



Malvern East Group

MEG Supports *PLANNING BACKLASH*

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MEG Newsletter....March/ April 2017

From the Convenor's Desk

So many phrases catch my eye! I make a mental note of each one until it's superseded by the next one. What caught my eye recently was a report in the Age on March 1.

"Crown saved itself millions of dollars under a special deal granted by the Planning Minister ..."

I wonder if any of the people we employ ever hang their heads in shame when they do 'special deals' for developers. Crown is paying \$72 million in fees and taxes for its HUGE development but *"a Melbourne City Council report released yesterday shows that Crown would have had to pay \$138 million if the project had been assessed under the new rules brought in by Mr. Wynne last year."*

Crown by-passed those laws arguing it was a special case. They withdrew the application, re-submitted it and made a special request to Mr. Wynne. *"Mr. Wynne and Premier Daniel Andrews obliged."* They changed the city's planning laws so that Crown could build its 328m high building.

Changed the laws for Crown! No payment due! A landmark of state significance! \$40 million increase in gaming, payroll taxes and rates paid by Crown to State Government!

And then on Feb.9 Mr. Wynne told Neil Mitchell that he (and only he) gave permission for the \$1.7 billion dollar development and when asked by Mitchell about the shadow that would be cast by such a massive building, "No shadow," declared the Minister triumphantly! **"It's a miracle!"** I thought. Later that week the Minister withdrew that statement. **Whew!**

And then on March 29 Clay Lucas reported that Mr. Wynne is under pressure to defend his slim majority of 1.9% in the seat of Richmond so to pacify the North Fitzroy residents he has managed to enrage a developer...**(yes, enrage a developer!)**...*"by placing a 10 storey limit on a former industrial site in Queens Parade...that until Tuesday had no height limit."* Developer Tim Gurner had proposed 16 levels, dropped it to 12, appealed against a Refusal by Yarra Council and was due in VCAT next Monday...**until Mr. Wynne intervened with an edict for 10!**

Oh, what it is to be either Crown or to live in a marginal seat! Would that we could all be so lucky!

More people for the middle suburbs

Everyone knew that Minister Wynne's "Plan Melbourne Refreshed" would not contain 'refreshing news' ...and it didn't. It just made the way easier for developers. As Stonnington didn't get much in the way of good news in Mr. Guy's "Plan Melbourne" we are not as badly affected as some other municipalities but our Neighbourhood Residential Zone which previously allowed only 2 dwellings per lot has now been changed to allow **more than two** and the erstwhile Minister (always quick to grab at straws) declared that he was "saving the backyards" by mandating the percentage of each lot that is to be "garden area." Sunday Age on Mar.12 quoted Sally Capp of the Property Council ... *"the blueprint would give the community an opportunity to change its thinking when it comes to appropriate housing and density."*

We're always happy to know that the Property Council has our best interests at heart.

World's most liveable city???

In The Age on Feb.16 Josh Gordon questioned the liveability of Melbourne ...and rightly so! He pointed out that Melbourne has lost much of its liveability because it's growing at an unsustainable rate and things can only get worse. We have an ageing and over-burdened public transport system, a crime rate that is rising rapidly, housing affordability that has plummeted while rental costs are rising, state schools that are struggling to cope with the demands, a deteriorating environment with increasing waste, noise and pollution and declining air quality...and we might add an ever-increasing loss of trees and green space!

Josh finishes his article with the wry comment that he *"doesn't mean to be unduly negative."* Glad about that! It would be AWFUL if he really meant to be negative.

And by the way....

Melbourne is the 'world's most liveable city' on the Economist Index....it's 16th on Mercer.

A decentralisation snippet

In Sunday Age on Jan. 29 Stawell is again featured. *"About 150 people were made redundant before Christmas, though most would be quickly re-employed by local industries going from strength to strength and others soon by new players in the close-knit community."*

Here's a list of the business activities in and around Stawell...the southern hemisphere's first underground dark matter laboratory soon to be opened, Nectar Farms' hydroponics glasshouse project, Frewstal abattoirs expansion, duplication of the Western Freeway between Ballarat and Stawell, proximity to the Grampians Peaks Trail provides tourism opportunities. It has the State's cheapest housing with period houses being renovated and infill sites being designated for housing. New businesses are starting up every couple of weeks. The Council has an "investments attraction officer" who said that Stawell is in a growth period.

If it can happen there it can happen in every country town. Alas, it seems that State Government's obsession with 'growing Melbourne' takes precedence over every other part of the State. We wonder if Mr. Wynne even KNOWS about other places in Victoria.

