



Malvern East Group

MEG Supports **PLANNING BACKLASH**

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MEG NEWSLETTER...JULY/AUGUST 2021

From the Convenor's desk

"I clean the air you breathe. I can do that for your children if you let me live."

A mature leafy tree produces as much oxygen in a season as 10 people inhale a year. On average, one tree produces 260 pounds of oxygen in a year."

I saw that information on a FB page for *wildlife.net* and could not resist telling you. Apart from providing us with shade and countering the 'heat island' effect trees actually save our lives. Given the recent wild fire events in America and Europe during this northern summer we cannot afford to be destroying the trees that seven Stonnington councillors have voted to abolish.

I can hear you groaning "She's STILL on about the damn trees." You're right! I am. You may have noticed that MEG's letterhead has a tree. The letterhead was designed by Scott Samuel in the early days of MEG nearly 17 years ago when Scott, Remy Favre and I were working to get MEG going. One of our aims ..(faint hope)..was to preserve the neighbourhood character and to teach residents how to oppose inappropriate development. We taught you the processes but we couldn't teach you how to WIN all the time. An occasional win has kept us going.

MEG Membership Subscriptions

If you wish to remain on our mailing list and haven't yet paid the \$5 subscription fee you need to do it during the next few weeks. Here are the details for a bank transfer....

BSB 633000 ... A/C No. 127 271 591....A/C Name ..Malvern East Group

Please let me know if you make a bank transfer. Cheques or cash to 14 Chanak St.

City must support good architecture ...The Age ..July 6

Nicholas Reece (Deputy Lord Mayor of Melbourne) wrote ...

"in recent years Melbourne has allowed too many poor developments....too many towers that are nothing more than spreadsheets in the sky delivering a profit for developers, but leaving the city poorer because of bad design and low quality materials"

We can say that about the suburbs too. Just look at that thing on the corner of Tooronga & Dandenong Rds. Look at Chadstone!! Look at the Forrest Hill Precinct in Sth Yarra. Look at that bland dreary stuff in our main roads.

Melbourne City Council is going to establish a new Design Excellence Program.

"Average is no longer good enough when it comes to architecture, design and urban amenity."

MEG hopes that MCC has told Minister Wynne about this program. Judging by his performance as the "design policeman" he's not too *au fait* with excellence.

Nicholas Reece and Prince Charles...not quite the same but similar

Sunday Age...July 25 The prince is known as "*architecture critic-in chief*". He labelled Birmingham's post-industrial building boom "*a monstrous concrete maze*," the brutalist

National Theatre "a clever way of building a nuclear power station without anyone objecting," the modern extension to the National Gallery "a monstrous carbuncle on the face of a much-loved and elegant friend." (N.B. That carbuncle never eventuated.) Charles must have felt somewhat vindicated in July 2021 when "Housing Secretary Robert Jenrick pledged a series of reforms to put '**beauty**' back into planning in Britain." MEG wonders if Richard Wynne could ever be persuaded to follow suit!

Move to make suburbs greener---and cooler Bus. Age Classifieds...Aug.7
"Manningham Council's current call for an urban forest policy consultant is part of a growing movement among Victorian councils to protect residents against a predicted rise in deadly heatwaves." **(Tell that to the 7 Stonnington councillors who voted to destroy all those trees in Percy Treuvaud Memorial Park.)**

"A Melbourne City Council report says, "The urban heat island effect is a common phenomenon in cities worldwide that occurs when densely built urban areas become warmer than nearby suburban and regional areas, particularly after dark."

"Urban forests have proven to be one of the most effective methods for mitigating heat-retention in dense suburban areas."

Talking of spreadsheets in the sky

It has been reported that a 50 storey building has been proposed for Box Hill..... as if that suburb hasn't suffered enough from high-rise stuff.... and a 50 storey building for the Frankston foreshore , destroying heritage buildings in the process. Stonnington already has a 50 storey building on the corner of Chapel St. & Toorak Rd. One wonders just how many more steps are we to take before the suburbs of Melbourne, a once gracious Victorian city, are but a distant memory.

Collingwood resident seems to agree with Deputy Lord Mayor and Prince

In a Letter to the Editor on July 21 he wrote, "permitting the inappropriately oversized developments in Collingwoodhas opened a progression of oversized and undistinguished developments." The writer is responding to an Age article on July 19,

"Fear towers will ruin 'soul' of inner city."

