



# Malvern East Group

MEG Supports **PLANNING BACKLASH**

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MEG NEWSLETTER....JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2021...and a bit of March!

From the Convenor's Desk

**The breaking news is that the residents who sought to preserve the covenants on their land have lost the Supreme Court case. The only hope we have now of saving Percy Treyvaud Memorial Park from STUFF is if the motion put forward by Crs. Lew and Morgan to evaluate 51 potential sites for that wretched stadium comes up with an alternative site.**

*This is what I had written prior to the Supreme Court decision.....*

I've decided to begin this newsletter with some comments about the tragic loss of trees, worldwide and, of course, locally.

This loss is aided, abetted and indeed promoted by all levels of government and, sad to say, by residents themselves. In Victoria we have local councils voting to destroy some significant trees...and sometimes save others... with the advice of qualified arborists invariably saying, "save them all." We have a State Government hell-bent on destroying thousands and thousands of trees. Both levels of government claim (virtuously) that they will make up for it after some concrete STUFF has been built where once there were trees by planting hundreds and even thousands of saplings...and, sometimes, a GARDEN! People who want to put STUFF on space once occupied by our precious trees have NO IDEA of what trees actually DO and they vote 'in ignorance.'

**"Ire grows as thousands of trees axed" The Age Jan.4**

*"More than 10,000 trees have been cut down to make way for the Andrews government's major transport projects with more than twice this number now facing the axe."*

Clay Lucas reported that, *"including 26,000 to go for the North East Link road project the government will have overseen removal of 40,000 trees."*

\_\_\_\_\_ They should hang their heads in shame!

The lungs of the city are gradually being destroyed in the name of progress.

*"These projects change the face of neighbourhoods....."*

On Jan.27 we noticed in the H.S. a tiny paragraph "**Vic to go green**" ...6000 trees to be planted in Victoria....and in The Age an article about Minister D'Ambrosia unveiling a plan **"to create 18 new parks across Melbourne."** Some of these will be "off leash dog parks" and 18 pocket parks. Ms. D'Ambrosia said, *"The corona virus pandemic had highlighted the importance of being able to visit a park close to home."*

Meanwhile Ms D'Ambrosia seemed to have forgotten... (or deliberately omitted)... mention of *"documents released in December showing where the \$50 billion rail line's 26 kilometres*

*first stage will run details plans for the Southern Stabling Yard in Heatherton.....the train stables would take up 35 hectares of **zoned Green Wedge.***

Bang goes Lily's 'chain of parks!'

In a Letter to the Editor on Jan.19, a Highett resident wrote, "*The intended takeover of 35 hectares of "green wedge" zoned land in Heatherton is only the start of it. There are another six parks and gardens that are listed for destruction.*"

Recently MEG sent you information from the Green Wedges Coalition asking you to make a submission regarding State Government's proposals to allow a multitude of uses in Melbourne's Green Wedges. We thank all of you who made an effort to do this. It was not easy and, made more difficult than necessary by State Government Department constantly "changing the posts." We fail to understand the overt efforts to destroy anything that's 'green' in this State. (MEG **often fails to understand** the actions of State Government!)

### **How to deal with a pothole...and add to our green canopy at the same time**

(Channel 9 News...Feb. 15) Residents in Diamond Creek complained to their local council (Nillumbik Shire Council) about a large pothole where several cars had been damaged. Council said it was a VicRoads issue. VicRoads said it was a Metro Trains issue. Metro Trains said, "No." So the quick thinking residents planted a tree in the hole. Sheer genius!

### **Push for more green spaces...The Age March 1**

*"New design standards to improve access to public space could push up prices....."* and so says the Property Council. *"The Victorian government will mandate that new apartment blocks with more than 19 dwellings must have access to communal green space. Apartment buildings taller than five storeys will be required to avoid "wind tunnelling" and balconies will be eliminated on buildings taller than 40 metres to reduce "overshadowing and "windswept" and underused balconies."*

Minister Wynne is at it again....changing the planning rules. We really wonder how often this man has changed his mind during his tenure as Minister for Planning.

