



Malvern East Group

MEG Supports **PLANNING BACKLASH**

C/- 14 Chanak Street,
Malvern East Vic 3145
Phone/Fax 9572 3205
Email meg@chezsamuel.com
Web <http://www.chezsamuel.com>

MEG NEWSLETTER.....Jan./ Feb. 2020

From the Convenor's Desk

On Dec. 27 in The Age I saw this tribute to John Cain in a Letter to the Editor....

"He demonstrated an enviable standard of integrity and fair dealing and professional conduct in public office we seem to have lost sight of in recent times."

The writer went on to say,

"The Andrews government promised Victorians that it would be an open, transparent and accountable government, one that would improve integrity in public life."

Wouldn't it be a great society if we actually had that at every level of government?

We would then have democracy!

Victoria's keen attention to 'heritage'

Noel Towell reported in The Age on Dec.17 that Heritage Victoria has proposed that the Eastern Freeway between Hoddle St. and Bulleen Rd. *"has a cultural and historical significance to the State"....*and it seems that State Government welcomes this astonishing proposal. We have to wonder if this idea emanated from State Government because if the Heritage Council actually lists this road as "heritage" there will be no stopping the North East Link. According to Towell *"the state government welcomed the recommendation, saying the listing would provide certainty for the North East Link..."*

Meanwhile heritage houses (which are heritage) are being demolished on a daily basis and Minister Wynne does not lift a hand to stop such vandalism.

North East Link

The Age Feb. 10.... Boroondara, Banyule, Whitehorse and Manningham Councils will spend squillions taking action against Minister Wynne's decision to ignore advice from the Panel he appointed and give the "go-ahead" for this road....where 26,000 trees will be destroyed. The Panel recommended more consultation and better, more detailed designs and our erstwhile Planning Minister with a wave of his arrogant wand dismissed all of that nonsense and ticked it off. MEG sincerely hopes that the Councils are successful in court. In the meantime the trees are left to absorb pollution and provide shade.

Minister asked to intervene

In The Age on Feb. 17 we read that Kingston Council has asked Minister Wynne to intervene in a planning dispute in order to "safeguard" the green wedge. The Mayor said, *"The safeguarding of Melbourne's green wedges is far too important to be left to VCAT....."*

Talk about being between the devil and the deep blue sea! Minister Wynne better than VCAT? So help us all!

A 'special' for residents who live near a private school

The Age ...Dec. 10 *"Residents will lose the right to object to the building of new private schools under planning laws to 'fast-track' the development of the Catholic and independent sectors."* Urbis lobbied the Government on behalf of Camberwell, Caulfield and Trinity Grammar and Scotch College to exempt schools from the usual planning process and have the Minister fast-track planning applications for all private schools. A letter-writer on Dec. 13 wrote that she is appalled that Richard Wynne was allowed to approve the disastrous North East Link despite expert advice and **now** this one man can approve anything the private schools sector wants without reference to the neighbours. Tends to take one's breath away, doesn't it? 'Democracy-defying,' one could say!

Casey Council and the possible implications

There are constant press reports about the 'Casey scandal.' Age Dec. 14 The Planning Institute national chief executive said, *"...the scandal was having a big impact on public trust in developers and on elected councillors and MPs in particular."*

Public trust in developers? That's a quaint thought!

If anyone has information on such a matter please contact us ASAP.

On the same day Villawood's executive director said that *"the scandal was damaging the reputation of the development industry in general. He said, "This is unfair because most in the industry do the right thing and have their hearts in the right place."* Gosh!

It is faintly possible that the government may take all planning decisions away from elected councillors. MEG urges you to watch for this. You may not like what your councillors decide but your right to lobby them to act on your behalf should be sacrosanct.

Just imagine what it would be like if Minister Wynne decided on ALL planning applications!

MEG's mind just went blank with horror!

Further to this, on Feb. 18 State Government took the giant step of sacking Casey Council...(and we hasten to say that not all Casey Councillors have been involved in the scandal surrounding the actions of one developer)....and then on Feb.19 Chris Vedelago reported in The Age that one time Casey councillor Sam Aziz claims *"his return from Egypt to Australia was thwarted because he was experiencing heart palpitations... (BET HE WAS!)...and shortness of breath and was sweating so much that airline staff stopped him from boarding a flight....."*

MEG wonders if Australia has an extradition treaty with Egypt?

