover Height

Meeting commenced at 7:30 and ended at 9:20 pm

Present:

Convenor Dov Frazer, Secretary Ron Nothman, Peter Cappe – DA Rep

CR Miriam Guttman-Jones: CR Sally Betts

Apologies: CR Goltsman

Attendance List:

See Separate Attendance List

Minutes of previous meeting:

Moved: Richard Morris Seconded: Peter Cappe

Approved unanimously

A. Rodney Reserve Discussion

1 – Motions passed at Council Meeting of Dec 6, 2016

That Council:

This is page 5 of the Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 6 December 2016

1. Defers consideration of the report pending additional information to be provided to Council as follows:
 - (a) An additional concept design setting the amenities building into the western slope with a green roof.
 - (b) Investigation of reducing the size of the building through deletion of specific staff facilities and of canteen space, and any acceptable reduction in toilet, shower and change room space.
 - (c) A comprehensive traffic and impact study conducted during school term, to determine the impact of the improved sporting facilities on local roads and local amenity.
 - (d) Details of discussions held or input received from local RSLs in relation to the Dover Heights tunnels.

- (e) Information about the size of Hugh Bamford Reserve and a feasibility study relating to having a full size football ground at that location.

Holds a Councillor workshop to discuss the above matters, as well as arranging a presentation of the new information to the Dover Heights Precinct, prior to consideration at a Council meeting.

Notes that lighting and grandstand seating are to be excluded from the project as requested by local residents.

Notes that no children's playground is to be built in Rodney Reserve as requested by local residents.

Confirms that the play equipment at the end of Liverpool Street is to be removed due to being unsafe and too close to the dogs off-leash area.

Notes that funds have been allocated from the SAMP Fences budget for the renewal of the cliff fence from Diamond Bay to Hugh Bamford Reserve, the concept plans for which will be provided to the precinct for consideration.

Undertakes an investigation for any Aboriginal sites that might exist on the reserve, in consultation with the La Perouse Local Aboriginal Land Council.

Undertakes an investigation into radio astronomy associated with Rodney Reserve and maps sites of significance in the Reserve.

D Frazer, L Rubinstein, G Benson, T Krouk, M Kofsky, S Cassells, R Belcher and A Dibdin addressed the meeting.

2. Mayor Betts said Council is applying for a heritage grant for the CSIRO Radio Telescope site to improve the site
3. Mayor Betts said that all of the above reports passed by council Dec 6 would be presented to the Dover Heights Precinct at a meeting BEFORE any further consideration to go to community consultation for any structures
4. No lights or temporary events will happen this winter in Rodney Reserve

B. Blake & Military Road Upgrades

1. Motion passed at Dec 6, 2016 council meeting to get extra funding for the project

Planning Agreement - 637-639 Old South Head Road, Rose Bay (DA-575/2015)

Mover: Cr Goltsman Seconder: Cr Betts

Endorses the draft Planning Agreement attached to this report applying to land at 637-639 Old South Head Road, Rose Bay, which contributes \$195,403 to Council for public works for the additional footpath, planter boxes and driveway improvements at Blake Street and Military Roads intersection, currently being undertaken through Council's Local Village Centres Public Domain Improvement Plan.

Authorises the Mayor and General Manager to sign and execute the agreement and affix the Council seal to the documentation.

2. The extra fund will allow driveways at the periphery of the project to be replaced as well as more pavers.
3. The Precinct is awaiting final plans from Council for exactly what areas will be replaced with either concrete or pavers and which tree species will be planted.
4. The Precinct is keen to replace the curb and gutter at the north side of 220 Military Road along Blake Street as well as landscaping that verge.
5. Final architectural drawings meant to be done by April and the actual project started in July.
6. The Precinct would also like the section of carriageway on Blake Street between Portland and Military Road to be resheeted. The Precinct realises that this is a different budget but would like it to happen at the same time as the other works

C. Sydney Water Outfalls

1. Ron read the article from Sydney Morning Herald on Dec 18, 2016

DECEMBER 18 2016 - 1:35PM

Raw sewage released near Bondi as decades of government dithering runs on

Heath Aston

Twenty years after the NSW government first promised to fix the problem, 4 million litres a day of untreated sewage continues to be released into the sea from cliffs between Bondi Beach and South Head at the entrance to Sydney Harbour.

Raw sewage from four of Sydney's wealthiest suburbs – Watsons Bay, Vaucluse, Rose Bay and Dover Heights – is discharged at the shoreline despite Sydney Water commissioning report after report over three decades into corrective works required.

While the vast majority of Sydney's sewage has gone into deep ocean outfall since 1990, the century-old sewerage system of the eastern suburbs is the last in NSW to allow human waste, which includes nappies and wet wipes, to flow directly into the sea.

A freedom of information request by Fairfax Media has revealed decades of bureaucratic inaction on making progress on a suitable fix against vigorous local opposition – some of which, documents show, is motivated by concern at protecting multi-million-dollar house prices in the area.

