



MINUTES
Ordinary General Meeting, Tuesday 15 May 2018, 7.35pm

Present: Nicholas Atkins, Kevin Chamberlin, Mary Chapman, Emmy Chung, Sebastian Clark, Dave Collins, Bill Cook, Ray Cowling, Andrew Cron (guest), Stephen Farrugia, Alba Gatto, Peter Gerrand, Valerie Gerrand, Ross Goddard (guest), Janet Graham, Michael Horscroft, Mary Kehoe, Jan Lacey, Graham McCallum, Dan McDonnell, Rosa McKenna, Gerry McLoughlin, Bridget Macwhirter, Jane Poynter, Duncan Rouch, Lorraine Siska, Jacqueline Stevenson, John Tekieli (guest) and Angelo Tsoutsoulis

Apologies: Cecilia Gason, Rosemary John, Mary Kelleher, Colin Long, Jacques Peril, Margaret Peril and Geraldine Suter

The Chair, Kevin Chamberlin, welcomed attendees to the meeting and introduced the guest speakers from the City of Melbourne (CoM): Andrew Cron, Senior Coordinator – Traffic Engineering (acting in the role of Haig Poulson, who was on sick leave); John Tekieli, Senior Coordinator–Traffic Engineer; and Ross Goddard, Traffic Engineer.

1. Presentation by Andrew Cron, John Tekieli and Ross Goddard from Traffic Engineering, Melbourne City Council, on traffic flows, speed limits and the impact of the West Gate Tunnel Project on traffic in North and West Melbourne

Andrew Cron said they had a strong team handling all aspects of Melbourne Metro and many other projects. They were spending a lot of time managing construction across the city.

Specifically regarding plans to reduce traffic speeds, their Bike Plan was into its second year. This included 13 kilometres of cycle routes across the city with the aim of making bike connections stronger. Swanston Street and Albert Street, East Melbourne, were examples.

John Tekieli showed a map onscreen, which he was bringing to the Association to get feedback. This was apparently quite different from the map put out a few months ago. The colours represented different types of road, e.g., light green = arterial roads, grey = 50 km/h, yellow and blue = a combination of school speed zones and speed limits changed to 40 km/h on request from schools etc. The yellow, grey and red colours indicated where there was an application to VicRoads for a reduction to 40 km/h.

Curzon Street, a road of most concern to locals, is an arterial road. They were applying for 50 km/h on Arden Street to Dryburgh Street. They didn't want to jeopardise the 40 km/h limit on local streets by asking for too much. Ross Goddard added that they had sent a proposal round about cycle lanes on Arden Street to the Wreckyn Street roundabout. They were trying to get approval to reduce the limit to 40 km/h (shown in blue and light blue). Everything that's not blue is proposed to be 40 km/h. John said there would also be treatments to roads to make them look more like 40 km/h roads.

There was a query about Rathdowne Street. John said it had a lot of speed humps and other changes, so it was considered better to make it a uniform speed near schools, nursing homes etc.

King Street in the CBD is 40 km/h. The area between La Trobe and Dudley streets (West Melbourne) has been permanently lowered from 60 to 40 since the opening of the Haileybury school campus. There was nothing to prevent them lodging similar applications for Arden Street.

Questions were asked about the effect of the West Gate Tunnel Project (WGTP), the resulting pressure along Dryburgh Street and the effect on West Melbourne. Bill Cook thought Hawke Street would bear the brunt of traffic exiting at Dynon Road and would become a funnel for turning traffic.

Hawke Street has particular safety issues relating to high traffic levels and centre parking, with drivers often ignoring the 50 km/h limit.

John said the first step towards traffic-calming was median strips (Hawke Street being a local road).

Ross noted that the West Melbourne Structure Plan (WMSP) was downgrading parts west of Spencer Street. Bill asked if speed reductions could be implemented in a hurry in this area as the volume of through traffic was minimal.

Regarding timeframe, Ross said there was funding for developing a case to go to VicRoads in the 2018–19 budget. It needed time for the engineers to produce drawings. So say end of first quarter next financial year.

Re Grattan Street, as far as he was aware VicRoads had granted a temporary closure between Flemington Road and Royal Parade. Ultimately it would reopen with one lane in each direction plus an on-road bicycle lane.

