



MINUTES

Ordinary General Meeting, Tuesday 20 February 2018, 7.35pm

Present: Nicholas Atkins, Kevin Chamberlin, Emmy Chung, Melanie Del Monaco (guest, CoM), David Evans, Cecilia Gason, Peter Gerrand, Valerie Gerrand, Janet Graham, Stephen Hatcher, Enid Hookey, Michael Horscroft, James Jones, Jan Lacey, Adam Mills (guest, CoM), Heiley Nguyen (visitor), Jane Poynter, Duncan Rouch, Sue Scarfe, Fran Schott, Jacqueline Stevenson, Gina Stuart, Carolyn Thompson, Timoti Tirta (visitor), Marshall Waters and John Widmer

Apologies: Bill Cook, Ray Cowling, Jenny Danielson, Stephen Farrugia, Rosemary John, Mary Kelleher, Bridget Macwhirter, Melanie Oke (CoM), Annie Rivera, Gerard Rodgers, Mark Stewart, Geraldine Suter and Helen Sweeting

Chair Kevin Chamberlin welcomed attendees to the meeting and wished them a happy new year from the Association. There had been a late apology from Melanie Oke from the City of Melbourne's Engineering Services Branch, who had been going to speak about the Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy 2030. The other presenters, Adam Mills and Melanie Del Monaco, from the Urban Strategy Branch, would speak briefly about this as well as their main topic, the West Melbourne Structure Plan.

Assistant Secretary Janet Graham introduced and welcomed visitors Heiley Nguyen and Timoti Tirta, two of a group of four tourism students from the Netherlands who were doing a university project about Melbourne and were interested in meeting residents and businesspeople from North and West Melbourne.

1. Confirmation of minutes of previous meetings

Moved Valerie Gerrand, seconded Jan Lacey:

That the minutes of Ordinary General Meetings held on Tuesday 17 October and Tuesday 21 November 2017, having been circulated electronically and taken as read, be confirmed.

Carried.

2(a) Presentation by Adam Mills, Senior Strategic Planner, and Melanie Del Monaco, Urban Strategy Branch, City of Melbourne, on West Melbourne Structure Plan

Adam said work on the West Melbourne Structure Plan (WMSP) began three years ago. In July 2017 they had presented a draft structure plan for consultation during July–August, which had then gone back for the planners to incorporate the community's responses. The final WMSP had been endorsed at the City of Melbourne (CoM) Future Melbourne Committee meeting on Tuesday 6 February 2018.

The urban planners had identified five distinct places in West Melbourne. For example, Spencer included Spencer Street, which was envisioned as a local high street with potential for public transport extensions and a reduction in private traffic. There were plans for 10,000 square metres of open space. There would be new floor area ratio (FAR) and built-form controls to address density, height and open space.

Adam said there was community support for retaining mixed use. Climate resilience had been factored into the plan, such as where solar panels could be located. Three-quarters of respondents had supported the plan — at the Council meeting this had been described as an "extraordinary extent of support". People had expressed concerns about the FARs, discretionary heights and non-residential uses, which covered 25% of West Melbourne. After consultation, the plan had gone to the Victorian Government Architect, who largely supported it with some additional suggestions.

The main changes include:

- The **West Gate Tunnel Project** (WGTP) has been finalised and is happening but is not supported by CoM. There will be additional actions to mitigate impacts (particularly traffic ex-Dynon Road).
- The **FARs now exclude basements** (to try to reduce on-site parking).
- **Increased preferred maximum heights on Dudley and Adderley streets.** This doesn't have much effect on the south side of Dudley Street. Density controls stay the same, discretion is more flexible.
- **Strengthened vision statements.**
- **Employment floor area ratios** (given comments received).
- **Strengthened off-street parking rate.** There are only 23 cars per 100 people in West Melbourne.
- **Removal of Commercial 1 Zone** as this is covered by the Special Use Zone.
- The stipulation that **planning applicants must** deliver 6% affordable housing has been modified to "**should deliver 6% affordable housing**". If developers can't deliver that, they must tell Council why.

What the WMSP will enable:

- Capacity for 5500-plus new dwellings
- Capacity for 4500-plus new jobs
- 10,000 square metres of new open space
- Increased tree canopy from 20% to 40%
- 300 parking spaces converted to open space
- Additional 300 resident-permit-exempt car spaces
- Walking and cycling improvements
- New connections to Docklands via pedestrian and cycle bridges.

Questions / comments by attendees and answers by Adam and Melanie

Q: We're talking about 11,000 more people, taking an average of two people per dwelling.

A: An extra 4000 to 8000 people in West Melbourne by 2030.

A masterplan (indicative only for illustrative purposes) was shown onscreen. Discussion followed about the impact on E-Gate. Adam wasn't sure whether the E-Gate development would go ahead. But the WGTP was going ahead. That would mean 10,000 people not in E-Gate.

He said it was Council policy not to buy land for open space. They extended open space where possible, e.g. Hawke-Adderley pocket park.

Q: Is the Council making any progress in persuading Public Transport Victoria to extend the tram line in Spencer Street through the proposed new shopping centre to connect with the soon-to-be-renamed West Melbourne Station?

