



# Malvern East Group

MEG Supports **PLANNING BACKLASH**

C/- 14 Chanak Street,

Malvern East Vic 3145

Phone/Fax 9572 3205

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

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

## MEG NEWSLETTER ...JULY/AUGUST 2016

### VALE JUNE WHITING

June lived in John St. Malvern East. She was a feisty lady who, despite wretched health, vigorously opposed the huge development opposite her home. With the help of her family, in particular her daughter Kate, she supported MEG and her neighbours in opposition to the application for the 18 storey 'landmark' building on the corner of Tooronga & Dandenong Rds. Before work commenced on the project June often said, "I would prefer to be dead rather than live opposite a construction site." When demolition of the existing buildings was completed and construction was about to commence June died. Kate said in her message to me that her mother 'was true to her word.' She died on July 14.

### From the Convenor's desk

You may have noticed on your Council Rates Notice that Malvern East properties have increased in value by 21 %. This increase is greater than that of any other suburb in Stonnington. If you're thinking of leaving that's great news but if you're staying we suggest that you start saving so that you can pay the higher rates and remember that this is election year for all Victorian Councils. Election date is October 22 and it's postal voting. You can acquire information about the candidates by coming to the MEG Forum. (See notice below.)

Thanks to MEG members who have renewed their MEG membership. To those who haven't you still have time to do so before we take you off the Mailing List.

Thanks also to the **very few** members who sent us comments about the 'Bill of Rights.'

Most succinct was one gentleman who told me not to worry about anything anymore, that we're "**being governed by idiots**" and it seems that there's nothing we can do about it.

Thank you Ron! What would I do without you?

**Put this date in your diary...**

**Sunday October 9...2.30 p.m.**

**Forum for Council Candidates**

**St. Joseph's Hall...47 Stanhope St. Malvern**

*(More about this in later notices.)*

### Infrastructure Victoria takes action

Age June 29..."Infrastructure Victoria has chosen 43 people including tradies, parents, scientists and students to sit on two panels advising on major projects for the state. It is hoped the move helps to avoid costly mistakes. There are to be 2 juries...one rural and one metropolitan." The article only mentions one name...James Wong (22), a university student

from Glen Waverley. We have NO IDEA who the other 42 are, nor do we know why they were chosen nor do we know when. We are beset by secrecy in this State.

### **The whims of Planning Ministers...AGAIN!**

Age July 11. Yet again we are informed of a Planning Minister allowing a developer to 'have his way.' The \$300 million high-rise at 100 Collins St. designed by Zaha Hadid breaches Minister Wynne's own density rules by about 30%. Approval was granted on the basis of "perceived public realm benefits." We're told that the building will be wrapped in "white latticework" and the vase like tower was expected to become a new visitor drawcard for Melbourne.

### **More whims of the Planning Minister**

Age Aug.4 Moreland Council has requested permission of Minister Wynne to do away with *"tiny apartments with no balcony and poor natural lighting."* The Council wants one-bedroom apartments to be at least 50 sq.m., 65 for 2bedrooms and at least 90 sq.m. for 3 bedrooms. A bit of common sense rejected by the Minister.

*"Mr. Wynne is expected to soon release his own potentially weaker rules on better apartment design."* (The Age should be chastised for the split infinitive!) MEG lodged a submission re "Better Apartments" in December 2015.

On July 12 The Age reported that Professor Buxton of RMIT warned that *"laws dictating density levels have been plucked out of the air"* and he suggested that the frenzy of high-rise approvals between 2012 and 2014 represented *"a time bomb for the CBD."* (MEG thinks it's a 'time bomb' for certain suburbs too!) Michael Buxton added that *"Melbourne's public amenity will continue to be plundered."*

Further to all of that we have word from Sunday Age Aug 14 where it's reported that *"the draft design standards have been released...."* and the executive director of the Property Council says that these guidelines reflect *"a fair place between community concern, market demand and industry feedback."* In simple terms there are no minimum apartment sizes and the developers won again because *"there is nothing in the new rules to prevent developers filling their towers with tiny apartments."*

**N.B.** These are only '**draft guidelines**' and this means that first of all we have been asked to comment AGAIN and that nothing is mandatory....just some more **guidelines** and we all know how much notice developers and VCAT take of "guidelines."