He continues..."Each relies on the previous to justify the excessive height and as a result one hears the weasel words "**emerging character**" used to justify more of the same."

Development blueprint towers over city's soul The Age June 19

A blueprint for development of up to 14 storeys in the heritage streets of the City of Yarra drew hundreds of objections. One resident and business owner said,

"We think that modern soulless buildings are stripping the soul of Fitzroy for short-term gain for only a select few. Taller buildings take away the light ...they ruin the streetscape. Parking in this street is already a nightmare.

We don't want to see a second Chapel Street."

Well, who does? Nobody MEG knows.

Yarra Council's blueprint recommends 'mid-rise' buildings **up to 14 storeys**.

"Victoria's planning guidelines state that mandatory height limits should be imposed only in exceptional circumstances."

And the only person who has the power to decide what an exceptional circumstance might be is our very own MR. WYNNE.

Of course there could be the odd developer passing by.

Meanwhile down at Portsea Lindsay Fox is defeated.....for the moment

The trucking magnate had attempted in 2018 to have the beach in front of the Fox compound zoned residential. Mornington Shire Council refused the application so Mr. Fox appealed to the Supreme Court.

It was reported in The Age on July 9 that the Supreme Court dismissed his case during the first week of July. Mr. Fox may appeal this decision!

More flammable cladding....H.S. July 5

*"Cladding Safety Victoria figures show that the Victorian Building Authority has referred **719 buildings** to the organization...up from 643 at the end of 2020."*

CSV is carrying out works on 200 buildings. It is unable to assist every building with flammable cladding.

"CSV's job is to prioritize funding for the highest risk buildings...."

Some buildings get a partial fix with only the most dangerous cladding being removed. On July 2 The Age reported that 857 buildings in Melbourne have dangerous cladding.

Let us not forget that State Government is worried about a stalled tunnel!!

On August 6 the Herald Sun reported

"Cladding Safety Victoria reached its target of having 200 projects under way or completed by June 30 under the \$600 million program."

In the same article, *"Planning Minister Richard Wynne said Victoria led the world in its response to inflammable cladding."* He should hang his head in shame!

"...the heat is coming and we are not prepared for it." The Age July 18

Stephen Livesley, Associate Professor in forest sciences at Melbourne University, Professor Christian Jakob an atmospheric scientist at Monash University and Dr. Sebastian Pfautsch, a specialist, on urban heat at Western Sydney agree on the issue of global warming and its causes. Pfautsch says that State Governments

"have allowed property developers to shape the built environment. It is not just that large houses on small blocks leave no room for trees. The little space between them provides no room for recreation and serves to increase heat, with side passages often home to air-conditioning systems that spew heated air across dividing fences."

The black roads absorb heat during the day and radiate it during the night. Roofs and exterior walls in fashionably dark colours exacerbate the heat impact.

Moonscaping of sites by developers starts the whole process and

we have seen this on a large number of sites in our own suburbs.

That's what our very own council will do at Percy Treuvaud Memorial Park and seven councillors are so proud of that. They should hang their heads in shame.

"Trees are recognized globally as a weapon against the heat-island effect....."

A snippet in Bus. Age on August 16

Andrew Forrest couldn't work out why

"environmental destruction has to go hand in hand with business."

Nor can MEG!

Did you know???

From June 2021 Minister Wynne has taken over all planning applications from private schools.

If you live anywhere near any one of the many private schools in Stonnington you will not be able to object to anything they want to build. It's called DEMOCRACY.

Population....the city and the regions....and the future

The Age...July 15 *"....it is to be expected that the big capital cities will resume their relentless pursuit of growth while many regions languish...."* This has been the pattern in Australian states. We have said often that a STATE Government should govern for **the State** not just the city. It appears that the pandemic has forced it to realise this basic fact.

Dr. Tim Paterson says, *"For Melburnians, high population growth has contributed to urban sprawl, traffic congestion and unaffordable housing."* He says that population growth has halted for the next few years and there is an increased interest in regional living. For years MEG has promoted **decentralization**. It would appear that this has been forced upon government and Dr. Paterson suggests that Government could *use the*

next four to five years developing plans that will sustain regional growth and gradually increase the regional share (of population) year by year.