### **Meanwhile in the newsletter from the VPA on Feb. 19.....**

Mr. Moseley bemoans the fact that "*our ability to take on new projects is limited due to "our focus on Fast Track....."* and in the same newsletter Moseley reported that at a recent meeting the Minister had outlined the Government's BIG HOUSING BUILD....\$5.3 BILLION TO BUILD 12,000 HOMES OVER THE NEXT 4 YEARS...Wynne said that the government was seeking partnerships for this.

MEG wonders if those partnerships involve "developer donations." (Just wondering!)

### **Developer donations on the rise.**

The Age..Jan.27 "*The property industry has ramped up its political donations to a fresh peak that takes its total funding to \$54.2 million over the past two decades.....'* and "*Property developers are the second-largest donating industry....."* (Donating is an industry??)

*"Curbs are urged as developer donations rise."*

MEG wonders which government, which Party, has the internal fortitude to curb developer donations.

### **Andrews Government decision strips local councils of power**

Councils will have no power to make planning decisions *“on the construction of thousands of new social housing units.”* (The Age.... Mar.4) That means we will have no say either. *“Last year Housing Minister Richard Wynne his government’s decision would speed up the application process by up to 15 months and that housing providers would still be required to consult with councils and communities and appeal rights to VCAT would remain.”*

Well, that’s not going to happen! As from March 3/2021 we’ve been stripped of any rights. Provision of social housing is a GOOD thing. Not allowing anyone to say where it should go is a BAD thing....especially when we were allowed to do so only last year.

### **Cladding issue....The Age Feb.22**

*“Flammable cladding is being removed from 80 buildings by Cladding Safety Victoria.”*

This was the body formed by State Government *“to carry out its \$600million rectification program. It has finished work on 11 buildings and aims to start on 200 hundred more by the end of June.”*

Incidentally, Mr. Wynne wants his BIG BUILD to have buildings with **safe cladding**. MEG heard him say that.

### **Façade for East Melbourne mansion**

Behind East Melbourne mansion “Eblana,” a developer proposes a tower which would soar 42m *“from behind the façade and front two rooms of the grand Italianate-style building at 140-142 Jolimont Rd.”* (The Age ..Feb.6) Facadism is just a ‘nod’ to heritage and the National Trust’s Victorian director of advocacy Felicity Watson said, *“facadism “ is a poor design outcome. The locals are ‘livid.’*

### **“Final furlong for Village work” Bus. Age Feb.24**

*“The developers of surplus land at Melbourne’s Caulfield Racecourse expect to lodge plans by the middle of this year for the ambitious final \$800 Million stage of the decalong project. The consortium is in partnership with Melbourne Racing Club. The MRC owns the land beside the racetrack. (That’s the land between Normanby & Station Sts...NOT the Crown Land that was bequeathed to the people of Victoria by Queen Victoria.)*

This final step in cluttering up open space is on Smith St. and it will be *“a mixed use precinct ranging in height from 15 to 22 storeys,”* Needless to say all the trees in Smith St. will go! Already there are 848 apartments and 8 townhouses and work is in progress on another 437 apartments across 7 buildings. ( Unbelievably awful stuff!! No trees of course.)

*“The entire development’s 55,000 sq.m. used some form of brick detailing to tie the Village into the local fabric of the neighbourhood, mainly red brick housing.” (So help us all.)*

A final quote from the article is from Sam Beck.

*“We’re not just building the buildings, we’re extending the suburb. We brought those textures into this to make it feel more residential.”*

### **Caulfield Station upgrade...in the pipeline      Station is heritage listed.**

More chaos! *“Caulfield Station could become a major bottleneck once the \$13.7 billion Metro Tunnel is built in 2025 if upgrades to develop a new concourse do not go ahead.”*

Caulfield Station is a Transport Hub now. *“Commuters boarding inbound Frankston wervices at Malvern, Armadale, Toorak or Hawksburn and wanting to access the Metro Tunnel Stations will have to travel back to Caulfield to change trains.”* And of course there’s all

that STUFF being built across the road. (See above.) A tiny snippet in this article mentions that there is **“a proposed new light rail link to Monash’s Clayton campus.”** Vicinity representatives told us in 2020 that they wanted such a link to be built with a station at or near Chadstone Shopping Centre. With a station nearby there will be no need for them to provide more car parking.