Four million litres a day of untreated sewage continues to be released into the sea from cliffs between Bondi Beach and South Head. Photo: Christopher Pearce

Over the years, locals groups have fought against the prospect of everything from damaged house foundations due to tunnelling, closed streets, sludge trucks and odour if a waste treatment solution is used in the area.

There has also been concern that an upgraded sewerage system could trigger a demand for denser development in those exclusive suburbs.

Three detailed reports into the Vaucluse and Diamond Bay outfalls – two by private sector consultants – have been commissioned by Sydney Water since 2003 when it shelved plans, first announced in 1996, to build a 3.5 kilometre diversion tunnel to the Bondi deep ocean outfall system.

The tunnel, which could have cleaned up the Sydney coastline of sewage pollution for good, was announced with a budget of \$32 million in 2000.

The sewer outlet at Diamond Bay. The century-old sewerage system of the eastern suburbs is the last in NSW to allow human waste to flow directly into the sea. Photo: Nick Moir

By the time a "strategic planning report" by Sydney Water was circulated internally in 2011, the cost of the Bondi tunnel option began at \$150 million, while a cheaper strategy of directing sewage to the Rose Bay "submain" was costed at \$65 million.

The Rose Bay solution would reduce discharge from the cliff by 85 per cent, with the Bondi tunnel option described as "economically unjustifiable" by 2011.

While the sewerage fix remains on long-term hold, the NSW government last year took \$745 million in cash dividends and other payments out of the profit-making Sydney Water monopoly.

The 2011 report notes that the continuation of untreated discharges conflicts with the authority's corporate goals to ensure "clean beaches, oceans, rivers and harbours" for the public.

The report states that the water quality impact has "no measurable impact beyond the mixing zone" off cliffs used by rock fisherman, despite being just three kilometres from Bondi to the south and the entrance to Sydney Harbour to the north.

"The water quality in the localised area around the outfalls will exceed the guidelines for primary contact recreation (swimming). However, swimming is not a regular activity near the outfalls because the high cliff and rocky shore make the area relatively inaccessible," the report states.

But it also notes aspects that threaten Sydney's reputation as a clean water city for locals and tourists.

"The outfall plumes can be seen from the top of the cliff on a very calm day. Gross litter is visible from the water in the area close to the outfalls," according to the 2011 internal report.

Fairfax Media has visited the Diamond Bay south outfall where raw sewage drops from the cliff on to a rock shelf where a community of seagulls picks at the discharge and what appeared to be wet wipes.

The minutes of a Sydney Water meeting in an appendix to a report raised the prospect that pollution from the "mixing zone" carried to



The northern beaches, including NSW Premier Mike Baird's Manly electorate.

"Visible pollution (nappies and other plastic items) near Long Reef (Dee Why) during northern current in the ocean – could that be due to Vaucluse and Diamond Bay face-cliff outfalls?" the minutes record as one discussion topic in 2011.

In a summary document, Sydney Water notes: "In October 1996, the State Government made a commitment to the community that a tunnel would be built by December 2000 in accordance with the timetable set by the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA)."

NSW Water Minister Niall Blair would not commit to action.

"Sydney Water is working on a pollution reduction program and will issue a report to the

EPA by early 2017. We'll wait for the results of that study before considering the next steps," he said in a statement.

Water quality expert Stuart Khan, an associate professor in engineering at UNSW, said Sydney Water was right in insisting that the public health risk was minimal due to the inaccessible nature of the area to anyone but fisherman and divers.

"The real issue is the gross pollutants, things like nappies and wet wipes that will be in the water there," he said.

"No one really wants to see raw sewage coming off the cliff but it really comes down to cost-benefit questions and whether the public will accept the situation. Public perception is one of the things that shapes Sydney Water's priorities, which is why coverage and debate about these issues should be welcomed," he said.

Persistent problems with stormwater run-off at beaches in the Royal National Park and Coogee should also be part of public discussion, he said.

A Sydney Water spokesman insisted that despite the timeframe, the authority was still working on a solution, with another report expected in 2017.

"Sydney Water is working closely with the EPA, experts and community representatives to identify the best solution to manage releases from the outfalls," he said.

"It is a complex issue that is a legacy from our early sewage network. There is no silver bullet to fix it without high costs and significant disruption to the community. However, we remain committed. We're currently undertaking a pollution reduction program, which includes a study to further assess any environmental impacts."

Do you know more? Contact haston@fairfaxmedia.com.au

DECREPIT SYSTEM

In December 1990, The Sydney Morning Herald carried a story about a public meeting at Diamond Bay Bowling Club in Vaucluse.

"Will the state government introduce medium-density housing in the eastern suburbs when the Water Board has improved the sewage system?" was one of the main questions 200 residents who turned up to discuss a proposed upgrade to the area's 100 year-old pipes wanted answered.