State Government will actually be forced to consider the whole STATE and not just the CITY?

City folk flock to the country The Age ...Aug.4

"A record net 11,800 people left the nation's capital cities in the three months to the end of March.....The Bureau of Statistics reported this on Aug.3/2021.

"Since the start of the pandemic, a net 22,651 people have left Melbourne for other parts of Victoria. Melbourne has lost a net 34,366 residents, including 3682 who have moved to Brisbane."

"People in the prime of their working years are the biggest group moving out of Melbourne"....Brisbane and Perth are "increasingly attractive to internal migration."

"KPMG urban and regional planner said the pandemic had changed population patterns."

MEG has advocated a policy of decentralization or regionalization for as long as we have been in existence. If there's one good thing that has come out of this hideous pandemic it's that city folk are looking at our regional areas with new eyes. Now all we have to do is persuade State Government to put money towards regional and bus links and stop its obsession with massive infrastructure programs in Melbourne.

Should be a breeze!

LOCAL NEWS

Questions to the Council from the community.

This is Item 7 on the Council Agenda. It is rarely used by members of the public. A quick search of the practices of a number of other Councils has shown that members of the public can ask questions verbally at Council meetings. This is NOT ALLOWED in Stonnington. It was possible at Ward Meetings but COVID has been a good excuse to do away with those and the grapevine tells us that the "Meet your Councillors" sessions were not a roaring success.

If **you** want to question Council about a particular issue this is what you do.....

Email council@stonnington.vic.gov.au

Topic...Item 7...Question(s) to Council

Give your name & address.

Type your question (s). Send email any time before noon on the day of the meeting.

If you don't have email write your question, post it or deliver it to the Council office.....**and then hope you get an answer!**

The Age reported that on Aug.26 a Melton City councillor "*used public question time to every council in Victoria to ask a question.* Moonee Valley Mayor said he would not tolerate this. "*Public question time is not an opportunity for councillors from elsewhere to come into our chambers and use our council meeting as a platform....."*

He's right! That time is an opportunity for local residents to question council but not in Stonnington.

The Gables The historic 'Gables' in Finch St. is closed due to 'unsuccessful lease negotiations' All signs have been removed from the site. What will happen to this wonderful heritage place?

"Tree change a win for local democracy" The Age Aug.16

In St. Kilda a resident of an art deco apartment block enjoyed having next door a eucalyptus yellow gum ...(a significant tree)..." *home to possums and white-plumed honeyeaters, noisy minors, mudlarks, butcherbirds, currawongs and rainbow lorikeets*". Recently neighbours received a notice from a Council Dept.saying that a Permit had been issued to cut it down. A petition was organized. Councillors agreed to have an

assessment from an independent arborist who said that the tree was healthy It was saved. A small but significant victory at a time when a climate emergency has been declared.

**Meanwhile next door in Stonnington.....
seven councillors recently voted to destroy 67 trees,16 of
which are significant, in a park while all councillors in Port Phillip
voted to save one in a backyard.**

Caulfield Station Precinct

Across Dandenong Rd. from Malvern East the next stage of the Caulfield Station Precinct involves Smith St. and the first thing to be done with Smith St. is to close it to traffic from August 30 and the second thing is to cut down the 16 trees that line the street. Well, what else would you do with trees if you were a developer **or** one of the seven Stonnington councillors who vote to destroy trees?

The option is to save them! Perish that thought!

Mayor not for turningThe Age ...CBD...July 9

East Ward Councillor Alexander Lew is attempting to get support from other councillors to declare "*no confidence in Mayor Kate Hely.*" According to this article Cr. Lew attempted this at the "closed doors" briefing on July 9. Apparently the mayor who is "*officially independent acts a little too like a Green.*" If you watch the 'open' (carefully rehearsed meetings) you would be inclined to agree with this view. Alas, there's no law against it. The mayor says she's not going anywhere.

MEG noticed this week that there is a Change.Org petition which seeks the mayor's resignation. It was started by a resident. No, we don't know him and we don't know what his grievance is and we don't know how the petition is progressing.

Tok Holdings Pty. Ltd. V Minister for Planning & Ors

Council approved a proposal for an 8 storey development in Toorak Village when Council's preferred height for the area was 5 storeys. (MEG wonders why councillors voted against their own height preference.) ...An appeal against the verdict was lodged with VCAT by 3 appellants who wanted a review of the decision. Mr. Wynne stepped in and approved it. before the VCAT appeal could be heard. Supreme Court action was taken against this decision and recently Mr. Wynne won the case.