### **Strategic Planning for Victoria**

At the next meeting of the CCC with Minister Wynne MEG will ask for a copy of the Labor Government's detailed policy for developing Victoria. We have said for some years that strategically directed, incentive driven decentralisation is an appropriate way to populate Victoria. Melbourne is NOT the State of Victoria and Victoria is NOT just Melbourne. What we need is a 'State of cities' not a "City State."

Has the Minister even heard of the "Luv-a-Duck" factory in Nhill staffed by the Karen people or the tourist attraction of the painted silo at Brim which is to be replicated on silos for 200km or the "Australian Eatwell" factory at Donald or Lake Tyrell at Sea Lake which is attracting hundreds of Chinese tourists or the ground-breaking kilometre long tunnel at Stawell that will house the southern hemisphere's first dark matter detector and which will draw scientists from all over the world?

We want to know the details of what State Government is doing to promote these initiatives and others like them. We want to know how much money is spent on promoting rural Victoria. We want them to start leaving our city alone!

### **Fees at VCAT**

We reported in our last newsletter that the Government proposed to charge objectors a fee of \$51 to speak at a VCAT hearing. As a result of submissions there has been a 'rethink' and the fee to be heard is now \$19.50 with Health Care card holders to pay \$9.80. The fees *"reflect Government policy to ensure that VCAT is, and remains, a high quality, low cost civil and administrative tribunal accessible to all Victorians."* (From letter to Mary Drost, Convenor of Planning Backlash from the Department of Justice and Regulation.) ... and if you believe that twaddle you take the prize for naivete.

### **Cabrini Hospital**

Cabrini Property Group continues its unrelenting opposition to Council's decision to lop 2 storeys off their 7 storey development proposal. A VCAT hearing is scheduled to begin on September 5/2016. After reading of the unfortunate events at the hospital reported in the Age on July 23 and August 2 it seems to us that Cabrini might could be devoting its energies to delivering quality patient care rather than spending \$82 million (plus) on yet more buildings on that small site.

### **Sky Rail**

In Letters to The Age on June 23 a Carnegie resident bemoaned what "feels like unrelenting misery" compounded by the destruction of mature trees around the Carnegie station. The letter-writer said that the trees "provided sanity." Alas, after June 23 even more trees were destroyed along the Carnegie, Murrumbeena, Hughesdale line and on August 13 it is reported on radio that even more are to go. Residents have united in a concerted effort to have the rail line put underground but we regret to say that it seems they are beaten. The misery will go on and the benefits in the long run are dubious.

When will people learn that trees provide not only sanity but they absorb pollution, contribute to a lessening of the heat effect, provide shade and contribute to the general well-being of a community.

Governments are destroying thousands of trees in this State on a daily basis...and MEG weeps. ..At Council Meeting on August 1 Councillor Koce from North Ward asked for a report re landscaping and open space along the railway lines that neighbour our suburb.

### **Glenferrie Rd./ High St. Structure Plan....Amendment C223**

MEG has a number of members in Malvern and many of them are deeply concerned about what is proposed by Strategic Planning for this Major Activity Centre. At the request of residents we have had a quick look at the Amendment and we are genuinely appalled at what seems to be a concerted attack on two shopping strips that have Heritage Overlays. With height restrictions (?) of 4 storeys proposed for the Glenferrie Rd. shopping strip, between 4-5 storeys for the High St. strip AND a 12 storey limit for the Malvern Central site AND an 8-10 storey limit between Malvern station and Dandenong Rd. we can only hope that developers don't hear about it. We have no doubt they've already heard and are preparing to take their case to Council and Panel. What happened to policy that is supposed to protect Heritage Overlays? It seems to be dead and buried!

### **Prahran East**

Recently there was a 7 storey proposal for 519-531A High St. right in the middle of Prahran East Village. It was refused by Council Pl. Dept. The applicant duly lodged an appeal at VCAT. Residents duly submitted 'statements of grounds' and prepared their own submissions, employed a representative and VCAT duly issued a Permit **with not one concession which addressed residents' concerns**. One resident (a MEG member) likened the proposal to having "a Picasso in the middle of a Matisse exhibition." MEG wonders if a VCAT Member would even understand such an apt analogy. Let's use it in all future submissions.

