

Minutes of Dover Heights Precinct Meeting

26 November, 2016

Body Express, 157 Military Road, Dover Height

Meeting commenced at 7:30 and ended at 11:30 pm

Present:

Convenor Dov Frazer, Secretary Ron Nothman,

CR Miriam Guttman-Jones; CR Leon Goltsman; CR Sally Betts

Guests:

Philip Thalís, Director Hill Thalís Architects

Scott Field - Executive Manager, Safe Waverley, Waverley Council

Melissa Green – Community Liaison Coordinator, Waverley Council

Jessica Chapman – CSIRO

Attendance List:

See Separate Attendance List

Minutes of previous meeting:

Moved by: Malcolm Kofsky Seconded by: Richard Morris

Approved unanimously

A. Presentation on Rodney Reserve Concept Plans by Philip Thalís –Director - Hill Thalís Architects

See attached PDF of slide show presentation

Many questions from residents were answered by Philip Thalís, Scott Field & Mayor Betts.

Residents in general extremely angry. Most every resident in attendance spoke about the proposals over the course of 2 hours. Consensus of residents was that all due diligence including a meaningful traffic study, analysis of the military history, analysis of security issues and analysis of radio telescope history and assets be done BEFORE moving onto building designs and ensuing community consultation on said designs.

Motion: Waverley Council hold off from proceeding with proposed developments to Rodney Reserve until Waverley Council has provided the residents of Dover Heights and ratepayers with:

- the results of a traffic feasibility study as well as an investigation into the dangers to children posed by this increased traffic;

- a study of the increased noise pollution to the area resulting from the changes to the use of the park and the increased traffic;
- an investigation into the dangers of a public toilet and change rooms in the particular circumstances of children practicing sport on a field and being largely unsupervised;
- outcomes of investigations of the tunnels and associated military sites and the impact the proposed development will have on them;
- details of all the sporting facilities in the greater Waverley/Woolhara/Randwick area and evidence (not merely Mayor Betts' allegations) to demonstrate that these are being fully utilised and cannot meet the existing demand; and
- an investigation into Hugh Bamford Reserve and its current utilization, including the extent to which Hugh Bamford could be used in place of Rodney Reserve as it has current off street parking, lighting, toilet facilities and can host a full size soccer field.

Moved by: Grant Benson, Seconded by: Tony Krouk, Motion Passed

Jessica Chapman from CSIRO made a brief presentation about the history of radio astronomy in Rodney Reserve and the importance of the discoveries that were made there

B. Report on Blake & Military Road Upgrades – Bianca Simpson Materials

Dov – See hand out from Bianca. After extensive community consultation and after a very long phone call with Bianca, I can report:

1. unless more funds are found the extend of pavement on the North East corner will not extend beyond the driveway of the commercial builder;
2. existing driveways will not be redone unless more money found – driveway at South East corner 151 Military or 216/218 Military or 171 Military or 222 Military;
3. curb and gutter on Blake next to 220 Blake in Dover Heights Forest will only be redone when the paving is redone between Portland & Military on Blake. Bianca will request that this is done at the same time;
4. benches will be of wood despite precinct concerns that wood will simply deteriorate quickly like all other wood benches in our area;
5. Bianca has asked that all trees planted will be Callistemon which is red flowering bottlebrush; and
6. Planter boxes will not be used as Council has advised they require more maintenance than shrubs & grasses

C. Report on Council Amalgamations – Mayor Betts

Proposed name of Eastern Beach Council discussed as well as the wait for a decision from the Supreme Courts about Woollahra legal appeal.

D. Subcommittee Report – Parks Reserves & Streetscape

Dov recounted weekly emails to Paul Sparks – attempting to get many issues resolved with trash, fencing, bogs, and overgrown weeds along fence.

Have attempted to get Gabrielle Upton to meet in DH Coastal Reserve about getting funding for viewing platform and new fencing everywhere:

Motion:

DHP requests that Gabrielle Upton meet with precinct executives at the Radio Telescope Memorial in Rodney Reserve with hopes she can help secure funding for a better memorial, viewing platform and new fencing throughout the DH Coastal Reserve

Moved by: Les Armstrong Seconded by: Ron Nothman Motion Passed

E. NO Council Responses to previous motions

F. New Business

Dov discussed his Macquarie Lighthouse tour and how Burghers of Sydney insisted that the lighthouse windows be blacked out towards the city of Sydney so the residents would not see the flashing lights. Dov enquired if residents of Dover Heights might be afforded the same benefit. No motion was passed on this issue.

Meeting Ended 11:30 pm

Next Meeting is Monday, 27 February, 2016

Letter Read by Ron Nothman from Michael and Kerry Gottlieb, Precinct Meeting of 28 November, 2017

Thank you Ron for reading this letter and thank you Mayor Betts for attending this meeting. Apologies that we are not able to attend this meeting but we are overseas at the moment.

This process regarding the redevelopment of Rodney Reserve has been going on since at least June 2015 when Council resolved to prepare the Rodney Reserve Master Plan. With all due respect, we believe we can speak on behalf of most if not all the residents of the area, we are frustrated with the complete lack of due process and transparency in this process.

The residents of Dover Heights formed a committee to engage with Council. A few meetings have taken place with Mayor Betts and members of the committee, however it appears that

there is a lack of any meaningful consultation and it appears that these meetings and engagements are being done so that Mayor Betts and Council can tick a box that they have engaged in consultation, without genuinely hearing the concerns of residents and rate payers.