Kevin noted that the rationale for the Dynon Road off-ramps was to get people to the university precinct. The Grattan Street closure and narrowing would make this pretty hard. Ross pointed out that Council had formally objected strongly to the Dynon Road ramps, not only with regard to the effect on the hospitals and the knowledge precinct.

John said they had downgraded Queensberry Street, since when they had been fighting a rearguard action because of the Grattan Street closure. So Queensberry Street in Carlton had increased to two lanes. There are four east–west streets in our area: Arden, Queensberry, Victoria and Spencer. The WGTP would have a big impact on all four, which is why they objected.

John said Rob Adams [Director of City Design at CoM] had plans to reinvigorate the corner at Queen Victoria Market but he wondered what would happen to Victoria Street. There were a number of strategies in planning that we could respond to.

Regarding Hawke Street congestion, Ross said a lot of traffic would divert down the Wurundjeri Way extension, which would reduce the pressure of through traffic in King and Spencer streets, south of Hawke Street, and which might then be downgraded under the WMSP as reductions in traffic occurred from the West Gate Tunnel.

John said Spencer Street had the potential to become a local road. It is forecast that the number of pedestrians crossing Spencer at Collins Street will increase from 4000 to 10,000.

Ross noted that VicRoads is only one part of the State Government's transport stable; there is also Transport Victoria. A comment from an attendee that VicRoads had worked closely with Transurban on the WGTP and that the Western Distributor Authority was calling the shots prompted discussion about likely traffic paths and the possibility of a congestion tax at the Dynon Road off-ramps. Ross mentioned a newly-formed organisation that would be looking at traffic mitigation. We don't increase limits to accommodate increased traffic (that's 1960s thinking), he said.

John said they were trying to bring Spencer and King streets into line with other city roads. Ross explained that keeping pedestrian crossings brisk, and not extending the time allowed to cross, resulted in better safety. With a 60-second cycle there are half as many pedestrians waiting on the footpath as there are with a cycle of 120 seconds.

This prompted a personal comment about interminable waits in cars at traffic lights and how great it would be if the lights turned green as one approached. Cameras that can effect this do exist apparently. Ross replied that traffic lights generally tick over to facilitate trams and pedestrians, so they were trying to implement the opposite of the procedure suggested.

A question was put as to how to help the 57 tram get up Victoria Street, as it so often gets held up by traffic too close to the yellow line, and was there an intention to put longer trams on this route to take increased passenger numbers. John said some of the tram stops were so small and the Errol Street corners so tight that larger trams were not allowed along the 57 line.

City of Melbourne's Emma Appleton is working on the West Melbourne Structure Plan and Rob Moore has had the Western Tunnel (WGTP) added to his Metro Tunnel portfolio (all now called State Infrastructure).

The Chair thanked the guests for their presentation. They departed soon after 8.30pm and the meeting continued.

2. Confirmation of minutes of previous meeting

Moved Sebastian Clark, seconded Jane Poynter:

That the minutes of the Ordinary General Meeting held on Tuesday 17 April 2018 be confirmed.
Carried.

3. Committee report

Secretary Jane Poynter said the Committee had met on 10 May and welcomed Sebastian Clark and Jacqueline Stevenson to the Committee. Sebastian had agreed to take the role of Deputy Chair and Jacqueline would handle memberships. Sue Scarfe had not sought re-election and was thanked for her valuable contribution. The Committee would be working this year on an updated membership system. They had also discussed the Spring Fling — we might have a theme on recycling and waste. Dealing with our own household rubbish and the growing piles left in streets was an interesting topic.

There was a comment that CoM didn't seem to be purchasing products made from waste materials, which didn't support its otherwise proactive policy of 'Refuse, reduce, re-use, recycle'. Bottle returns and reducing packaging were mentioned. The CoM website is still open for feedback. It was suggested that we get someone along to talk about this before the Spring Fling.

With reference to updating the NWMA website, Jane said we needed to go back to the bare bones, decide what we needed and then redesign it, giving Jacquie a new membership system to work with. With regard to archiving, the Association was getting advice.

Moved Jane Poynter, seconded Bill Cook:

That the Committee report be accepted.
Carried.