Meanwhile in Hawksburn Village....also in Toorak

On the northern side of Malvern Rd. in the middle of this Neighbourhood Activity Centre an application for a 7 storey building has been lodged. This is right up against one and two storey dwellings to the rear of the site in May Rd. MEG wishes the residents all the luck in the world. They will need it.

Phone Survey re your opinion of Council's performance

MEG member reported on August 26 that he had just received a phone call re **Council's** performance to date. The following areas were covered.....

Roads & Traffic Management Rubbish collection & environmental friendly disposal.
Planning & development Parking Facilities presentation & maintenance...parks, etc.
Events & Tourism Communication with residents

Our member suspected that "*this would be conducted by a highly paid consultancy that would produce a voluminous report that will go in the council hierarchy's bottom drawer filed under CONSULTATION.*"

Council Meeting ...August 2/2021

At this meeting the membership of an Advisory Committee LBGTIQA+ was appointed and Cr. Mike Scott was appointed Chair of the Committee.

Harold Holt Swimming Pool

Council has approved the expenditure of \$4million to modernize this community asset.

Barry Humphreys once said,

"It's only in Melbourne that one would find a swimming pool named after a Prime Minister who was lost at sea!"

Winning ticket for councils...not for you!

On July 29 it was reported in the H.S. that councils will have a "parking fee windfall." John Masanauskas wrote that the pandemic had caused a drop in income for councils so the trend is to raise the price of parking and the fees for infringements. FYI...Stonnington hopes to raise \$21million...an increase of \$7million....and we all know about the increase in rates.

At Council Meeting July 19

A petition from residents around Orrong Romanis Reserve was presented to Council, asking that the existing tennis courts not be made into multi-purpose courts because visiting teams for sports such as netball would cause parking and traffic problems for residents. Cr. Sehr indicated that residents did not want more traffic around their area. Apparently it doesn't matter if this happens to residents in East Ward.....as if Chadstone Shopping Centre doesn't cause them enough problems already without adding the traffic for a stadium.

It would appear that what PNA wants is what PNA gets and PNA wants a stadium in Malvern East and no other venue for netball is going to be acceptable to good old PNA.

Chapel St. Precinct Association

MSN reported on Aug. 30 that Chapel St. traders are pleading to be allowed to open during the lockdown "on condition that they serve only vaccinated customers." Precinct Manager Chrissie Maus said this business model would encourage all Victorians to get vaccinated.

Some of the Planning Applications in & around Malvern East

85 Finch St. Alterations & additions to dwelling in H.O.

2 Alcalá Av. Construction of 2 storey dwelling.

16 Turner St. Pt. dem., bldgs. & works to dwelling in H.O.

Tooronga Rd. At home cake business with one full-time employee working 9-5 Monday to Saturday.

153 Manning Rd. Multi-unit development.

59 Edsall St. Construction of single dwelling in H.O.

1 Kingston St. Pt. dem., bldg. & works to dwelling in H.O.

5 Tollington Av. Instal solar panels to dwelling in H.O.

24 Prior Rd. Convert to rooming house with long-term residents.

98 Manning Rd. Pt. dem., bldg. & works to dwelling in NCO and SBO.

8 Boardman St. Ext. & refurbishment to existing dwelling.

13 Carmulo Av. Dual occ.

11 Sycamore St. Pt. dem., bldg. & works to dwelling in NCO.

33 Valetta St. Malvern Construction of dwelling on a lot less than 500 sq.m. in GRZ.

53 Ranfurly Cr. Glen Iris Pt. dem., bldg. & works to extend existing dwelling in H.O.

9 Central Park Rd. 2 storey addn. to rear of single storey dwelling in H.O.

15 Epping St. Alterations & additions to dwelling in H.O.

29 Wilmot St. Two lot residential subdivision.

St. Mary's School ... 87-91 Manning Rd. Bldg & works to existing Education Centre in GRZ & IPO and reduction in car parking requirements.

951-955 Dandenong Rd. Sec. Consent Amendment to replace combustible cladding with cladding of a color different from the original cladding.

637 Waverley Rd. Removal of restrictive covenant.

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