In this regard, at each Dover Heights precinct meeting (where Council members are present), the residents of Dover Heights have unanimously opposed the building of toilet blocks, car parking and seating. We have expressed serious concern about the traffic congestion in a narrow street, that already has a school, synagogue, church and day care all on the same block. We have requested a traffic study be conducted. Council's response is that our concerns are noted, yet as far as we are aware, no traffic studies have been done. Can Mayor Betts please confirm whether or not these traffic studies have been conducted? Mayor Betts is now presenting a new concept plan, yet how can this be done without having done a traffic feasibility study if you claim you are taking residents concerns into account? We have seen children coming very close to being run over because of the traffic congestion that already exists and the inability to see oncoming cars - surely this needs to be thoroughly investigated.

Regarding the toilet blocks, change rooms and storage facilities that Mayor Betts is proposing, we have consistently said that we believe public toilets in Rodney Reserve are dangerous yet Mayor Betts has continually dismissed these concerns as unfounded. Just last week, a 5 year old child in Orange was raped at a public toilet at a park. We have taken the liberty of printing out just a few newspaper articles of children being sexually assaulted in public toilets. This is unfortunately just a few of the many incidents that occur on a regular basis and if Mayor Betts or Council would like to see more examples, we can certainly provide them. The reality is that public toilets are dangerous for children to go unattended. People may argue that we can't go without public toilets and many public spaces have public toilets. However Rodney Reserve is not just a playground where parents are usually present with their children and these parents can and should accompany their children into the toilets. Nor can anyone compare Rodney Reserve to a shopping mall, where there are several people using the restrooms at any particular time. Rodney Reserve is used by many children during the week for sport practice, with their parents dropping them off and picking them up after their training. These children are usually being supervised by a single coach. It is impossible for a single coach to accompany each child to the toilet every time they want to go, or even to keep an eye on them. It is also not feasible to say that parents

should wait with their kids during practice. We are parents ourselves and the reality is we are very often dropping 2 or 3 kids at different activities at the same time and so it is impossible to do this. In addition many kids from surrounding areas who are old enough to go play on the field without their parents would not be supervised when going into or even near these toilets. If there is even one incident that occurs in these new toilet blocks, it is not ok. What better place for a Paedophile to hang out than toilets in a park where hundreds of little soccer boys and preteens visit, with limited supervision. As it currently stands, parents using the field know that there are no toilet facilities and they make sure the kids go to the toilet before practice

either at school or at their homes. You can argue that parents can continue to do this but the reality is many parents are not aware of these dangers. If even one incident occurs, apart from the truly devastating and life changing impact this would have on the child, the family and community involved, this would surely have terrible repercussions for the perception of Dover Heights as a safe, family friendly neighbourhood as well as irreparable damage to the tourism in the area.

Finally, taking into account the future amalgamation of the Councils and their financial distress that is necessitating this merger, we as residents and ratepayers believe it is completely inappropriate for Council to proceed with this project and to spend a significant amount of money without having fully investigated and demonstrated to ratepayers that the current sporting fields within the greater Waverley / Randwick / Woolhara area cannot meet the alleged demand for more playing space. In the exercise of due process it is not sufficient for Mayor Betts to continue to allege that the demand exceeds the supply without providing concerned residents with full details regarding the number and availability of fields that currently exist. There are 16 soccer fields alone within Queens Park itself, how many more exist within the greater Waverley / Randwick / Woolhara area. We also know that Hugh Bamford Reserve which is 1km down the road and which can host a full scale soccer field, currently has toilet facilities, change rooms, lighting and off street parking and is not fully utilised. Despite numerous letters and requests to Council, as well as the lodging through legal representation of an application under The Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009, Council has failed to provide concerned residents and ratepayers with any actual evidence demonstrating their business case for these impositions. Their failure to do so is a complete lack of due process.

Therefore we feel that, for Council to be presenting us with a concept plan, and to attempt to engage with us on discussions of size and location of parking, toilet facilities etc is completely inappropriate at this stage and demonstrates a complete lack of meaningful consultation and due process. We therefore put forward the following motion:

Waverley Council hold off from proceeding with proposed developments to Rodney Reserve until Waverley Council has provided the residents of Dover Heights and ratepayers with:

- the results of a traffic feasibility study as well as an investigation into the dangers to children posed by this increased traffic;*
- a study of the increased noise pollution to the area resulting from the changes to the use of the park and the increased traffic;*
- an investigation into the dangers of a public toilet and change rooms in the particular circumstances of children practicing sport on a field and being largely unsupervised;*
- outcomes of investigations of the tunnels and associated military sites and the impact the proposed development will have on them;*
- details of all the sporting facilities in the greater Waverley / Woolhara*

- *Randwick area and evidence (not merely Mayor Betts' allegations) to demonstrate that these are being fully utilised and cannot meet the existing demand; and*
- *an investigation into Hugh Bamford Reserve and its current utilization, including the extent to which Hugh Bamford could be used in place of Rodney Reserve as it has current off street parking, lighting, toilet facilities and can host a full size soccer field. Without doing so, Waverley Council cannot allege that it is taking residents' concerns into account and engaging in due process. Every time the Committee meets with Mayor Betts the committee unequivocally opposes the building of toilet and storage facilities and a car parking for the reasons above, yet following these meetings Mayor Betts continues working on these developments and in fact each time the toilet facilities seem to grow in scale to now even include a kiosk. This clearly demonstrates a lack of meaningful consultation. The current proposals appear to have the look and feel of a commercial development and are completely inappropriate in an area of such cultural and historical significance. Yours sincerely*

Michael and Kerry Gottlieb

Ratepayers and Residents of 4 Rodney Street, Dover Heights