



**North & West Melbourne Association Inc.  
PO Box 102, North Melbourne, Vic 3051**

**Ordinary General Meeting  
Dewey Common Room, Bastow Institute  
603–615 Queensberry Street, North Melbourne**

Meeting Chairperson: Kevin Chamberlin

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**MINUTES  
Ordinary General Meeting, Tuesday 17 October 2017, 7.35pm**

**Present:** Kevin Chamberlin, Mary Chapman, Emmy Chung, Bill Cook, Stephen Farrugia, Alba Gatto, Peter Gerrand, Valerie Gerrand, Janet Graham, Susan Greer, Enid Hookey, Michael Horscroft, Jan Lacey, Paul McLeod, Rob McLeod (guest), Bridget Macwhirter, Jane Poynter, Duncan Rouch, Carolyn Thompson, George Tyler and John Widmer

**Apologies:** Nicholas Atkins, Adam Bandt MP, Ray Cowling, Stephen Hatcher, Rosemary John, Annie Rivera, Gerard Rodgers, Ellen Sandell MP, Sue Scarfe, Jacqueline Stevenson, Geraldine Suter and Helen Sweeting

Chair Kevin Chamberlin welcomed members and the guest speaker, Rob McLeod, Community Liaison Officer at Adam Bandt MP's office, who was standing in for Ellen Sandell, State Greens Member for Melbourne, who had been detained in Parliament.

**1. Presentation by Rob McLeod, Community Liaison Officer, Adam Bandt MP's office**

After acknowledging that we were meeting on Wurundjeri land, Rob recorded apologies from Ellen Sandell, who would be sitting in Parliament until midnight debating the Assisted Dying Bill, and also Adam Bandt, who was in Canberra. He felt the past few months had been so much 'treading water' and then came a lot of distractions regarding senators' and MPs' ineligibility. Now this was the first week of Parliament sitting. Rob said he would be happy to take questions at any time, preferring an interactive discussion.

He said he had got involved in the Greens because of climate change and referred to today's events as a backward step. The Turnbull Government had put forward a policy that did little and supported continued coal instead of renewables. Rob said we had to shut coal down but this policy did the reverse — coal would be in place longer with no plan to transition afterwards. He had received messages from both Ellen and Adam and would speak on topics he knew we were interested in.

**Public housing renewal plans**

Rob reminded us that there would be a directions hearing on Thursday 19 October preparatory to the panel hearing on the Abbotsford Street estate redevelopment.

**Q:** I heard someone say the Greens supported high-rise.

**A:** That's not right.

A few decades ago it was thought that public housing was the responsibility of the state. There were problems with relying on the private system. The government is now saying developers can come in and do pretty much what they like as long as they include 10% public housing.

It was clear from the get-go that information provided to community organisations and residents was not good; they had been steamrolling ahead, while expressions of interest had already gone out, which was disturbing. It's become clear that a lot of the information did not match the reality. It could be public housing or community housing. In the case of Flemington, they are planning to knock down approximately 210 dwellings but introduce 820 new private dwellings. In North Melbourne they will demolish 110–120 social housing units and build around 200 private units. We should take with a grain of salt the increase in public housing — they want to hand it over to developers. We've seen it doesn't work in Carlton; the same divide exists.

The Parliamentary Inquiry that the Greens put forward is open for submissions now. The panel is looking at the intention to give the Planning Minister full control and the lack of third-party rights. It's also looking at the issue of transparency and genuine consultation with affected residents and assessing alternative options to demolition. We encourage submissions.

**Q:** I believe the committee is not going to report until March 2018.

**A:** Correct. The government is steaming ahead regardless. This is the sausage-making process. The idea was floated of a school or North Melbourne Primary School expansion. A rally was held in Flemington on Sunday. There were also neighbours from Abbotsford Street there. Some people had been told "You'll be able to come back to a lovely three-bedroom home", others had been told something quite different.

**Q:** What's the thinking? If Labor lose the election, would the Liberals do the same thing, or could they stop it?

**A:** There are options. We can go through the planning system, or through Parliament, but probably through the community is best. In Fitzroy and Richmond they wanted to fill open space with private development. That plan went ahead in Prahran. If it's made a public issue, that might worry the government. They might then ask people what they want. Some buildings do need an upgrade. There's a massive waiting list for public housing, but this process is wrong. We need to have an open discussion about this with the community driving it.

**Q:** The Association has a strong history on social and affordable housing. We supported public housing in Capel Street, Hawke Street, 143 O'Shanassy Street and the Uniting Church in Brougham Street [Abbeyfield House]. We had stand-up battles with the then Department of Housing over the other side of Hawke Street — they wouldn't listen. At a recent meeting they said there wasn't much demand for family accommodation. Why don't we make developers incorporate a set amount of social housing units? Regarding the 'school' component, is the triangle for North Melbourne Primary or for another school?

