

# YARRALUMLA RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

## Minutes of Meeting 27-7-06

**Present: Sue Banks, Mac West**

1. We have been informed about a forthcoming meeting to discuss **Planning system reform** on **Monday 7 August at the Italo Australian Club, 78 Franklin Street Forrest:**

Minister for Planning, Simon Corbell, MLA has recently announced the next stage of the Planning System Reform Project which includes receiving community comment on the exposure draft of the new Planning and Development Bill. The Bill is the key tool that the ACT Government will use to make the ACT's planning system simpler, faster and more effective for residents, industry, business and the community. The Minister has also released an outline of the proposed Territory Plan restructure, which is also an important element of the reform package.

Representatives of ACT Planning and Land Authority will be visiting Community Councils across Canberra during July and August to brief the community on the documents released for public comment. The Consultation period concludes on 31 August 2006. Copies of the documents can be obtained from Government Shopfronts and online at [www.actpla.act.gov.au](http://www.actpla.act.gov.au)

While this sort of thing can seem terribly general and removed, the implications can be very significant:: an assessment was received from Di Johnstone in Deakin reads, in part::

<A major concern> is that third party appeals for "merit" and "impact" assessable developments (pages 18, 19, 20 of the quick guide) as these require third party appellants to indicate "material detriment". This "material detriment" only involves a person's use or enjoyment of their land (or persons presumably if there are more than one). It does not address other adverse effects on the community, including creating an unacceptable precedent. And seems to exclude the prospect of groups with wider agendas, on heritage or environment, being able to appeal. This would be a good issue for the community to focus on, as it is at the heart of community access to the process. With such a narrow definition, it seems there will be little (or no) real prospect of the wider affected community having any say at all in such developments, as by definition the legislation would leave the community with no legal basis to protest! It would seem that the only people who would have any basis would be those on immediate boundaries, or whose view might be directly affected. And with very few in fact entitled to protest, the smaller numbers would carry less weight and mostly have fewer available resources to protest too.

A guide to the legislation can be found at:

<http://www.actpla.act.gov.au/consultation/reform/pdf/quickguide.pdf>

2. In relation to the above, it has been clear to us that the inner southern suburbs are not represented in the same way as all other parts of Canberra because of the lack of a generally representative body. This is readily illustrated by looking at the list of proposed meetings for discussing planning system reform:

- 26 July 2006 Weston Creek Community Council, 7.30, Weston Club, Weston
- 2 August 2006 Woden Valley Community Council, 7.30pm, Hellenic Club, Woden
- 3 August 2006 Tuggeranong Community Council, 7.30pm, Vikings Club, Tuggeranong
- 9 August 2006 Gungahlin Community Council, 7.30pm, Gungahlin Lakes Golf Club, Gungahlin
- 15 August 2006 Belconnen Community Council and North Canberra Community Council, 7.30pm, Community Room, Belconnen Library

Spot the omission? Many different individuals and community organisations have noticed the absence of representation, not least ourselves:

-----Original Message-----

To: Savery, Neil  
Sent: Friday, 28 April 2006 4:34 PM  
Chief Planning Executive, ACTPLA

Dear Neil,

As a residents' association of the one of the inner south suburbs of Canberra we are concerned that we are not members of any body which has formal consultations with the ACT Planning Authority. We understand that the ACT Planning and Development forum has members from the community councils of other regions. We would like information as to what would be involved in setting up a group for South Canberra.

We are not a group primarily concerned with community services so we would not be in a position to set up a community council with links to the department of community services but nevertheless we think you would agree that this is a sizeable part of Canberra in which a lot of the current development is happening.

Please could you let us know what steps we should take and who we should speak to on this matter.

Yours sincerely  
Susan Banks  
Committee member  
Yarralumla Residents Association

Susan, we have been very keen for there to be a group in the South that can broadly represent interests in this location, much for the same reasons as you have put in your email. It has been unfortunate that a South Canberra Community Council equivalent to the other parts of Canberra has not emerged, but these are ultimately a construct of local communities and not for a Government Department such as this one to foist upon someone.

As you are proposing something that has no equivalent in the ACT there is no precedent to draw on for ideas.

The ACT Planning and Land Authority does not involve itself in setting up community groups and therefore despite the fact that you say you do not want the interests you represent to form a community council, I think your first point of call should be with the Department of Community Services to discuss what options might be available.