Decentralisation....Disbursement of population...Optimum population distribution??

Which definition do you like best? Apparently that has to be decided before action is taken. This is a classic example of clear government thinking.

Dodgy building materials

Some quotes from The Age Jan.31....

"Non-conforming building products touch nearly every part of our daily lives..... from asbestos that kills to cheap glass that explodes, to flat pack kitchens reeking of formaldehyde....."

.. "dodgy builders who'll do anything to save a buck ordering from dodgy suppliers who send lethal, banned material to our country because they know the government won't do anything about it."

You'll be pleased to know that there's a Senate inquiry to all of the above. Yes, **another inquiry!**

Melbourne Water moves to sell park land

The Age Jan.11 It beggars belief that any Government can deem public land 'surplus' but that's what they do. The report states that Melbourne Water is trying to re-zone four such sites in Rosebud, Reservoir and Brunswick West and the fourth is in South Morang. There's a system in place called ...Fast Track Government Land Service. That means any Government authority can declare land 'surplus,' offer it to other government authorities (e.g. Councils) and if no authority buys the land it's put it on the open market and guess who steps in! Of course, it's our ever-present developers already salivating at the very thought of open land. They don't even have to demolish an

old school. There's nothing in the way...well, except for a few inconsequential trees and they pose no great problem. They can go the way all good trees go these days...instant mulch.

Immigration from home and abroad

Yes, they're coming to Victoria from everywhere. 82,800 people have moved to Victoria from interstate during the last year and only 65,600 people have left. (Age Mar.14) The State is now home to 6.1 million, 4.6 million of whom live in Melbourne and are stuck on some road, somewhere near you or being up close & friendly with a lot of people on public transport. Victoria now has 25.2% of Australia's total population. Terrific news isn't it? Why don't people like all the OTHER states on this vast continent?

A Scott Morrison 'gem'

The Age reported on March 14 that Victoria had a record high of 41,700 births and in another article also on March 14 it reported that "*Scott Morrison has linked housing affordability to Australia's birth rate, suggesting would-be home buyers are delaying having kids so they can get into the property market.*" Doesn't appear to be happening in Victoria, Mr. Morrison!

Airport rail link

March edition of Royal Auto published a solution to the never-ending problem of a fast link from the CBD to Tullamarine. We read that a consortium wants to build a light-rail link which would run every 4 minutes 24 hours a day...driverless, ticketless, fully automated, super-quiet, will operate on or above existing infrastructure and will cost about \$1.5 billion. Peter O'Brien (ex-president of the Victorian & Australian Chambers of Commerce & Industry) is leading the Airshuttle Consortium. He has 12 consultants working on a pro-bono basis. It will be operating within 5 years if it gets State Government approval. MEG is utterly bewildered to read that there's an IF. Why hasn't this already got approval? Why haven't we heard about the proposal before? What's the problem? Messrs Andrews & Wynne **obliged** Crown when they gave permission for a tower we didn't need. Why can't they **oblige** the consortium for something we actually do need? Beggars belief!

Endless destruction of trees

Caulfield/Glen Eira Leader (Feb.21) carried the sad story of the iconic 250 year old 'Boyd Murrumbeena' tree being destroyed to make way for Sky Rail. Residents have not been permitted to see the plans for Sky Rail and Minister Wynne did not allow a community consultation process for this project. As a result significant trees have been lost and the Premier is unapologetic..."*Others may be concerned with saving a particular tree, my job is to save lives, save time and deliver on the commitments we made.*"

Premiers, developers, Planning Ministers, Councils, anyone in authority seems to be oblivious to the sheer number of trees that are being lost in Melbourne on a daily basis. Council's own staff can give permission for significant trees in good health to be destroyed to make way for development with the rider that x number has to be planted to replace them. Who polices that???

ON THE LOCAL SCENE

WARD MEETINGS...East Ward...April 19 at 7p.m. Phoenix Park Community Centre

South Ward...May 3 at 7p.m. Functions on Chapel

North Ward...May 18 at 7p.m. Functions on Chapel

Chadstone Bowls & Recreation Club

It would seem that this is the 'red button' issue for East Ward. Council has chosen this site for a feasibility study regarding the destruction of the Bowls Club and replacing it with a 4 court stadium

for netball. Consultants have been employed to carry out the study and one of the first things they did was to ask for the Club Membership List. In accordance with privacy laws the Committee refused to make this available. The Committee advised members of this and said that each one had the right to respond to the consultant's questions if they were approached and they also had the right not to do so.