**Q:** Only half of Arden Gardens [Woolworths site] has been sold.

**Q:** We don't often hear of incentives for developers to provide a portion of affordable housing. There are myriad opportunities — it's done in Europe — but here both Labor and Liberal are obsessed with private development. We are giving away public property for private use. This is a golden opportunity for kids from disadvantaged backgrounds to get a good education.

**Q:** I went to the protest meeting in Flemington and was impressed with people talking about access to local schools and the disruption to their children's education that would occur if they had to move to a distant suburb.

**A:** I couldn't agree more. There are mainly non-English speakers on the Flemington estate. The government has told them they will get a knock on the door to sign something about moving them away.

**Q:** Are you saying no development or better development?

**A:** We should be going back to the drawing board. Take Ascot Vale. They said "We'd quite like upgraded or new buildings" but they are going to get a knock on the door. Do you have opinions?

**Q:** Kids from this estate attending the school are indistinguishable from others.

**Q:** It's not just this but it's also losing green space when climate change makes it even more important. Consultants are running these meetings.

**A:** The whole development model across Melbourne doesn't have much family accommodation. We're going to ask what sizes. Large families are going to be accommodated by walls being knocked down to create larger units.

**Q:** That won't work. Some units will end up with two kitchens.

**Q:** The government is just rezoning this land, taking it over and imposing huge heights. They are just kowtowing to developers and allowing increased density.

**Q:** Urban practice here is appalling. This area was recently rezoned as 11 metres maximum. Planning is not secure. It was supposed to provide certainty. Heights are also used to cite as a precedent.

**Q:** We have seen increases of 40%, 60% and 100% just in the last Census. Look at Kavanagh Street, behind the ABC in Southbank. There are buildings along there with 400 people in them where there was previously a school. Speak to angry residents about their 'view of the ocean'. Look at the Census from 2006 to 2011 to 2016 — the evidence is there. What we've got now is an agenda driven by builders.

**Q:** Plus now 6000 extra cars with the West Gate Tunnel Project.

**A:** E-Gate could be a beautifully planned area.

Rob McLeod was thanked for his presentation and the discussion. The meeting proceeded with the regular agenda.

## **2. Confirmation of minutes of previous meeting**

*Moved Jane Poynter, seconded Valerie Gerrand:*

That the minutes of the Ordinary General Meeting held on Tuesday 19 September 2017, having been circulated previously and taken as read, be confirmed.

*Carried.*

## **3. Committee report**

### **(a) New members**

Two people had applied to join the Association at the Spring Fling.

*Moved Michael Horscroft, seconded Bill Cook:*

That Helena and David Steel be approved as members of the NWMA.

*Carried.*

### **(b) City of Melbourne grant**

The Association had been successful in securing a full City of Melbourne (CoM) Resident Group Operational Grant of \$1550 for 2018. This is just for running costs. Secretary Jane Poynter thanked Cecilia Gason for her expertise and help writing grant applications.

### **(c) Spring Fling Festival stall, Sunday 15 October**

Jane reported that the NWMA stall at Spring Fling had been a huge success, with nearly \$350 raised from book and plant sales, to be divided between the Association and North West Patch. A lot of people at the festival had stopped and talked. She thanked members Nick Atkins and Jacqui Stevenson, Enid Hookey and John Widmer, Mary Chapman, Rosemary John, Janet Graham, Cecilia Gason and Andrew Paull (and Cecilia's mother, Flo), Bridget Macwhirter and Piers Greville, and Emma from the North West Patch group, for setting up the stall in the morning, and Susan Greer, Michael Horscroft, Stephen Farrugia, Carolyn Thompson and Emmy Chung for taking over at lunchtime. Thank you also to everyone who submitted a memory or observation for the photographic presentation: Kevin, Jane, Ray Cowling, Mary Chapman, Lorraine Siska, Jan Lacey, Tony Lang, Geraldine Suter, Michael, Carolyn, Janet and Bridget. There would be another chance to see this at the anniversary dinner. Janet thanked Jane for organising the Spring Fling stall.

### **(d) North West Patch community garden**

Bridget had submitted the Sustainable Communities grant application for North West Patch the previous week. She had earlier reported: "I'm unsure when we'll hear if we've been successful, but we are confident that we submitted a strong application with all the necessary components. Thank you to everyone who put their hand up to help with the application process. We had a great amount of help from Cecilia Gason ... Cecilia has a strong background not only in submitting grant applications but also with her employment — approving grant applications. We also had a huge amount of help from Richard Vanderkley, who really got the ball rolling on putting the backbone into the application. So thank you immensely to Richard and Cecilia!"

If you wish to keep up to date with North West Patch or sign up for the community garden you can do so by joining their Facebook group: [facebook.com/groups/northwestpatch](https://facebook.com/groups/northwestpatch)

**(e) 50th anniversary dinner, Wednesday 25 October**

There were still a few places left but the number booked so far (51) was enough to make it viable. There was a reminder to bring along NWMA memorabilia, documentation etc, to display. Kevin observed that it had taken him seven hours to read the old minute books.