### **Going bush!**

The Age...Feb.4 *“Melbourne experienced a 30 per cent collapse in the number of people re-locating to the city.....ABS data shows a net 7445 people left Greater Melbourne area through the September quarter...”* It takes a pandemic to promote “decentralisation” a policy Meg has always promoted. Alas, *“The major limitation on the regions is “woefully inadequate infrastructure.....”* Are we surprised? While Melbourne suffers under major infrastructure disruption the regions suffer under HARDLY ANY! Beggars belief!

### **Fake turf...Spectrum Jan.30**

When local councils decided that outdoor dining was ‘the thing to do’ to save the traders we thought we’d have *“a flurry of new plantings”*....sort of ‘pocket parks’ here and there. *“Transforming public land...albeit temporarily...into places to eat and drink was seen as an opportunity to create a suite of cool and shady spots where people would want to linger.”* NOT SO!! Stonnington Council with its usual enthusiasm for the ‘global warming’ artificial turf has installed it in and around the Chapel St. area....in particular.

MEG member wanted us to mention the sad looking plastic garden on  
Burke Rd. near Wattletree Rd.....sad indeed!

There’s a street garden outside a bar in Richmond.....*“It’s composed entirely of climbers and looks loose and natural.”* But that’s not in Stonnington where councillors just love FAKE TURF despite believing in a “climate emergency.” Such hypocrisy! Bring in Dr. Greg Moore to teach them about “global warming.” Remember his words to a MEG audience....***“They’re cooking the kids.”***

## **LOCAL NEWS**

### **Tree situation in Stonnington**

At Council Meeting Dec.1/2021 there was a 5-4 Councillor vote to destroy 4 “significant” trees at 18 St. Georges Rd. in Toorak. Council officers had refused to issue a Permit. All documentation was REDACTED.

A similar situation exists in Malvern East where the owner of 43 Central Park Rd. wants to destroy 2 significant **Sydney Blue Gums (Eucalyptus saligna)**.

Arborists’ reports presented by officers recommended retention of the trees and arborists’ reports from the owner recommended destruction in both cases. Certain councillors who voted to destroy the trees at St. Georges Rd. voted to save the trees at 43 Central Park Rd. A compromise was reached through an alternative recommendation which sought yet another arborist’s report and a reduction in the canopy. In each instance all of the reports to date were redacted.

**MEG has NO IDEA why all the attachments regarding trees are not made public and on January 15/2021 Andrew Dixon lodged an FOI request on MEG’s behalf for the documents relating to the St. Georges Rd.application. No docs yet! On March 4 staff apologised for the delay, informing us that there is a backlog. Arborists’ reports highly confidential?**

So much for the latest “Local Government Bill” which calls for  
‘accountability and transparency.’

## **Council Meeting Feb.15/2021**

### **Urban Forest Strategy ...Council commits to the following....**

Promote the value and importance of retaining trees in urban landscapes.

Maximise the retention of high-value tree and established trees with large canopies.

Protect trees defined a Significant Trees through continued administration of the Local Law

Minimise tree removals through the land use planning process.

Only support the removal of healthy, established trees when there is a compelling arboricultural, community safety or public value reason to do so.

*"The strategy notes the progressive loss of large established trees from private land estimated at more than 1000 throughout the city."*

## **Stonnington Council spent \$40,000..H.S. Jan.17/2021**

*"Stonnington Council spent \$40,000 last year to get residents' thoughts on planned level crossing removals at Glenferrie Rd., Kooyong and Tooronga Rds. Malvern."* According to the article Council engaged JWS Research to survey 500 residents by phone. Half of them didn't live near the proposed crossings. Mayor Hely said that *"council didn't have a preference on the design."* Dean Hurlston called this *"fence sitting."*

### **Some snippets we have picked up around the traps**

#### **Site for a residential hotel in Malvern Rd.**

The site to the east of the Malvern Vale Hotel is FOR SALE....with a Permit.