A: It will cost \$4 to \$5 million to construct the Spencer Street tram extension. There will be short-term changes to Spencer Street.

Q: And King Street?

A: We need to get a balance between King Street remaining as a traffic route and safety considerations. Improve the environment for pedestrians and cyclists.

Q: What's the process from now on?

A: A planning scheme amendment is being drafted as we speak. It will go to CoM for authorisation and then back to the community for further input before final approval of the amendment is sought from the Minister for Planning.

Q: What's the significance between orange and purple on the map?

A: In terms of capacity, the colour coding on the masterplan indicates Council's assumptions about which sites will be developed and which sites will stay as they are.

Q: Have you reprinted the booklet?

A: We're doing it now.

Q: How do we get a copy?

A: It's expensive — we'll send a few copies to the Association for sharing among members.

Q: There's a traffic black spot at Hawke and King streets — there have been minor accidents and fatalities. What can be done to make it safer?

A: Introduction of new crossings along King Street will slow traffic down. More development along King Street and more tree-planting will also help.

Q: Is there any chance we can have local traffic zones in North and West Melbourne?

A: There are some opportunities to have 40 to 50 km/h speed zones in some areas. Street plans are a good start. There's a definite acknowledgment by VicRoads that they don't want traffic rushing through.

Q: How about a congestion tax?

A: It is an issue, reflected in the transport strategy.

Q: What can you do to reduce traffic?

Q: VicRoads has no appetite to change the speed limit, but Victoria Street should have the same speed reduction as other roads.

Q: How long does the plan last?

A: Up to 10 years. It's hard to put a timescale on it.

Q: So realistically it might last only five years?

A: In terms of all the work done, probably longer.

Q: Do you know anything about the Festival Hall redevelopment? In the application for 185 Rosslyn Street we were able to get four storeys along Rosslyn Street.

A: I think they're doing four storeys on the south side of Rosslyn.

Q: What's the future of 6% affordable housing?

A: It will stop speculation. Developers will factor 6% affordable housing into the cost of the site.

Q: I think it's a real mistake to allow developers more density in return for some affordable housing.

Q: What's the definition of preferred maximum height?

A: It is discretionary. But it works with the FARs; that's the big difference. Mandatory floor control.

Q: Were lobby groups involved in this?

A: Yes, advocacy groups.

Q: There have been complaints about bellringing at St James Old Cathedral. In terms of transparency, the planning scheme should recognise the right of bells to exist — some protection in the planning scheme.

A: It's not something that's been raised recently.

Q: It's an important part of the community. It needs to be in some sort of public document.

Q: The 300 residential permits — you can't get a residential parking permit in developments?

A: That's correct. It's not providing more off-street parking. It's about reallocating (1200) spaces.

Q: With 5500 new dwellings we will all have special circumstances, not just where I live.

A: Three hundred parking spaces — that's not good use of space.

There was discussion about commuters parking in local streets etc.

Q: The Council seems to be allowing overshadowing, overlooking and larger, higher buildings. I would like to see better protection and the ability for Council to oppose.

A: That is why we need this structure plan.

2(b) Brief presentation by Melanie Del Monaco, Community Engagement Partner, City of Melbourne, on the Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy 2030

Melanie Oke, from the CoM's Waste team, was an apology for the meeting. In her absence, Melanie Del Monaco, Community Engagement Partner, provided information about CoM consultation currently underway to develop a new Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy, a 12-year action plan. They were consulting on this now and wanted to hear from residents. A page on the waste strategy on the CoM website offered a good opportunity to provide feedback via a questionnaire. Responses were due by 26 February at <https://participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/waste-resource-strategy>

Melanie encouraged everyone to complete the online survey and also offered to collate any comments and ideas from tonight into the feedback for the development of the new draft plan.

Questions / comments by attendees and answers by Melanie

Q: I saw a truck collect both types of waste and put it all in the back.

A: They should be collected separately.

Q: Does Council have a strategy for recycling now that offshore processing is in doubt?

A: We are looking at initiatives around that to address future needs. There's no solution at present but it's a big consideration.

Q: Is there a policy regarding recycling going forward?

A: Yes, this is the current strategy. We are drafting this at the moment.

Q: Hard rubbish is dumped in the street.

A: It's an issue right across Victoria. I don't have figures but it's definitely an issue for us.

Q: Turnover of tenants is one cause. Belongings are constantly put out on the street. We need to have education about this. Not everybody knows the rules.

A: Yes. There are also different types of opportunities springing up all the time to share unwanted goods.

Q: In the large block of flats where I live we try to educate tenants but it makes no difference. It's particularly bad at this time of year because students are moving in and out. Also, there seems to be little point in recycling when not much use is made of recycled plastic, such as making furniture. Is there any plan?

A: That could become part of the new strategy — a focus and commitment to turning waste into another product. The CoM could consider this as part of the new strategy being developed.

Q: Many things could be made from recycled materials.

Q: A lot of stuff in the street is broken junk. Now it's all year round. Council's collection of garden waste etc is good.

Q: If you go to Footscray, they have different divisions — it's a free service if it's recyclable.