**(f) NWMA Christmas dinner**

Should we have one? It was agreed we should. It was probably West Melbourne's turn to provide the venue, so Carolyn offered to check out Royal Standard Hotel and the Royal Mail. The dinner would probably take place on a Tuesday — to be advised.

**(g) Unisex Exeloo for North Melbourne**

Last sighted on a wharf in Auckland, construction work on the Queensberry Street site had begun in preparation for the Exeloo's arrival. It should be completed in three weeks.

**(h) Abbotsford Street public housing development**

Kevin said he had been trying to get a date for a meeting with the Housing Minister (who was no longer Martin Foley, according to an announcement). [That statement was corrected later, meaning Foley is still Minister for Housing.] The Association had lodged its submission on Monday 16 October, asking to be heard at the Social Housing Renewal Standing Advisory Committee hearing.

*Moved Bill Cook, seconded Michael Horscroft:*

That the actions of the Chair, including the request to be heard at the panel hearing, be approved.  
*Carried.*

We would try to get a representative of the Education Minister or the Education Department to attend the meeting with the Housing Minister's staff. It seemed that nobody knew whether the 'school' was part of North Melbourne Primary School.

**(j) Treasurer's report**

Michael said the only letter in the mail had been one from the Commonwealth Bank; everything else had come in electronically. The statement confirmed that we had obtained the extra 1% interest on our term deposit because the balance was over \$10,000, namely \$10,040.

**(k) Melbourne Metro Rail Project**

Rachael Palmer is our nominee to represent the Association in the Melbourne Metro Rail Authority's Parkville Community Reference Group. Rachael has been involved in this project since its inception and lives near the area affected by the tunnel. The southern boundary of the 'Parkville' area is Dryburgh Street, so this is a relevant group for North Melbourne. Enid Hookey was nominated as our representative in the MMRA Kensington and Arden Community Reference Group.

*Moved Stephen Farrugia, seconded Duncan Rouch:*

That this meeting endorse the nomination of Rachael Palmer as the NWMA representative in the MMRA Parkville Community Reference Group and the nomination of Enid Hookey as the NWMA representative in the MMRA Kensington and Arden Community Reference Group.  
*Carried.*

Steve Cross is also a representative for North Melbourne Residents in the Parkville Community Reference Group. There was a suggestion that we could provide input on station names through these channels.

**4. Reports from affiliated organisations**

**(a) Melbourne North Police Community Consultative Committee (PCCC)**

Jan Lacey said the committee had met the previous week. There being no speaker, it was routine business. Jan referred to an earlier report where a jump in crime statistics in Melrose Street had been recorded, which had then disappeared. Police were being cagey about this. They said an operation had

been underway because of intelligence that criminal activity was occurring at a shop. Surveillance had resulted in people being charged, so crimes were no longer being committed there.

General discussion of nefarious activities rumoured to be taking place in the Melrose Street area followed.

## **5. Discussion of correspondence circulated in the past month and received by hand**

One paper item of correspondence was tabled — the bank statement from the Commonwealth Bank (see item 3(j) above).

## **6. General business**

### **(a) Plane Tree Way proposed Public Highway notification**

Jane said a friend who lives at City Gardens had received a letter from Council saying it was going to gazette Plane Tree Way. The Lady Huntingfield childcare centre was still being refurbished. At last month's NWMA meeting (September) we had had CoM presenters speak about the Gardiner Reserve expansion; now Council wanted a public road to the childcare centre. They wanted to encourage entry to the centre from Plane Tree Way rather than from Haines Street. There is a giant drain under Plane Tree Way to cope with flooding.

Mary Chapman said CoM was looking at how care of the trees could become Council's responsibility rather than the owners corporation's. Plane Tree Way is considered private land. Members can pursue this at their leisure and make submissions if they wish. The matter will be discussed at a meeting on 7 December.

Valerie Gerrand noted that a letter from CoM advised that the 40 km/h speed limit in Errol Street was going to apply right through to Haines Street.

### **(b) 80–82 Lothian Street, North Melbourne**

Jane reported that the development had been approved, with three dwellings (down from the 15 units originally applied for). These consist of 2 x 3-storey houses plus one apartment in the former Wishart building.

### **(c) 17–37 Abbotsford Street, West Melbourne (Gadsden site)**

Janet said she had attended a practice day hearing on 13 October. Stephen Farrell had also attended, representing a number of residents who were supporting Council's reduction in height from 11 storeys to nine (although we think this is still too high). Representatives from the applicant (PDG Corporation Pty Ltd) and from Council thought a compulsory conference would be useful, as did the VCAT member, Helen Gibson, whereas Stephen and Janet both said in their experience these never achieved a result. The applicant thought a compromise could be reached; we surmised this meant 10 storeys. The compulsory conference is on 4 December at 1.30pm, and if the matter doesn't settle the full hearing will begin on 14 March 2018.

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

Tuesday 21 November 2017, 7.30pm, at the Bastow Institute, 603–615 Queensberry Street, North Melbourne. The guest speaker will be Fiona Patten MP, our local MLC and Member for Northern Metropolitan.

The meeting closed at 9.00pm.