



# Malvern East Group

MEG Supports **PLANNING BACKLASH**

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## MEG NEWSLETTER.....MARCH/April 2022

### From the Convenor's Desk

Seen on March 25 on the FB page of 'Stonnington Residents and Ratepayers'...

"A society grows great when old men grow trees, the shade  
of which they will never sit in."

A pox on State Government in its endless removal of thousands of trees across  
this city and the State.

A pox on Stonnington Council in its recent destruction of the trees at Percy Treyvaud  
Memorial Park and another pox Melbourne Racing Club in its mowing down of 48 trees at  
Caulfield Racecourse!

Before you groan and say, "She's on about trees AGAIN," bear with me. It's my  
obsession...and everyone is allowed to have one obsession...or two...or even three!  
It gave me heart to read in The Age on April 15 that we could save the planet if we  
"**plant one tree at a time.**" Clive Blazey is touring the country trying to persuade  
people to plant more trees. "*We need trees to absorb carbon in our atmosphere to keep  
the temperature rise within 1.5 celsius.*" His wife says that most deforestation is  
happening in our own backyards. I weep when I hear the chainsaws.

MEG's message has always been that we take care of our environment by planting trees  
and I warn you that there just maybe more mentions of tree destructions in this  
newsletter.

### Exodus from city to regions brings benefits and growing pains

On March 14 In The Age Benjamin Priess wrote . "*in March migration from Melbourne to  
regional Victoria reached 19,700, the highest on record.*"

Geelong, Ballarat, Bendigo, Wangaratta, Warrnambool are already showing '*growing  
pains.*' These cities are already making plans for expected population growth.

"*Geelong's Council has identified 5,500 hectares in its northern and western growth  
areas that are in early stages of development, in addition to the rapidly growing suburb  
Armstrong Creek on on the city's south-eastern outskirts. Ballarat Council has  
earmarked 1800 hectares for potential urban development for 24,000 more dwellings  
and the Greater Bendigo Council has identified 1500 hectares suitable for housing.*"

It's not all 'beer and skittles' in the country towns.

One family who moved from Mitcham to Wangaratta is travelling back to Blackburn to  
see their GP because they cannot get an appointment with a GP in Wangaratta. MEG's  
experience is that it's not all that easy to get a GP appointment in Melbourne!

### Meanwhile in a new suburb of Melbourne

On Current Affair in March, Georgia Linnell reported that "*Residents of one suburb in  
Melbourne's west are spending up to an hour in traffic to travel less than a kilometre  
each morning with traffic experts likening it to a prison.*"

*There is one entrance and exit to Kalkallo, a suburb on the outskirts of Melbourne's west  
made up of two different housing estates which is home to 6,000 residents with plans for  
30,000.*"

Residents of Kalkallo must be thrilled to bits to hear that Council is coming to the rescue. *"Hume City Council said that alternative exits for the estate **are anticipated in the next two or three years.**"*

Professor Michael Buxton likened it to living in a prison. *"Australian outer suburbs are probably the worst-designed in the world and we are locating huge numbers in them."*

#### **And talking of Councils.....**

On March 26 Royce Millar reported in The Age that *"The allegedly corrupt developer at the heart of the Casey land deals saga has sought a Supreme Court intervention to stop the report by the state's anti-corruption watchdog being tabled in State Parliament."*

John Woodman is claiming that IBAC *"denied him procedural fairness and breached its statutory obligations by not providing the developer with a reasonable opportunity to respond to a draft report, which mentions him 1450 times among hundreds of pages."*

MEG has not seen the Court's decision and the report is due to be tabled in Parliament in the first half of this year.

#### **And further talk of Councils**

John Masanauskas wrote about our very own Council in the Herald Sun of April 8 *"A local Council media policy that would ban its councillors from criticizing staff has been slammed as an attack on freedom of speech. City of Stonnington's updated policy would also require councillors 'to make every effort not to damage or harm council's reputation. Last month, Yarra Council backed down on similar moves to censor criticism after a community backlash."*

MEG believes elected representatives are 'fair game' particularly the ones who campaign on an issue and then have a sudden change of mind when they manage to get a seat at that table. Note the change of mind of one East Ward councillor who wrote on her FB page on February 27....

*"It was a beautiful evening to go for a walk around Percy Treyvaud Memorial Park. It is sad to lose 16 significant trees in this park however all the removed trees will be replaced with double the number of new trees and there will be a net increase in public open space here when the Masterplan for this site is completed. It's good to see the works underway for the long awaited indoor highball court stadium, and new facilities for the Chadstone Bowls Club, Chadstone Tennis Club, Chadstone Lacrosse Club and East Malvern Tooronga Cricket Club."*

Please note that only 16 significant trees were mentioned (not 167 mature trees) and there was no indication of how long it will take for the yet to be planted saplings to start doing all the good for the environment that established trees do. There was no mention of artificial surfaces which heat the environment. There was no mention of ANY adverse effects on the environment at all.

More about Stonnington Council's new media policy in LOCAL NEWS.

#### **Minister Wynne asks for public comment**

On March 28 we, the taxpayers of Victoria, paid for an entire page of The Age so that Minister Wynne could ask our opinion of his plans for the Beaufort Bypass.

MEG really wonders why. It is typical of State Government to ask for our opinion which ticks the "consultation box" and when we go to the trouble of giving it we find that what we said is totally ignored and the Government proceeds to do what it was going to do in the first place. In this case "Regional Roads Victoria" will bypass Beaufort when and how it wants. MEG is of the opinion that it would be better to spend the money fixing all the country roads that are riddled with potholes than spending money asking our opinion on a proposed new road around Beaufort....or anywhere else!

