

Minutes of the Mill Hill Bondi Junction Precinct Meeting (AGM) held at Waverley Library on Thursday 26 May 2016



Chaired by Marcella McAdam with Stephen B. Cohen taking minutes

The meeting opened at 6.30 pm

Present

Councillor Andrew Cusack and Councillor Paula Masselos. Candidates for the seat of Wentworth: Dejay Toborek; David Allen and Evan Hughes. 35 people signed the attendance sheets and at least another 5 people had not signed in (according to a head count).

Apologies

Mayor Sally Betts; Councillor Angela Burrill; Howard Parry-Husband; Anne Casamento; Matthew Gain; Gil Morris; Gayle Walker; Mike Bonney; Tien Bonney; and Jill Lumsdaine.

Matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting on 17 February 2016

There were no matters arising from the previous meeting, however there was a responses to a motion from the 26 August 2015 meeting:

Motion

Howard Parry-Husbands' motion:

Request that St James Pocket Park be officially classified as a park, not as a reserve in order to guarantee the green space be preserved.

The minutes were accepted by Paula Gallagher and seconded by Howard Parry-Husbands.

Response

Whether the space is called a 'park' or 'reserve' itself does not ensure the space is preserved as public recreational land. The zoning and classification of the land is the mechanism under planning law which allows particular uses within a space and would prohibit other uses from occurring.

In the instance of St James Reserve, it is Council owned and zoned as RE1 Public Recreation in Councils Local Environmental Plan this land is also classified for community use.

Land zoned Public Recreation enables the land to be used for public open space or recreational purposes and activities. For more information on what is permitted and prohibited on land zoned Public Recreation please refer to Waverley Local Environmental plan 2012. Most of Waverley's Parks and Reserves are zoned RE1 Public Recreation. The lands classification as 'community' land ensures that the land cannot be sold unless it is reclassified which would require approval from the minister, Council and Mayor and would need to undergo a period of community consultation.

Because St James Reserve is zoned for public recreation and classified for community use it is secured for this use in future. Changing the name of the reserve to 'park' is inconsequential so is not recommended for change.

Outstanding motion

There was still no responses to the following motion from the 26 August 2015 meeting:

Motion

Kate Watson's motion:

That Waverley Council correspond with TransGrid; NBN and Foxtel regarding the possibility of placing the overhead wires in the NBN trench at the time NBN will be trenching in our area.

The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted by Simon Swifte and seconded by Charles Agius.

Amalgamations

The State government is moving forward and has already amalgamated a number of Councils. The amalgamation of Waverley Council with Randwick Council and Woollahra Council has not occurred yet due to legal challenges from Woollahra Council and Botany Bay Council (proposing to take part of the Randwick Council area).

Sadly our Council is still pushing forward with much eagerness to create a huge Eastern Suburbs Council. Even sadder that at the last two Council meetings, motions were put forward for a poll or referendum to take place asking residents if they wanted to merge. Two weeks ago the motion was passed but last week due to a rescission motion put forward by the Mayor Sally Betts. The vote was lost as this Council does not want to listen to residents. Councillor Paula Masselos worked so hard alongside the other Labor, Independent and one Liberal Councillors to get this poll alive, but our two Liberal Councillors Angela Burrell and Andrew Cusack voted against it even though they knew that we always wanted a public meeting or referendum to have our say. So disappointing. On the day before the vote Marcella McAdam wrote to all Councillors reminding them what Mill Hill Bondi Junction wanted and that Councillors Angela Burrell and Andrew Cusack were fully aware yet they still decided to ignore our request. Obviously they have forgotten who voted them in.

West Oxford Street development

As the planning proposal for two towers at 194 - 214 Oxford Street was rejected by Waverley Council, the developer has gone to the State Government and is now having his DA presented to the Joint Regional Planning Panel which is currently in favour of the proposal. It is due to be considered on 31 May 2016.

Annual General Meeting - election of Committee members for 2016-2017

Marcella McAdam stepped down and was thanked on behalf of the Precinct Committee by Danielle Ecuyer. Marcella put in a lot of hard work especially with the unprecedented amount of development occurring in Bondi Junction including the forthcoming Civic Precinct in the area currently occupied by Officeworks, the Bondi Vet and the Library.

Marcella said she only wanted to remain convenor for two years and thanked our three Councillors: Councillor Angela Burrill, Councillor Andrew Cusack and Councillor Paula Masselos; Responsive staff at Council: Peter Monks and George Bramis; Precinct Coordinators: Melissa Green and Mary Shiner; The Mill Hill Bondi Junction Precinct Executive team including Stephen B. Cohen for doing an amazing job taking the minutes... not easy! Special thanks to members of the community: Gayle Walker, Eric Scott, Kate Walker, Charles Agius, Frank Cahill, Fiona Glen, Bettina Ferguson, Matthew Taylor, Rob Hayward and Paula Gallagher. Thanks also to our close friends from the Queens park Precinct: Simon Swifte, Peter Cohen and Ian Barber.

Simon Swifte, Co-convenor of Queens Park Precinct chaired the meeting during the election.

Nominations were called for the following committee positions, all nominees were elected unopposed:

Convenor: Marcella McAdam nominated **Danielle Ecuyer**, seconded by Frank Cahill.

Secretary: Ilana Cohen nominated **Stephen B. Cohen**, seconded by Danielle Ecuyer.

Traffic Rep: Marcella McAdam nominated **Howard Parry-Husbands**, seconded by Danielle Ecuyer.