4. Reports from affiliated organisations

CoRBA (Coalition of Resident and Business Associations)

- (a) Bill said the **Exhibition Buildings** took high priority in CoRBA's agenda. There were concerns about the Melbourne International Flower & Garden Show in Carlton Gardens not treating the gardens with the respect they deserved. White Night also makes extensive use of the gardens and there had been a soccer activity approved over the next couple of months.
- (b) It was queried how many local associations were involved in the **CoM Parks and Gardens Advisory Committee**. Could we get a full list of new members? (Mary Chapman answered "yes".) Someone from the Melbourne South Yarra Residents Group was believed to have been appointed.
- (c) Discussion about **where CoRBA meets**. They had been given marching orders from Melbourne Town Hall but were hoping with the change of personnel there might be a reconsideration.
- (d) Bill had raised the issue of **traffic and speeds in North and West Melbourne**. Someone had suggested that Jonathan Nolan of the Melbourne Bicycle Users Group (MBUG) was good at advising on how to improve the planning of bike paths.

Moved Bill Cook, seconded Ray Cowling:

That Bill's CoRBA report be adopted.
Carried.

There were no reports from the Homelessness Action Group (HAG), Melbourne North PCCC or other affiliated groups.

5. Discussion of correspondence circulated in the last month and received by hand

None discussed other than as noted elsewhere in these minutes.

6. General business

(a) State Government's Public Housing Renewal Program

(i) New social housing strategy: updated report (13.5.18) by Duncan Rouch

Duncan's updated report (13 May 2018) had been circulated electronically. Duncan spoke briefly about the report, which now included elaboration on the Housing First strategy with thanks to Valerie Gerrand for providing the information.

Valerie requested that Duncan's report should be further amended to show that the 10% increase in public housing *only* applies to the (now) seven public housing renewal projects, not to public housing across the state, and that the total number of new public housing units will be just 79, not 6300 (see page 7 of the report).

Duncan said he was associated with the Greens' public housing committee and the Greens were happy to criticise the government on its handling of the Public Housing Renewal Program.

(ii) Kensington public housing estate: development history and lessons for public housing strategy: report (13.5.18) by Duncan Rouch

This report had also been circulated by email. Duncan explained that the way the renewal of the Kensington public housing estate had taken place was the origin of the strategy to sell off public housing and land. The worst aspect of the project was that 265 public housing units had been lost, which was a lot more than those being replaced under the current Public Housing Renewal Program agenda.

Duncan's reports were accepted.

(b) Voter eligibility in the City of Melbourne

Ray Cowling said the gerrymander in Melbourne was such an important matter that the NWMA needed to discuss it with a view to asking CoRBA to follow up and lobby to get fairer resident representation by the next election. He referred to the figures quoted in his Planlist circular with regard to the Lord Mayoral by-election. Investors have two votes but it's hard to find out what this entails. *The Age* had reported that the number of property investors enrolled to vote had grown since 2016 by 7091 people to a total of 64,718.

Nick Atkins said the rule that granted an extra vote for having a second house closed 10 years ago.

Melbourne is the only municipality in Victoria where businesses vote in Council elections, and each business gets two votes, compared to one vote per resident. Kevin noted that CoRBA had been established to work on reforming the Council. The gerrymander (in which businesses were given two votes) had been introduced by the Liberal Party and continued under Labor governments.

The voting statistics for the Lord Mayoral election were due out the following Friday, 18 May, after the votes had been counted. Discussion followed about the confusing voting provisions and the pressing need for electoral reform.

Moved Ray Cowling, seconded Mary Kehoe:

The Association expresses its concern about the existing gerrymander on Council and asks that our CoRBA representative, Bill Cook, get the matter listed on the agenda for the next CoRBA meeting where the matter will be fully discussed and CoRBA's support obtained; and that Ray Cowling, Bill Cook and Kevin Chamberlin confer and prepare an up-to-date position paper.

Carried.

7. Time, date and venue of next ordinary general meeting

Tuesday 19 June 2018, 7.30pm, in the Dewey Common, Bastow Institute, 603–615 Queensberry Street. The guest speakers will be from Melbourne City Council's Royal Park Transport Assessment Project team who will talk about trees and sustainability.

The meeting closed at 9.15pm.