Remembering the fires

In The Age & H.S. on Feb. 8 we read a letter from a retired forest scientist who wrote, *"Yesterday was the 11th anniversary of Black Saturday and it is also pertinent to recall Black Thursday **February 6, 1851**. Documents from that time recorded, the hot north wind was so strong that thick black smoke reached northern Tasmania, creating a murky mist, resembling a combination of smoke and fog. Homes, crops and gardens were consumed by the rushing fire leaving a quarter of Victoria in a heap of desolate ruins."*

He said that 5 million hectares was burnt.

Trees provide cheap and effective alternative to air-conditioner

ABC Feb.13....a warning over "heat island effect" in cities as tree coverage declines.

Environmental planner Tony Matthews of Griffith University said, *"We need to place a higher social and economic value on trees and green space in our cities."*

MEG has always promoted the value of trees in helping to clean the air, lower the temperature and provide shade and we absolutely deplore such places as the new Prahran Square with all its concrete **and** the very thought of getting rid of no less than 70 significant trees to build a concrete stadium in a park. We need to increase the GREEN space and the number of trees to bring the temperature down not systematically remove it.

Tony Matthews went on to say, *"We know a tried and tested strategy is the introduction of more trees and green roofs in urban spaces reduce surface temperatures by up to 40%."*

Population increase and how to cope with it

We all are acutely aware of the daily increase in Melbourne's population and in The Age on Dec. 15 Andrew Taylor wrote about a solution to lack of housing for all these people. All we have to do is *"shrink the homes."* People are looking for townhouses rather than apartments because of the building defects in apartment block. *(More about cladding later.)* Mike Day said, *"developers and planners will seek to replicate inner-city neighbourhoods in fringe suburbs, creating 'mini-Melbournes' of pocket parks, small streets terraces, shop-top housing and laneways."* BUT, says another planner, NO JOBS THERE! MEG wonders if it's possible for them to concentrate on existing country towns and devise ways and means of "developing" those areas just as the residents of those towns recently devastated by fire are "resurrecting" their homes and businesses. Victoria has established towns with schools, houses and shops and, in many cases, industries. Let's build on those attributes and stop wasting time trying to jam more people into Melbourne. It's called DECENTRALISATION or more recently REGIONALISATION....and it's not rocket science!

Cladding...the issue that just won't go away

H.S. Feb.2 *"Dangerous cladding that fuelled a high-rise fire in Melbourne CBD still hasn't been removed."* The fire occurred a year ago and at least 20 residents still can't return to their homes. Apparently a funding agreement has been reached between Neo200 Owners Corp and Cladding Safety Victoria but work can't be started until the damaged apartments are repaired....and permits are required for that. One resident said that information was inadequate and MEG would say that about the entire cladding issue. How many apartment blocks have been identified? How many have been remedied? Who paid? Have the 40 identified buildings in Stonnington been fixed? Where are they?

And now, on Feb.9 The Age reports that there's a **Recycle deal for cladding**. Well, it's not really a deal....yet. *"A Melbourne company has been given \$2.9 million to develop a commercial use for the massive haul of cladding which is being stripped from hundreds of Victorian buildings."* So no-one really knows what to do with the stuff and it's still not been removed from the 100s of identified buildings.

Overshadowing...one of the inevitable results of endless development

On Feb.9 Tom Cowie reported in The Age that Docklands only has one park and now *"residents fear that even this patch of lawn will one day be cast into darkness after their suburb was excluded from a plan to preserve sunlight in parks."* Melbourne City Council wants *"mandatory sunlight rules to restrict development around parks in the inner suburbs to prevent overshadowing during certain times."* (N.B. the Lord Mayor lives in Docklands!) One resident believes the lack of sunshine is detrimental to health. (Well, of course it is!

How often has MEG said that?) She went on to say, "*we need less concrete, not more.*"

Gad, the woman's a genius!

FYI There is a recent RED DOT decision from VCAT regarding the overshadowing of solar panels. *Ramjee v Manningham C.C.* We have no doubt that this issue will come up again and again so please note that decision.