Channels 7 and 10 have shown clips regarding this matter. On March 6 Channel 10 interviewed the Mayor of Stonnington, East Ward Councillor Jami Klisaris, who said ,

"Well it's a large site and it doesn't abut any residential homes immediately and it also has space for plenty of parking."

Under *Item e* on Council's Notice Paper residents involved with the Bowling & Recreation Club have lodged questions at every Council Meeting since the feasibility study was proposed in December '16. Membership of the Club has increased, support has increased and the members have resolved not to leave the present site. Looks as if Council might have to consider abandoning the project or be ready to bulldoze over a lot of bodies. Here's hoping it doesn't come to that and that an alternative site for the stadium is found so that the destruction of a popular sporting venue does not eventuate.

Community Gathering at Caulfield Racecourse Reserve

On a hot evening in February 60-70 people found their way to a meeting point in the Reserve to listen to even more promises related to the opening up of the Reserve to the people who own it... i.e. you and us! This time a couple of people from the Dept. told us that the legislation to dissolve the Trust would take about another 6-12 months to go through Parliament. One Glen Eira Councillor attended as did the local MP and one Stonnington City Councillor. Thank you to Councillor Judy Hindle for making the effort.

It seemed to us that the MRC had taken over even more of the land for horse training purposes. There were many more white fences and hurdles in what we remembered as open space.

And then we read...in the Herald Sun on Mar. 6 that the new President of the VRC intends to turn Flemington racecourse over to families. The inside of the track will become public parks and sporting ovals . It will be a community space 7 days a week.

Amanda Elliott , the new VRC President said, *"I really want Flemington to be all things to all people and have a real community side to it."*

Why oh why can't we have an Amanda Elliott on this side of town so that our land across the highway at Caulfield could be 'all things to all people?' Can we clone Amanda Elliott and sneak her into the MRC Committee meetings?

State Secondary School for Stonnington

Finally the site has been selected, the architects have designed it ... no word on when it will be built but it is to be open for business in January 2019. It's to be a 4 storey vertical school with a rooftop garden and running track, terrace balconies overflowing with greenery and an open atrium in the centre. (The Age Mar.4) It will be built on Swinburne University's old Prahran campus in High St. at a cost of \$25 million.

The article says that there is no State Secondary School (other than the select entry, boys only Melbourne High) in the seat of Prahran.

We might remind State Government that there is no State Secondary School in the seat of Malvern either. Prahran High School was closed in the western part of Stonnington and both Chadstone High School and Malvern Girls' High School no longer exist in the eastern part of the city.

Caulfield Grammar outbids developers

Business Age Feb.10...The school paid \$12.6 million for a 2230 sq.m. opposite Central Park. Two houses at 385-387 Wattletree Rd. were put on the market in a joint offering late 2016.

That amount of money would have paid for half a State Secondary School in the eastern part of Stonnington.

293 Waverley Rd.

We understand that a local family plans to develop and occupy a mixed-use retail and apartment development on this site. They paid \$1.05 million for it.

280 Waverley Rd.

There was a Compulsory Conference on March 24 regarding this application. MEG heard that the applicant turned up with amended plans that no-one had heard of let alone seen. Some reductions have been made ... e.g. the restaurant numbers are capped at 120 instead of 200. We don't know whether the amended plans have been accepted by all parties nor do we know if this application will continue to a Merits Hearing on July 12.

An interesting rumour!

We hear on the grapevine that the owner of a house in a street near Cabrini Hospital has died and in her will she bequeathed her home to the hospital. The house is in a Heritage Overlay so here's hoping Cabrini hasn't got plans to pop another car park there!

Cresthaven..1a the Avenue & 239 & 241 Waverley Rd.

The Trustees of Cresthaven have decided that work will commence in September 2017. They have lodged a Planning Application which involves some changes to the approved plans and have asked that these be approved under Secondary Consent...i.e. no advertising. Tenants of their properties have been asked to vacate in July.

Heritage Protection for 558 Waverley Rd.

At Council Meeting March 20 Council endorsed the heritage citation for this building...

"The house at 558 Waverley Rd. Malvern East is a rare surviving example of a Victorian farmhouse type in this eastern end of the municipality. It exhibits typical Victorian Italianate features including an M-profile hipped roof, corniced chimneys and bichrome brick patterning expressed as brown Hawthorn brick dressings to red brick walls."