The Minister's Planning and Development Forum is structured so that community representation is at the Community Council level, and as you say, South Canberra, by virtue of not having a Community Council, does not have a representative interest on this body. Having said this, both the Minister and I hold the view that it is not tenable to have South Canberra represented by an individual or a residents association that does not have legitimacy with the wider geographic region. In other words something equivalent to the five other Community Councils, even if its interest are different.

I should also point out that the Forum does not discuss or involve itself in individual development proposals, but rather broader policy issues, where the Authority can provide early insight into some of its work and therefore provide both advanced notice of topical matters and also obtain early input into framing some of its consultation processes for these exercises.

So I appreciate the conundrum and we certainly would welcome something that could represent the whole of Inner South Canberra, but I am not in a position to bring that to fruition

Neil Savery  
Chief Planning Executive, ACTPLA

Related to this, more recently:

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Di Johnstone [mailto:dijohnstone@bigpond.com]

**Sent:** Monday, 17 July 2006 5:24 PM

**Subject:** Reviving an inner south residents body ... what do you think?

Dear all

Had a call recently from a very nice and resident-sympathetic ACT official in the planning system concerned that residents in the inner south did not have an adequate voice with the ACT government. The official was concerned that if there were such a group, it would provide a stronger support base and powerful extra voices for resident groups battling on specific inner south issues.

The official noted that there were councils in Belconnen and Woden etc, but not the inner south. And that the government was prepared to provide (minimal) funding (about \$5000 apparently) for such representative groups.

As you know the CCCC has now disbanded. If there is an interest out there I would be prepared to bring together some "core" residents from relevant groups over a social drink to talk about whether this is possible and how it might be done. I am definitely not offering to take it over, given quite a few other projects I have running at the moment, and family issues. In any case, there has got to be someone in the inner south with the right planning issues background that would be prepared to do it?

What do you think?

Much work and thought has already been put into this before by others, but nothing has yet come to fruition. **So if anyone is interested in being involved in any aspect of the formation of a South Canberra Community Council please let us know.**

### 3. Schools

The YRA was contacted by the YP&C group who are working on a submission to the ACT government in relation to the future of Yarralumla Primary School. The group have presented their submission on the future of the school, in particular the provision of programs for years 4-6, which was very well received by the Minister.

The committee considered that this was a very important issue for our community and Mac agreed to ask Sue Lindsay or a representative of the P&C or School Board to speak on the issue at the AGM

**4.** The issue of **the Deakin Embassy Motel** is still alive . A meeting is to be held to discuss the NCA proposal for height restrictions along Adelaide Avenue: the NCA has advised that it will be holding **a public forum on 16 August 2006 at the Deakin Football Club from 6pm - 7.30pm**. More information will come out about this next week.

There are also suggestions that the former Solander Galleries site opposite the Motel may also have its lease purpose broadened:

The Solander Gallery site is now covered by a B8. It would seem from the ACTPLA literature (<http://www.actpla.act.gov.au/consultation/reform/pdf/tprestructure.pdf> ) that the current **B8**

“entertainment, accommodation and leisure” zone would become **C5** and “intended for indoor entertainment and recreation facilities, clubs, drink establishments, restaurant, and commercial accommodation. Limited shops, residential, non-retail commercial and community areas would also be permissible” However the kind of residential development that would be permissible is not specified.

So this meeting may well be of interest to Yarralumla residents.

## 5. AGM

Yes, it's that time again. In the absence of most of the committee we were surprisingly generous in our delegation of tasks, as follows:

Sue – book the Sailing Club hall for **Sunday September 17<sup>th</sup> at 2.00** pm for 2 hours (if that date and time is free – to be confirmed);

Mac to draft flier and arrange printing;

Sue to coordinate letter box drop - Mac has maps and records. Letter box drop to be the weekend of 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> September;

Mike to prepare set of accounts;

Hugh to organise modest refreshments;

Les to prepare for all things to do with membership.

**Committee Membership:** **We need some new blood on the committee this year**, as Mac West needs to withdraw from involvement. Please consider nominating for a position on the Committee – while it's a commitment of intent to be involved, the workload is light ... as much as you have the time and opportunity to offer.

As for a **speaker**: last year, after the considerable discussion about the Neighbourhood Plans, we were very fortunate to have Neil Savery at the AGM, who was very informed and informative. This year there's no such major local issue to focus on, so **we would welcome a speaker on any topic that is interesting, informative or entertaining.**

**Does anyone have any contacts, or any ideas?** Please let the Committee know!

**Next meeting: Thursday 17 August, 7.45 pm**

**MAC WEST**  
**30 July 06**