Q: We can't get rid of it now since China shut the gate. There needs to be a strong lobby for a bottle deposit and a can levy. It's a question of what the hell do we do with it.

Q: Delivering to a recycling facility is all very well for the 25% of residents who own a car. What about the supposed 75% who don't? I was disappointed the garden-waste bin trial in North Melbourne and Kensington was discontinued and disappointed it wasn't rolled out in West Melbourne. The garden-waste collection is great but it would be so much easier if I had a bin to put weeds in as they grew. I filled in your survey in detail.

A: Thank you for completing the survey — there are a range of challenges and considerations. Good to hear your experience and be able to feed this into the new strategy.

Q: I love recycling. In Sydney we got money by returning bottles. The house next door to us has uni students living in it. Their recycling bin is always full of rubbish — they don't know the rules.

Q: I'd like to record a positive experience with CoM. We had a major problem at our 40-unit apartment building in West Melbourne, with tenants using the wrong bins, and leaving lots of rubbish overflowing. A member of Council staff came out and met with us and provided a very good solution. We now have two extra-large yellow bins to cope with large pieces of cardboard from packing cases, plus a large grey e-waste bin for old TV sets and electronics, and a large white bin for items to be donated to charity. She also provided a free recycling carry bag for each apartment, to carry small recycling items down to the usual yellow bins. In addition she provided wall posters for us to put up next to each bin, showing with clear images plus a minimum of English and Mandarin text what is and is not allowed in each bin.

Q: Regarding cigarette butts, is CoM still enforcing the policy?

A: I understand it is but would need to confirm the details of this.

Q: I had success phoning Council to deal with rubbish.

A: I encourage you all to fill in the survey to feed into the draft strategy. The other Melanie [Oke] from the CoM's Waste team, who can provide more detailed information about waste services, programs and strategies, will come and talk at another time.

Melanie and Adam were thanked for their presentations.

3. Abbotsford Street public housing development: report by Duncan Rouch on meeting with Fiona Patten, MLA, Northern Metropolitan Region

Duncan referred to the Parliamentary Inquiry into the Public Housing Renewal Program. He said the government wanted to press ahead with renewal. We had got the Greens onside to try to block the sale of public land. Fiona Patten had said she was on a learning curve. Duncan thought it would be best if we invited her here to talk and thought she would be useful in promoting our cause. It's apparent the government doesn't have a policy on the big picture. Duncan's background report, 'New social housing strategy', was shown onscreen.

He thought the Housing First model could be the way to go (page 3). This involved bypassing short-term emergency housing and, instead, moving families straight into supported housing in the community and bringing health services to the home. (See diagram on page 4 under 'Points of Entry'.) Duncan thought there was much building of what appeared to be substandard housing happening. He had heard people were desperate for housing. This is where the problem lies.

Valerie Gerrand commented that the blockage at the moment is that no funding is going into Housing First. There needs to be public housing funding. Duncan said there was only \$1 billion for all social housing. There is a system for affordable housing. Now they have actually found a tool. He had discussed Nightingale Housing with Fiona Patten, who was really keen. Nightingale builds to a very high standard.

Duncan's presentation and report were noted. Jane would circulate the report by email.

4. Committee report

(a) Confirmation of new memberships

Moved Emmy Chung, seconded Cecilia Gason:

That Sybil Nolan and Russell Robinson be approved and welcomed as members of the Association with a family membership.

Carried.

(b) North West Patch community garden

Jane said Association members' approval was needed to take the next step. The wicking boxes had been delivered to the Meat Market as flat-packs — 10 boxes approx 1 metre x 1 metre. As NWMA was auspicing North West Patch (not an incorporated association) it had to complete the formalities. Melanie added that her team was working with the Association following Council guidelines.

Moved Jane Poynter, seconded Michael Horscroft:

That, on behalf of North West Patch (to be incorporated), the North and West Melbourne Association take the necessary steps in line with Council policy to formalise the occupancy of the community garden at the Meat Market. The meeting notes that North West Patch will soon seek incorporation to take total control of the matter.

Carried.

Melanie explained that Council's approval and formalisation process would take a couple of weeks followed by another eight weeks or so getting all the processes right to avoid hold-ups on the way. Bridget Macwhirter had done much work on this. Melanie confirmed that North West Patch could apply for another grant under the Community Grants scheme (Federal Government).

5. Reports from affiliated organisations

Jan Lacey reported briefly that the Melbourne North PCCC had met two weeks before and had decided to continue the work done with local youths. There were no reports from other groups.

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

Kevin noted that all mail was dealt with electronically now and there were no hard copies to circulate at the meeting.

Valerie drew attendees' attention to the new public toilet in Queensberry Street, which was now operational! Lorraine Siska had succeeded in getting the doors changed from the original bright stainless-steel type to ones with a subtler, less shiny, greenish colour more in keeping with the heritage design. This had caused the delay in the toilet's opening.

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

Tuesday 20 March 2018, 7.30pm, Dewey Common, Bastow Institute, 603–615 Queensberry Street, North Melbourne.

The meeting closed at 9.10pm.