#### **FB page...Dec. 20 in the H.S....Council to be taken to Supreme Court**

True or False?? The FB post reported that Mitty Lawyers are taking on a class action by traders affected by the \$70 million Prahran Square development. Apparently traders are suing Council for the losses they incurred during the building of that concrete monstrosity.

**FB page...Jan 12.** A resident commented on FB that the site of the Good Shepherd Convent which is now occupied by none other than Chadstone Shopping Centre was **not sold** to CSC but was leased to the Gandel Group for 100 years. Does anyone know about this?

#### **Open space levy**

A North Ward councillor reminded us at a recent council meeting that \$8 million in the \$15 million *surplus* (?) is for 'open space.'

#### **Caulfield Racecourse Reserve**

Feb. 5 on FB an announcement....*"Final Land Management is close to being unveiled. It's now working its way through final approvals."* (MEG wonders just how long it takes to get FINAL APPROVALS...and from whom?)

Again on FB on Feb. 11 we were asked if we wanted a "coffee cart" in the Reserve and further to that gem it was reported that, *"This is just one of the ideas we are exploring."*

Gosh that's heartening! What's next? An actual date?

#### **And yet another rumour about that wretched stadium**

We heard that parents in the Western part of Stonnington are saying that they don't want to drive 4.5kms to Percy Treuvaud Memorial Park for their children to play netball.

**And another one about Percy's Park.....just a rumour!**

The CEO has said that Council wants ALL of the covenants removed from the park. Does that refer to the wishes of Officers or Councillors?

**'Water Sensitive City Officer'**

Council has advertised for a *'Water Sensitive City Officer' to facilitate and support integrated water management outcomes.* It's a 2 year full-time position and the pay is \$90,000 a year. (Seen on Facebook.)

**34 Armadale St.**

Where once there stood a beautiful old home there will be storeys of the usual ugly, dreary units. VCAT gave Goldfields the nod to build on the now empty block...and to add to the general distress over this the plans for this site the decision came through just before Christmas. The irony of it all!

**Some of the Planning Applications in and around Malvern East**

- 2 Deakin St.** Pt. dem. & ext. of existing dwelling in NRZ & H.O.
- 70 McGregor St.** First floor addn to existing dwelling in NCO.
- 23 Jordan St. Malvern** Dem. of existing dwelling & constr. of new dwelling.
- 14 Coolgardie St.** Single dwelling.
- 53 Jordan St. Malvern** Dem of existing dwelling & constr. of new dwelling in NCO.
- 30 Victoria St. North Malvern** Pt. dem., bldgs. & works on a lot less than 500sq.m. in H.O.
- 21 Nyora St.** Vest the whole reserve reserve in the name of Stonnington C.C.
- 94 Burke Rd.** Multi dwelling dev. in GRZ and SBO.
- 5 Baker St.** Pt. dem. bldgs. & works to dwelling in H.O.
- 55 Nirvana Av.** Constr. of new dwelling in H.O.
- 11 & 13 Darling Rd.** Constr. of multi-unit dwelling.
- 10 Gillman St.** Pt. dem. bldg. 7 works to dwelling in H.O.
- 62 Bowen St.** Constr. of 2 dwellings.
- 15 Washington Av.** Ext. to dwelling in NCO
- 6 Shrewsbury St.** Constr. of 2 dwellings.
- 4 Warley St.** Ext. to a dwelling on a lot less than 500sq.m. in H.O.
- 31 Glenbrook Av.** First floor addn in NCO.
- 15 Albert St.** Alterations & extensions to existing double storey dwelling in H.O.
- 31 Cambridge St. Armadale** Pt.dem. addns & alterations to bldg. on a lot less than 500 sq.m. in H.O.
- 883-885 Dandenong Rd.** Remove restrictive covenants.
- 19 Sycamore St.** Pt. dem. bldg. & works to dwelling on a lot in NCO
- 10 Manning Rd.** Pt. dem. bldg. & works to dwelling in H.O.
- 105 Finch St.** New dwelling and new front fence.
- 14 Wilmot St.** Demolition and construction of new dwelling in NCO.