A Panel will be appointed to examine this decision and to deal with any objections.

C223 Amendment...Major Activity Centre...Glenferrie & Wattletree Rds & High St.

This will probably be the 'hot button' topic at the South Ward Meeting on May 3. MEG members attended 3 of the consultation sessions and noted a certain amount of anger about the potential development in these Heritage Overlays. Approval has already been given for a 4 storey development at 12-14 Glenferrie Rd.

Malvern Vale Hotel ... 1321-1341 Malvern Rd.

This application includes the land where the Bottle Shop is now. The Malvern Vale is a well-known watering hole. It's where you can put your bets on the TAB at Cup time, have a meal, enjoy a coffee. It's to be demolished and the land will be used for a residential hotel building. The application includes a waiver of loading bay requirements. Is NOTHING safe?

Public Housing

No doubt you've seen on television film of Ashburton residents protesting against what Minister Wynne has approved for the Markham Estate in Ashburton. It's the usual story of using public land to build and sell (at a profit) private dwellings and, in doing so, reducing the number of public dwellings on site.

Well, he's at it again in the Prahran Housing Precinct. In Council's Notice Paper March 20 Councillors objected to the proposed Development Plan which would **reduce the number of units for public housing by 64**. Building heights at Horace Petty will be 16 storeys (now 13) Essex St. 10 storeys (now 3) and Bangs St. 11 storeys (now 5.). A total dwelling yield will be between 2,278 and 2998. 23% of the 20,700sq.m. will be Public Open Space and the existing Adventure Playground at the Horace Petty Estate will be re-located into that 23%. There will be an increase of up to 2,998 dwellings. **Either Mr. Wynne (and/or his Department) has gone MAD!!!** Councillor Koce delivered a rousing Recommendation listing 17 reasons why this Development Plan was appalling and demanding a meeting with the Minister to discuss the issue. This was received unanimously by Councillors.

Planning Applications in and around Malvern East... a few are listed here

23 Boston Av. Pt. dem. and extension to dwelling in an NCO

45 Thurso St. 2 lot sub-division

18 Parslow St. 2 dwellings on a lot in a GRZ

7 Peverill St. 2 dwellings on a lot in a GRZ.

9 Edgar St. Glen iris Constr. of multi-dwelling dev. In GRZ and reduction of parking req. Appeal... Against Decision to Grant. VCAT hearing ..May 31.

40 Tennyson St. Constr. of multi-dwelling dev. In GRZ. Appeal ...Against Decision to Grant. VCAT hearing May 8.

1394 Malvern Rd. Glen iris Demolition, constr. of mixed use dev. In Comm.1 Zone & Heritage Overlay, reduction in car parking req. and waiver of loading bay req. Appeal...Against Refusal to Grant. VCAT hearing May 29.

3 Nicholls St. Malvern Constr. of dwelling on a lot less than 500 sq.m. in NRZ and reduction in car parking req. Appeal Against Conditions. VCAT hearing July 12.

184-186 Tooronga Rd. Glen Iris Constr. of multi-dwelling dev. In GRZ, reduction in car parking req. and alter access. Appealed against FTD. VCAT hearing June 21.

728 Waverley Rd. Constr. of multi-dwelling dev. In GRZ, reduction in car parking req and alteration of access to a road. Appeal for FTD and subsequent Refusal by Pl. Dept. Practice Day Hearing Mar. 31. Compulsory Conference May 18 and Merits Hearing at VCAT July 7.

973 Dandenong Rd. Multi-dwelling dev. In Residential Growth Zone.

68 Fisher St. Removal of restrictive covenant. (At Council Mtg.Feb.20 Councillors resolved not to remove any more covenants.)

1341 Dandenong Rd. (Chadstone Shopping Centre) Post Construction Noise Plan. (Don't you LOVE it!)

33 Clarence St. Dem. & construction of a new dwelling on a lot less than 500sq.m. in NRZ & NCO.

5 Durward Rd. Two 2 storey townhouses. Comm. Cons. Feb.28. Called up to Council.

N.B. There is the usual number of applications for Pt.dem. & alterations in Heritage Overlays. Considering the number of these over the years of MEG's existence we wonder if there's a house left in the H.Os that hasn't been "done over."

DON'T FORGET TO ATTEND YOUR WARD MEETING.

WE'VE GIVEN YOU THE DATES FOR ALL THREE WARD MEETINGS

WE HAVEN'T HAD ONE OF THESE FOR SOME TIME.