



Malvern East Group

MEG Supports **PLANNING BACKLASH**

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Newsletter APRIL/MAY 2008

From the Working Group

When we see headlines such as "Lungs of the City Smothered Under Concrete" we either become more determined to stop the madness that is euphemistically known as 'planning'...or we despair. When we hear the erstwhile Minister for Planning talk about this "wonderful growth" that Victoria is experiencing we wonder what strange philosophy has spawned such a contradiction. When we learn about the "New Residential Zones" (NRZ) in the Labor Government's usual under-publicised fashion we decide that we can't let them get away with trying to impose areas of high-rise development in our present Res.1 zones. The recent release of land in the 'growth areas' was given much publicity with no mention of NRZ, the strategy which seeks to smother suburbs such as ours under concrete. These are the tactics the Labor Government used to introduce M2030 and then proceeded to override all hastily submitted protests from residents. The wishes of the developers prevailed.

It is imperative that you lodge a submission re NRZ to let them know that they can't get away with it again and that we demand to be heard.

We remember the promise of the Labor Government in 1999 when Bracks said,

"In particular our planning policy seeks to give Victorians back their voice and influence over decisions that affect their lifestyle."

New Residential Zones (NRZ)

We've provided you with the Discussion Paper, Submission Form and a document giving you a few points regarding NRZ. It's up to you now.

MEG recommends that you lodge a submission in your own words if you find

official Submission Form too difficult. Closing date is 5:00pm Friday April 18. You can submit by email to

planning.systems@dpcd.vic.gov.au

or mail to:

Residential Zones Review
Planning Systems
Department of Planning and
Community Development
GPO Box 2392
Melbourne VIC 3001

We believe that behind all of this is the view expressed by Tim Colebatch in *The Age* Mar4./08. When discussing the issue of affordable housing he stated:

"Local opposition to redevelopment of inner and middle suburban areas has led to a serious shortage of supply, relative to the demand from people wanting to live close to the city. Land is finite and when buildings can't go up, prices go up."

We live in one of those middle suburbs and apparently it's our opposition to inappropriate development that is the major cause of the lack of affordable housing.

Have you ever heard such nonsense? Even when we do oppose applications we invariably lose.

Perhaps Tim Colebatch and Alan Moran from the Institute of Public Affairs should be congratulating us for trying to protect 'valued suburban streetscapes' for trying to stop the moonscaping of sites so that we retain the trees and shrubs which absorb the pollution we all create. Our blocks are an integral part of 'the lungs of the city', indeed they are the 'natural infrastructure of the city' and if we don't want to be the 'Bangkok of the south' we have to continue to oppose a government whose policies

include such statements as "under-development must not be allowed to occur." The Municipal Association of Victoria, of which our council is a member, supports the introduction of NRZ. Rob Spence CEO of the MAV sees the proposal as a significant opportunity. It would seem that the MAV is advising councils rather than representing the views of councils.

STOP PRESS Latest news from Council...on Monday April 7 Council voted unanimously to reject the NRZ. The Mayor will write to the MAV condemning their premature support of the document and advising them that they should consult their members prior to making decisions. Great news! Now we must support Council's position by lodging submissions.

How Wrong Can the Bureaucrats Be!

In the Sept./Oct.1999 edition of Residents Voice, Jack Hammond wrote:

"On August 20, Dr. John Paterson, the (then) Secretary of the Department of Infrastructure, made the alarmist statement that the middle suburbs would become a slum wasteland belt if residents and councils did not stop opposing medium-intensity development."

Dr. Paterson forecast:

"that if resistance to medium-density housing continued the middle suburbs would be relegated to a grim future as an urban BADLANDS."

And there's more:

"the residents of the middle band were consigning themselves to a 'poverty-stricken old age' and their children to 'zero inheritance' if they continued to resist the forces of re-development in their suburbs."

He said property values would fall dramatically if councils and residents persisted in protecting suburbs built for a 1950's style world that no longer existed.

This remarkable 1999 prediction became known as Paterson's Curse. Dr. Paterson has gone and the replacement bureaucrats have now come up with a scheme to stop us from opposing the views of the bureaucrats. If the New Residential Zones

go through, the 'forces of re-development' will destroy the middle suburbs.

Lungs of the City Smothered Under Concrete

A special report (*Age* Mar.9/08) into the erosion of Melbourne's parklands revealed that "If development on parkland occurs at the rate it is now by 2050, there'll be no green spaces left in Melbourne." Royal Park has lost 31 hectares, Carlton Nth Gardens 3 hectares, 4 hectares of Yarra Park, 5.5 hectares in Flinders & Yarra parks. The current area in Melbourne's city centre given over to parkland is just a third of what it was in 1885. When Melbourne was "planned" LaTrobe had a vision of a city bounded by parkland.

And now we are presented with a document "New Residential Zones" which promotes another vision for Melbourne, one that will bury the "garden City" forever. Clearly it is easier and more economic for developers not to have to worry about those wretched trees and shrubs or our carefully maintained houses.

But let's not lose heart. When *the Sunday Age* contacted a spokesman for Environment Minister Gavin Jennings he said that the Labor Government is committed to maintaining public parks and that through the M2030 initiative the Government is committed to providing new parkland in growth areas. And that's while they're getting rid of the parks and gardens in the older areas!

Quaint, isn't it?