LOCAL NEWS

Coles Supermarket...Caulfield There's a rumour that Coles will close in 2020 so that Monash can develop that area for its own use. **We emphasise that this is a rumour!** Given the Corona virus effect on student numbers we doubt that Monash will be doing any expanding in the foreseeable future.

Caulfield Village We received information from Mathew Knight in December 2019 that the next stage in the development between Normanby Rd. and the racecourse is for 437 apartments...four 9 storey bldgs., 94 studio apartments (40 sq.m.), 191 one bdr. apts (50 sq.m.) 142 two bdr.apts. (70 sq.m.) and 10 three bdr apts....no size indicated. No mention of 5% social housing incorporated in this mess. No mention of TREES to absorb some of the pollution. Perhaps we've just missed these minor details in this development which is in ...(get this!)...***Classic Caulfield....ANDUDI (Urban Design Institute) gave it an award for the Best High Density Development in 2019.*** If you haven't seen it, you must!

Caulfield Racecourse Reserve

In the coming months the Trust will be considering **key issues and opportunities** regarding the LMP (Land Management Plan). They will be looking at reports and studies and they **may** commission further studies where appropriate. The draft document will be available in mid-2020 and then there will be **further consultation**.

Truly...that's what the email said.

MEG does not know how many years this has been going on but if we are to believe one of our members who showed us a letter his father (or was it his grandfather?) wrote to the Auditor-General early in the 20th century about the Reserve it's about 100 years. (*From the Convenor....sometimes I'm at a loss for words!*)

Chadstone Shopping Centre \$685 million makeover and expansion

Meg has attended two of the "consultation" sessions run by Vicinity....one at the Visitors Centre in CSC and one at the Bowling Club. At the first, there were 6 residents and 3 Vicinity people. The session was dominated by staff with one man using the phrase "to be honest" just about every 5 minutes. When asked by how much the building envelope would be exceeded in the **new 9 storey building**, he replied, "I'm not a planner." When a forceful male voice asked the same question at the Bowling Club he was told by another staff member "**by 8 levels.**" So the "I'm not a planner".."to be honest" man now knows the upward extent and the excess of this whacking great thing....and so do we. The new 9 storeys will be built at the Middle Rd. entrance. The Coles and David Jones car parks will have extra floors added so that a figure of 1400 extra car parks will be part of the new construction.

The "to be honest" man ('not a planner') told us at the first session we attended that he really liked the idea of the centre being a place where one could do the shopping, meet

friends for lunch, have a massage and then go to the hotel for a champagne....and it's all there on the same spot! So help me!

When asked what was intended for the 40 properties owned by CSC, the "to be honest" man said that they had no plans to extend the footprint at the moment. The figure of 40 properties was queried by a forceful male voice at the second session and the number rose to 80. Who knows exactly how much Vicinity/Gandel owns around CSC! We shudder to think! Vicinity intends to extend the fresh food market and concentrate on workplace, wellness and lifestyle retailers in the existing building.

NB Bus. Age Feb.20 CSC leads the list of Vicinity centres worst hit by the coronavirus and shares are down to \$2.36.

Cabrini's expansion advertised

We saw the \$120 million Gandel Wing receive lots of advertising in the papers and in extensive letter-drops accompanied by requests for donations. We were somewhat astonished as we sat in a Palace Cinema during the Christmas holidays to see Cabrini advertising on film with EVERYONE smiling...the nurses, doctors, technicians and patients all with beautiful white teeth bared. Clearly if you want to be happy just go to Cabrini! You'll be poor... but happy. We can only guess at the cost of all of this smiling advertising.

Chapel St & the new 'open space called Prahran Square

We have visited the concrete block which replaced Cato St. carpark at a cost of \$70 million and are genuinely appalled that this design was chosen by (which?) councillors. This is not green leafy 'open space' designed to counter the 'heat island' effect or provide shade on hot days and shelter on cold days. It is a great lump of concrete which resembles a stadium built over a period of 2 years...2 years during which some traders lost their livelihoods. Since its expensive opening in 2019 it has remained almost empty. People use it to walk across from the residences to the supermarkets. They don't stop to admire the concrete. In one attempt to get people to use this uninviting place, tennis was shown on a giant screen during January but that had to be shut down because this activity violated a by-law. **Meanwhile** we heard on Channel 7 News (Feb. 17) that there are 80 empty shops in iconic Chapel St.and some desperate traders.