DA Rep: Marcella McAdam nominated **Graeme Swan**, seconded by Danielle Ecuyer.

Licencing Rep: None.

Community Safety: Marcella McAdam nominated **Maria Flood**, seconded by Corey Worgan.

Heritage Rep: None.

General: **Georgia Koutsandrea**.

General: **Corey Worgan**.

Meet the Candidates for the seat of Wentworth - Election 2016

Three candidates for the seat of Wentworth attended our meeting to answer a number of questions of interest to our community: David Allen (Independent), Dejay Toborek (The Greens) and Evan Hughes (Labor).

Amalgamations

David Allen objects to amalgamations and wrote to Ipart. All reasons for amalgamating are a furphy. The benefits are not there. Costs go up and council become Powerless.

Dejay Toborek said that amalgamations were determined as the only path left for the Baird Government after their planning reforms failed. Communities have no say. The Greens want to make sure they respect residents, Council workers and elected members. Forced amalgamations are an attack on our Democracy. Constitutional recognition of local democracy keeps Councils viable.

Evan Hughes says there is very little the Federal Government can do regarding amalgamations as the State Government has authority. Labor is opposed to forced amalgamations at a State Government level. Our democratic rights have been taken away.

Light rail

David Allen is keen on light rail. It is important to spend a lot of money on public transport.

Dejay Toborek: Light rail or trees? Trees have been cut down when there is plenty of space for trams to run nearby. There has been no assistance given to our community by Malcom Turnbull's Federal Liberal Government.

Evan Hughes said that the public have lost confidence in the NSW State Government, but there will be some benefits to business in light rail.

Population density

David Allen believes an increase in population is OK as long as you plan the city well.

Dejay Toborek said that there are efficiencies when population densities increase. There are LEPs in place to retain sunshine when new developments are approved. Another public high school is needed and other services need to be put in place to cater for any increase in population density.

Negative gearing

David Allen stated that we can't afford to have a housing market crash (like in America).

Dejay Toborek says that 4 billion dollars would be better spent on schools. New build homes would be exempt from changes to negative gearing.

Evan Hughes stated that it is not the Government's role to help with wealth creation, However negative gearing plays an important role in retirement saving. Grandfathering till 2017 and on new builds.

Superannuation changes

David Allen would not make changes to legislation retrospective. Some superannuation companies are not well run, however they need assistance as a lot of our wealth is invested in them.

Dejay Toborek said that The Greens believe those most well off don't need top-ups, add-ons or concessions (they do agree with the Federal Government in that respect). There are issues for women who do not have access to superannuation during paid maternity leave. Reducing the capital gains tax concession along with other measures could bring in billions of dollars.

Evan Hughes would like to find a solution so that superannuation can exist in our society so that more people are not reliant on the pension. Superannuation funds are well run in Australia. He is very much a defender of the system and would never tax superannuation.

Environment: Is a carbon price necessary?

David Allen said an ETS was signed in 2007. There is much that we can do. We are not handling our economy well and mining is not helping. We export a lot of coal, but still have debt. People are worried and companies are not investing.

Dejay Toborek said that Labor is straddling the fence on the environment. They are not committed to closing down coal mines. The Greens have a target of 90% carbon emissions reduction. Carbon levels keep going up when new coal mines are created. The Greens have funds available to retrain miners in renewable energy industry positions. The Greens will have a carbon price that continually increases.

Evan Hughes says we live in a world where ETS is traded and wants to look at renewable energy options. Action on climate will help the economy and will not destroy it. Mining won't be around forever so we need to invest in solar etc...

Residential Control Board: Rent control

David Allen said that if housing prices get too high, the Government will be required to provide more affordable housing for people who can't afford their own home.

Dejay Toborek said that The Greens are working on rental property and tenants rights. Rents would be linked to the CPI.

Evan Hughes said that housing affordability is difficult in the Eastern Suburbs as it is such an expensive area. We are not close to a recession, but if deflation occurs, house prices will fall. Evan does not back rent control but supports market price. Social housing should be provided to those in need.

General Business

There has been concern that the facades of old buildings are now being demolished instead of being incorporated into new developments. We just lost a very impressive and well maintained facade on the corner of Oxford Street and Vernon Street Bondi Junction and there is a grave fear that the historic facade will not be retained when the Mill Hill Hotel is redeveloped.

Councillor Andrew Cusack said that developers can demolish buildings if they are not heritage listed. Residents can put in submissions to retain facades, but there is no guarantee that a facade would be retained even if it was heritage listed. It would only be necessary to take photographs of the building before it is demolished.

Developments at the Grand Hotel and the Mill Hill Hotel have currently been deferred and there have been many objections to both proposals.

Residential parking changes are a concern due to floating boundaries. It is causing problems for residents as more people try to park closer to the main shopping area. Also it is possible to get visitor parking permits at low cost. Users of these permits can park all day very cheaply. Some people use the visitor parking permit to park all day whilst they take a train to work.

The Eastern side of Hollywood Avenue currently has free parking. Residents can petition Council to implement a residential parking scheme there.

The shopping trolley locking mechanism is no longer working effectively and trolleys are being dumped all around our area. Shoppers have worked out ways to keep the trolleys working after they exit the shopping centres. Council is warning stores that trolleys will be impounded if they don't find a solution to this problem. Councillor Andrew Cusack will follow up with Trolley Trackers to be more vigilant and pick up more trolleys in a timely manner.

The meeting closed at 8.30 pm.

The next meeting will be held at Waverley Library at 6.30 pm on Wednesday 17 August 2016.