Community Consultation

An article in *The Age* (Feb.7/08) spelt out what we believe:

"The importance of community consultation in managing change cannot be understated: people need to feel that they are being heard and they are not left powerless, when in conflict with decision-makers.

"Planning a community is a delicate balancing act. It is essential that local voices have real and sufficient weight in the debate."

MEG and the other groups associated with Planning Backlash echo these sentiments. We wish they could be engraved on the

minds of Government members and planning bureaucrats and we hope that Justice Kevin Bell who is conducting an audit of VCAT gets the message.

Of course if New Residential Zone gets though Justice Bell and his staff won't have much to do as the proposal seeks to remove almost completely our right to appeal to VCAT.

Stonington Mansion Site

A report in *Business Age* (April 5/08) says that the "Industry Superannuation Property Trust has pulled the plug on the redevelopment" of this site. "Hamton managing director said it received several unsolicited offers for the substantial parcel of blue-ribbon land, after it was granted a permit to build on the site." Marketing of the Stonington Terraces project is continuing.

Free Energy Saving Lights

Energy saving lights and light bulb installation are available. Ring 1300 855 362 to make an appointment. This is a project by Low Energy Supplies & Services which obtains carbon credits by supplying the low energy bulbs. 29 energy-saving lights were installed at 14 Chanak St.

Chadstone

A member of our Working Group who lives in the area around Chadstone has sent us the Feb.08 newsletter from the owners of the centre and you'll all be pleased to know that everything out there is WONDERFUL! They have even formed a community consultation group and you are invited to contact these people if you wish to have anything discussed with the management of the centre.

Mark Thompson: Castelbar Rd. area
0412 921 553

Steve Clegg: Belleview Rd. area
0430 585 844

Denise Wallish: Malvern Valley Primary School area 9563 0943

Meanwhile, we have to congratulate the Chadstone owners whose security people succeeded in thwarting an attempt by gangs from opposite sides of the city to stage a brawl at the centre on Feb.16/08. Young people gathered in the food court to observe. It's a mecca for all sorts!

Bowen/Fenwick St. Proposal

Several MEG members (and others) lodged submissions regarding the plans for this area. A Panel Hearing was held at the Phoenix Park Community Centre on March 18 for those who wished to speak to their submissions. There is much opposition to the sale of public land for this project. In the light of what we have reported about the sad loss of public open space in this newsletter, this opposition is well-founded. Many residents fear that it's a 'done deal' and that the community consultation conducted by Council is one of those token gestures that the Victorian government is so enamoured of. We hope that the decision-makers in our municipality hear the voice of the community and act accordingly.

Reg Hunt Site 1287-1291 Dandenong Rd.

Becton has bought the site. The permit has been extended. Works must be started by March 31/2010 and finished 2 years later. The Planning Dept. has not had recent discussions with them but it was indicated to them that some proposed changes would need to be advertised.

Planning Applications

There are more applications in Malvern East. These are what we can find. We have not received any updates from Council since March 3.

57 Nirvana Av. Part dem., alterations & additions to dwelling in H.O.
Permit issued.

55 Karma Av. Demolition & replacement in a H.O. Application withdrawn.

67 Coppin St. Part. dem. alterations & additions in H.O. Permit issued.

24 Manning Rd. Part. dem., alterations & additions in H.O. Awaiting decision.

19 Prior Rd. Three 2 storey dwellings.
Advertising complete.

35A Emo Rd. First storey addition to dwelling in H.O. Ready for decision.

305 Wattleree Rd. Construct a courtyard and increase number of patrons from 50 to 100. Cons. Mtg. April 8/08.

177-179 Darling Rd. Two 2 storey units behind existing 2storey shops & offices. Offices on first storey to be converted into 3rd unit. In advertising.

30 Central Park Rd. First storey ext. to dwelling in H.O. Ready for decision.

66 The Boulevard. Five 2 storey units.
Refusal to Grant...April 7/08.
4 Forster Av. Dual Occ. Permit issued. Since
then application for a number of
amendments.
60 Tooronga Rd. Part dem., alterations &
additions to dwelling in H.O.
In advertising.
141 Waverley Rd. Change of use to arts
centre in Business Zone. Info. requested.
VCAT Hearings
52 Belgrave Rd. Dual Occ. Against Refusal
to Grant...12/3/08 Awaiting decision.
781-805 Dandenong Rd. Gym, shop & cafe.
Against Failure to Determine...Permit issued
by VCAT
615 Waverley Rd. Student Accom for 16
units. Against Failure to Determine...
April7/08.
280 Waverley Rd. 4 storey bldg. with shop,
office & dwelling in H.O. Against Failure to
Determine. 10/6/08 &11/6/08.
16 Hilda St. Dual Occ. Against Refusal to
Grant. 14/12/07 Permit Refused by VCAT.
6 Anfield Crt. Two storey dwelling at rear of
site. Against Decision to Grant a Permit.
20/5/08
1023 Dandenong Rd. Student Accom. for
27 units. Against Failure to Determine.
8/2/08 Permit issued by VCAT
790-792 Warrigal Rd. 3 storeys. 20
flats...basement car parking. Against
Refusal to Grant. 13/12/07. Awaiting
Decision.
16 Alma St. Four 2 storey townhouses.
Against Decision to Grant a Permit.
Awaiting Date.
66 The Boulevard. Five 2 storey dwellings.
Against Failure to Determine. Awaiting
date.

MEG's Postal Address

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