"Impact the future of the city of Stonnington" ...an advertisement

On Jan.25 The Age printed an ad. that spruiks the 'wonders' of Stonnington...a municipality that provides a culture where *"employee health, well being and development are a priority."* The ad. talks about us having *"a new CEO seeking to drive change and transformation ."*

The jobs advertised are....

Director Engagement and Innovation...(MEG doesn't know what that means for us.)

Director Corporate Services...(Required because of a recent resignation.)

Manager Infrastructure and Landscape Projects...(PLEASE no more artificial turf or concrete!)

Manager Events, Arts and Culture...(Do we really need more of these?)

Climate Emergency....says Stonnington Council...Feb.17

All MEG can say about this is that we hope this 'emergency' means that none of the present councillors will allow one more centimetre of the 'global warming' artificial turf to be put on anything in Stonnington....that not one tree on Percy Treyvaud Memorial Park will be destroyed....that tree-planting by Council will comprise pollution-absorbing trees...that not

one more development will be built in Stonnington unless it includes at least one canopy tree. During the 'debate' on Feb.17 there was not one mention of **trees** and knowledgeable people say repeatedly that extreme weather events occur when we start getting rid of trees.

Stonnington City Council....VEC Subdivision Review

The Age...Feb. 19 The VEC is looking at Ward boundaries and residents can comment on their suggestions if they wish. This has nothing to do with "single councillor or multi-councillor wards" which is what their previous reviews were about. This is all about numbers and changing the Ward boundaries on the basis of population.

(Well, they have to have something to DO!)

You can look at their report at Council offices or at vec.vic.gov.au and you can make a submission by Mar. 18 about their proposals if you feel like it. They'll have a public hearing at Malvern Town Hall at 7p.m. on March 24 and you can speak to your submission if you wish and if no-one asks to speak there will be no hearing! Their recommendations about the boundaries will be go to the Minister for Local Government on April 15.

Supreme Court case....Covenants on Percy Treyvaud Memorial Park

May 4 is the first day of a 4 day hearing in the Supreme Court at 436 Little Lonsdale St. The hearing is open to the public and people can come and go at whim. Please put the date in your diary and, if possible, go to some, if not all of this case. If the Supreme Court finds that the covenants are to stay as they are there will be no stadium at our park.

Suburban office for saleBus. Age Feb.22...Note reported location

This 2 storey suburban office property is in "leafy Glen Iris, near Cabrini hospital and several private schools. The site is 4305 sq.m. "near Central Park" and "around the corner from Cabrini hospital."

If you really want to know where it actually is, the address is 173 Burke Rd. and potentially the site and location allows a re-development up to five storeys.

A few of the Planning Applications in and around Malvern East

79,81 &93 Wattletree Rd. Armadale 5 storeys, 38 apts. 2 basement levels.

923 Dandenong Rd. Construction of Student accommodation in RGZ.

80-90 Waverley Rd. Change of use to a 'place of assembly" (theatre) bldgs. & works, car pkg dispensation & display of illuminated signs & liquor licence.

1796 Malvern Rd. Constr. of 2 dwellings on a lot in GRZ.

154 Darling Rd. Constr. of new dwelling in addition to existing dwelling on a lot in GRZ.

15 Clarence St. Limited licence renewal.

3 Sutherland Rd. Constr. of 2 dwellings on a lot in NRZ.

68 Central Park Rd. Alt. & ext. to existing res. In H.O.

2 Peak St. Sub-divide into 2 lots with each lot containing a dwelling.

547 Waverley Rd. Two lot sub-division...one extra dwelling.

13 Hedgeley Rd. Six 2 storey dwellings and removal of 7 significant trees in NCO. Permit refused by Pl. Dept. Appeal lodged. Merits hearing June 9.

7A Isabella St. Malvern 2 storey medical centre, carstacker, car pking dispensation. Permit refused at Council Mtg. Nov.18. Merits hearing July 30.

24 Hughes St. Construction of a 2 storey dwelling on a lot in an NCO. Cons. Mtg. Feb.19

31 Midlothian St. Changing proposed dev. from 2 dwellings to constr. of 3 plus bazement.

28 Midlothian St. Dual occ. in GRZ.

7 Ash Grove Demolition of dwelling.