



# Malvern East Group

MEG Supports *PLANNING BACKLASH*

Phone/Fax 9572 3205

Email [meg@chezsamuel.com](mailto:meg@chezsamuel.com)

Web <http://www.chezsamuel.com/meghome.php>

## Newsletter Aug-Sept 2007

### From the Working Group

Under Stonnington's Community Grants Program MEG has been granted 3 uses of Northbrook House for our meetings, the first of which will be our AGM on September 5 at 7.30p.m. (See attached flyer.)

We welcome a number of new members to MEG and thank those who have renewed their membership. For those who have not yet done so, we urge you to 'join up.' There's power in numbers...we hope! I have attended a number of Consultative Meetings since our last newsletter. It is important that MEG is seen to be supporting its members and we do that as much as possible.

Thank you, too, to those members who wrote to Minister Madden requesting Planning Backlash representation on the M2030 Review Committee. Alas, this "morphed" into a mere audit with a panel of pro-development members. MEG wrote to the Minister indicating our anger at this change. The actual document M2030 states that there will be a Review, Minister Hulls said there would be a Review, Minister Madden said there would be a Review...and he made that statement while DSE was conducting Stage 1 of the Audit apparently in secret. One wonders if the Victorian Government can ever be believed. Perhaps they don't know that it is a contradiction in terms to audit a non-prescriptive document. It is important that members of the public send in written submissions to the Audit Panel. The Terms of Reference can be found on the DSE website under Audit Expert Group. If you wish we can send you a copy. They are interested only in implementing that deeply flawed document M2030. Why can't they... "have the vision of their Victorian and Edwardian predecessors and create a built environment on Melbourne's urban fringe that is at least as exciting and accessible as the older parts of the city..." (Age July 2/07)... instead of systematically destroying the middle suburbs of our city?

### Central Planning

This suggestion has reared its ugly head yet once again. The proposal is to have a central panel and planning decisions will be made by members of that panel with no community input. We are told that the Government is only **considering** this proposal. At the meeting with Minister Madden on July 27 Mary Drost asked him to rule it out entirely and he refused to commit himself. MEG gave its opinion of this proposal in the Leader July 31/04.

### Neighbourhood Character Study

This was sent with the Housing Strategy to the Minister in Dec./06 with a request to exhibit it as Amendment C67 for public comment. Council's Strategic Planners met with DSE in Feb. and Mar.07. Further information was requested and subsequently supplied. In June the DSE representative handling the matter resigned. Prior to leaving he sent a memo to relevant departments with a recommendation that the Study was something constructive and was a basis to work with. Since then...nothing! I have heard that some requests for permission to exhibit amendments have been with DSE for 3 years.

It's a never-ending battle.

### Parliamentary Inquiry

A motion was put to the Legislative Council in May by Matthew Guy to establish a 7-member-all party Select Committee to inquire into the sale and development of public land and open space in Victoria. The Committee will inquire into:-

- ❑ the sale or alienation of public land for development
- ❑ the sale or alienation of public open space for the purpose of private development

- the sale or alienation of public land and the relationship to the Victorian Govt's M2030 and Green Wedges.

We told you in our last newsletter that Stonnington Council had agreed to lodge a submission to this Inquiry with particular regard to the Stonnington Mansion site. We will never get another such Inquiry. We are hoping that Council will present both in writing and orally. If there is an oral presentation we will let you know and we'll try to pack the Public Gallery on that day. The Government does not want this Inquiry and it certainly does not want it to succeed in laying bare the outrageous practice of allowing development on Public Land.

### **Meetings with the Minister**

Planning Backlash, under the leadership of Mary Drost, has arranged three 2 hour meetings with the Minister. The first of these was on July 27. Thirty groups from Sunshine to Westernport presented their serious concerns about the adverse impacts of M2030. The dogma of growth is destroying Melbourne. Scott Samuel and I attended this meeting. The next one was to be on August 7 when the country groups and some more city groups were to further inform the Minister. This was cancelled. The Minister was too busy. We have asked for another date. The next meeting is on Aug.16 as scheduled. As I represent MEG on the Working Group of Planning Backlash I will be at all meetings.

Minister Madden says that there is a "little anxiety in the community" about M2030. After our efforts at these meetings we hope he realises that there is more than "a little."

### **Snippets**

**The Reg Hunt** site has been sold. Rumours abound. Keep your ears open.

**The Tatt's building** on the corner of Tooronga and Dandenong Rds was sold some months ago and the Planning Application is for a gym, a cafe, offices and alterations to the ground floor...and the inevitable car parking dispensation. No multi-storey proposal.

**Phoenix Park/Bowen Street Concept Plan.** Community Consultation regarding this proposal was undertaken in Feb.07. MEG was not informed of this consultation. The proposed plan entails relocation of existing services at Bowen St. to new purpose-built buildings at Phoenix Park for a children's hub with improved child-care

facilities and extra places. The Bowen St. site would be sold by Council and redeveloped for residential housing for older people.

50 residents attended the consultation day and a survey of the area was undertaken. 248 responses were received. 45 respondents expressed concerns. Some of these concerns can be addressed through alterations to the plan but some residents will continue to oppose the sale of the Bowen St. site and/ or the use of open space for the new Phoenix Park facility. Full details of the Concept Plan can be found in Council Notice Paper June 18/07.

### **MEG in Melbourne Weekly**

We hope that you all saw the article in Melbourne Weekly July 24/07 where a member of MEG's Working Group, Remy Favre, didn't mince his words as he expressed his opinion of the State's Planning Policy M2030 and its decision-making body VCAT. Remy didn't have anything good to say about either of them.

### **Planning Applications and VCAT Hearings**

MEG has not received the Current Applications Register since May 14 so we are unable to list them for you as we have done in previous newsletters. A number of phone calls to the Planning Department and an email to the Planning Manager resulted in no answers. Requests to a number of Councillors resulted in us being told that Council was upgrading its system to Lotus and that when it is done there will be a meeting of all those who used to receive the Register (including Councillors) and we would be told how to access the information. On July 10 we were told that this meeting would take place in a couple of weeks. Since then we have heard nothing.

The Current Applications Register which included Delegate Decisions, VCAT Appeals and Consultative Meetings has been an invaluable tool for residents' groups such as ours.

### **MEG's Postal Address**

MEG  
c/o 14 Chanak St  
Malvern East VIC 3145