### **Caulfield Racecourse Reserve**

Mathew Knight reports that the 'Trust' may not be dissolved after all. Apparently the reason given for this is it will take too long to pass the legislation and install a new system. *(MEG asks..."Can it be true that the Government may not dissolve a 'bad' system and replace it with something better because it would take too long?" Astonishing!)*

If the Government actually took the action of dissolving the Trust the current Trust members would have to resign and the Dept. of the Environment would be the interim manager. This is a far cry from what was outlined last year.

Well, whatever happens regarding the Trustees of OUR land MEG knows that it won't be for the good of the people.

Incidentally, have you SEEN the developments on land bought by the MRC with money made from the use of public land? Absolutely appalling...and nary a green leaf to be seen.

**And there's more.... did you know that MRC leases the 54 hectares of public land at CRR for a mere \$90,000 a year?**

### **Malvern Historical Society**

You may be interested to know that this local historical society is now on Facebook. For further information contact Jane on 0438515631

### **87 Chadstone Rd.**

Bus. Age Aug 3..."One keen investor outbid eight others offering \$850,000 for a shop and first floor office at 87 Chadstone Rd." The shop is leased as a hairdressing salon with a rental return of \$40,000.

It's amazing that the shops in that strip still function so well considering that the massive Chadstone Shopping Centre is so close.

### **And speaking of CSC**

The 6 storey development on the northern side of the Centre is due to open in September 2016 so the immediate residential area can look forward to lots more cars and people invading the local area. Is there no end to that place? A MEG member in Midlothian St. reports that she is **not** looking forward to the opening. Are we surprised?

### **857 Dandenong Rd. (Now 2A Clarence St.)**

Please note that 2A Clarence St. cannot be located on Google, G.P.S. or in Melways! Clarence St. sounds better than a Dandenong Rd. address!

Included in the Permit for this 7 storey thing was a requirement of a 'green wall' on the northern side abutting St. Johns Lane. Last summer 4 wisterias were planted in the minute

space provided. As you no doubt know wisteria is a deciduous plant so one doesn't need an IQ of 190 to know that there would be no 'green' wall in winter. As we write this there is no leaf on any of the plants which range now from about 75cms in height at the western end of the wall to about 2m 50cms on the eastern end. There is a bit of grass in between these plants and at the western end there is a vigorous green weed.

Is this a breach of Permit? We intend to ask Council. Perhaps you, too, could ask Council!

### **Urban Forest Strategy for Stonnington**

(Council Notice Paper July 18) A key priority of this strategy will be expand the urban forest. The strategy does not refer specifically to OUR urban forest between Dandenong and Waverley Rds. It refers to the replacement and planting of trees on public **and private** land across the municipality. **Gateway Initiative...**aims to create or enhance a number of significant boulevards in the municipality through the establishment of signature avenues of trees. MEG welcomes any strategy that means more trees are planted, particularly in the light of the Government's systematic destruction of this invaluable asset.

### **Warning re developments overshadowing solar panels**

(Council Notice Paper July 4)...There are two Red Dot decisions from VCAT re the 'reasonableness of overshadowing of neighbouring solar panels.' Make a note of these in case you have a 'thing' going up beside you and it puts at risk your energy output from the panels. There are no regulations regarding this matter.

### ***Chen v Melbourne CC & Orrs 2012***

### ***John Gurry & Associates Pty Ltd. V Moonee Valley CC & Orrs 2013***

### **VCAT Hearings**

**Cabrini Hospital** 7 storey dev. Against Conditions 5/9/16

**13 Illowa St.** Multi-unit dev. In Growth Zone. Against Refusal to Grant 7/10/16

**35 Nott St.** Pt. dem. & works to dwelling in H.O Against Decision to Grant 17/11/16

**65 Argyll St.** Additional dwelling on a lot in NRZ, Against conditions. 30/11/16

**1131 Dandenong Rd.** Multi-dwelling dev. In Growth Zone. Against Refusal. 7/12/16

**547 Waverley Rd.** Multi-dwelling dev. In General Res. Zone...Against Decision to Grant 14/12/16

**1009-1011 Dandenong Rd.** Multi-unit dev. In Growth Zone. Against Refusal. 7/7 16

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