If the decrepit system was plugged into Bondi's deep ocean outfall, the theory went, Woollahra and Waverley councils could be ordered to allow higher, denser development in suburbs where most houses still had gardens and a backyard.

In other words, the discharge of four million litres of raw effluent from a cliff in their neighbourhood had a silver lining for those residents not wanting to see change.

To this day, the suburbs of Vaucluse, Dover Heights, Rose Bay and Watsons Bay have

hardly changed compared to the rapid infill that has taken place in other parts of Sydney.

The recent district plans by the Lucy Turnbull-led Greater Sydney Commission spared the area again.

Michael Yabsley, the then Vaucluse MP and corrective services minister, was reported as assuring locals in 1990 that "it doesn't stack up to abandon the existing [medium-density housing] policy."

He said the Liberals would maintain the medium-density plan for the area but warned the do nothing option on fixing the sewer outfalls was "unacceptable".

This week, Mr Yabsley told Fairfax Media that his memory of that meeting was hazy but he does not recall local opposition being centred on development policy or real estate prices.

He said he was surprised the untreated Vaucluse and Diamond Bay outfalls had still not been upgraded 30 years on.

"I recall there was so much emphasis on the Bondi outfall where the real volume was coming from and where the visual problem was. The water went from brown to blue and everyone was patting themselves on the back about fixing the problem," he said.

An internal "submissions report" written by consultants Manidis Roberts found significant opposition persisted in 2003 when Sydney Water shelved the first proposed upgrade.

"Property impacts; negative impacts on property prices" was one of the top three concerns when the company asked residents to explain opposition to strategies outlined in a brochure and "minimise property value loss" was raised as a suggested priority not covered in the brochure.

Peter Poland, a longtime Vaucluse resident was a member of a group that called itself CROSRS (Concerned Residents Opposed to Sewers on Residential Streets) said the main gripe was the prospect of building a tunnel through local roads.

"Some of the streets they wanted to go down were about two and a half cars wide, there would have been absolute chaos," he said.

2. The Mayor said that NSW EPA has mandated a study and consulted all users of the area included DHP.
3. Apparently spear fishing tours complained about the poor quality of the water.
4. They Mayor said the impact of the sewer outfalls upon the community was greater than originally thought.
5. The Mayor projected 3 to 4 years of consultation until anything was done.

6. Ron again offers his very sensible and cost effective idea of underwater pipeline from the current outfalls to the North Bondi Water Treatment Plant.

D. CLIFF FENCES UPGRADES

1. The Mayor said there was \$350,000 of SAMP money allocated to replace the cliff fences from Clark Reserve to Hugh Bamford.
2. Council seems to be very keen to start this project ASAP.
3. DHP stressed that material used should be 316 stainless steel or synthetic wood which will not degrade over time like all the current fences.
4. DHP want the fence line in the Dover Heights Coastal Reserve to be moved back to the line of the original fence which was 500 cm to 1 meter closer to the cliff.
5. All vestiges of previous fences should be removed including concrete footing, metal poles and wood.
6. The fence near the playing field should be placed out of site as it is already on the South end of the field to Dover Road.
7. DHP is consulting with Rose Russo from the office of Gabrielle Upton to try to procure funding for a viewing platform at the site of the current Radio Telescope memorial. CSIRO is already planning to upgrade the memorial plaque as well as the replica antennae.

E. Safety Report

1. Ron said be careful of ID theft from stolen letter as well as internet scammers.

New Business:

Motion 1:

DHP requests that Waverley Council embark upon a tree planting program on Military Road during the March 2017 planting season or ASAP. We ask that council only plant New Zealand Xmas Bush (Metrosideros) along with a well a Red Flowering Grevillea (such as Bulli Beauty) as DHP has already requested in the past.

Moved: Dov Frazer

Seconded: Leesa Armstrong

Unanimous Passed

Motion 2:

1. That the Council immediately remove the row of Banksia trees growing adjacent to No. 2 Loombah Road Dover Heights, and the Community Centre at Loombah Road Dover Heights.
2. That the Council immediately account, and disclose, to Dover Heights Precinct for all costs and expenditures relating to the planting and maintenance of all new plantings made adjacent to No. 2 Loombah Road Dover Heights from December 2001 to date.
3. That council explain why the resident at 2 Loombah road is granted a council funded privacy barrier made of shrubs when no other resident in Dover Heights has ever been provided with a similar council funded privacy barrier.
4. The council explain why they have refused to remove trees which are between the property boundary of 2 Loombah Road and the elevated walkway to the east which have nothing to do with the privacy of the resident at 2 Loombah Road and which are entirely in the verge of the adjacent property to east of 2 Loombah Road.

Moved: Peter Cappe

Seconded: Ron Nothman

Passed Unanimously

F. Report on Council Amalgamations – Mayor Betts

Woollahra legal appeal outcome expected on March 10, 2017. If appeal fails then councils will amalgamate. If appeal succeeds then who knows what may happen.

Closed at 9:20 PM

Next meeting Monday 22 May, 2017