### **Green light for new Collins St. sky scraper**

In the Herald Sun on April 7 we saw that "A \$269 million building that will tower over the historic Melbourne Club has been approved for the Paris end of Collins St."

Why it's still called 'the Paris end of Collins St. we'll never know. Parisian authorities would never issue permits for the buildings that dominate Collins St.)

All is not lost as far as "heritage" is concerned. We are informed that the existing building "will have its heritage-listed façade protected."

Facadism is alive and kicking in Victoria...and it's NOT green!

### **Probuild nightmare. Herald Sun... March 3.**

You may wonder what the collapse of a development company has to do with MEG.

Wonder no longer! Probuild is the Melbourne Racing Club's developer and the MRC is in the process of BUILDING on every square centimetre of space around Caulfield

Racecourse...and disposing of every tree it can manage to rid itself of in the process..

Probuild is a South African company and the Australian arm of that company has gone into liquidation. Deloitte is the appointed administrator and it has a 'mind boggling' task.

There are 800 hundred employees nearly \$14 million out of pocket.

What the collapse of the company means for the MRC plans is unknown at this stage.

### **Grass castles....The Age...Traveller...April 2**

"Oasis Downtown" is the name of the hotel the author of the article writes about and it is "one of the new generation of Singapore's living, breathing vertical gardens. Much of its 27 storey façade is covered, a little like an architectural three-day growth, in 21 species of climbing tropical creepers. Forty per cent of the building consists of communal green open-sided spaces.....no mechanical ventilation is required for Oasis Downtown rooms or offices because of those open-sided sky gardens and Singapore's annual 2200 millimetres of rainfall supplying plentiful water to irrigate the plant life."

This hotel rises above the surrounding low-rise tile-topped heritage shop-houses "like an incongruous gigantic raised green thumb in the middle of Asia's greenest city."

The Oasis Downtown is not the only hotel in Singapore that has adopted a 'green' image nor is it the only 'green' innovation in the city state. One that MEG has advocated (unsuccessfully) is the Rail Corridor, a tree-lined rail track. We wrote to the Federal Government some years ago and suggested that the vast railways that cover this continent be tree-lined. A curt reply from the office of the then Minister for the Environment was the reply. Did we get a "green" corridor? You know the answer to that.

### **Did we tell you this in a previous newsletter???**

Amendment VC180 relates to non-government primary and secondary schools. Any additions to these buildings is now decided by State Government. If you live near any of these schools ...and there are many in Stonnington...you will no longer receive notification from Council about a Planning Application. Any such application will go to the Planning Minister's office and you will not be able to lodge an objection. Such is true democracy as demonstrated by our very own State Government and our dearly beloved Minister for Planning!

### **Are rail works a pain? H.S. April 24**

"Families next to the \$34billion Suburban Rail Loop East fear they will be wearing disposable earplugs for years to drown out construction noise. Earplugs, white-noise machines and noise-cancelling headphones have been proposed as acoustic solutions for residents near tunneling and building zones...some of which will be in place for 6 years"

This project stretches from Cheltenham to Box Hill...26 kms. and guess what...the Suburban Loop Authority says that construction noise would "generally fall within the relevant EPA and Victorian Government policies.

It seems to MEG that all construction noise falls within EPA guidelines. It's their mantra.

Glad we don't live in Cheltenham, Heatherton, Burwood or Box Hill.

## LOCAL NEWS

### 173 Burke Rd. Glen Iris

(F.B. March 9).....Department of Transport originally opposed the Woolworth's application for this site. MEG checked with the office of Local M.P. Michael O'Brien and we were informed that the Department has done a backflip and no longer opposes it and will not be appearing at VCAT. Initially the Labor Minister for Transport had written to the M.P. for Malvern informing him of his opposition to the application

Now WHAT or WHO could have changed the Minister's mind?

### Mitre 10...Glen Iris

In Business Age on April 16 we noted that "*the high profile site at 15 Weir St.*" has been sold for "*a bumper \$30million-plus.*" Neither the buyer nor the vendor are keen on publicity so that's all the information we have BUT if ever we have seen a development site, it's this one!

*"The business and buildings were sold to Woolworths in 2011 for the now defunct Masters hardware chain, but the vendor held on to the 8687sq.m of land. Metcash Mitre 10's owner pays around \$1 million in rent....."*

### Stonnington Council's Media Policy...Herald Sun April 14

Unlike Yarra Council which backed down on its proposed censorship of "*councillor comment to the press*" Stonnington Council did not. With its usual 7 to 2 vote the updated media policy was passed at the meeting on April 11. Councillors are required to inform the Mayor or the CEO of what they intend to do.

*"It also directs councillors to ensure their interviews express personal views, their comments are factually correct, don't defame council staff and make every effort not to damage or harm council's reputation."*

Don't you just love that last bit? From what MEG sees of Council Meetings we wonder just what that reputation might be!

"Cr. Melina Sehr said the policy hadn't been updated for 10 years and was a response to a contemporary media landscape ...." WHATEVER that means.

"Mayor Jami Klisaris said the new policy is "*about being transparent and open and helpful to us and the CEO.*"

MEG leaves it up to you to form your own opinion on that last statement.

### Facadism in Stonnington

In the report about a development at 145-151 High St. Prahran we read that the Schedule identifies the guidelines for Heritage sites and among those guidelines is the following gem...

*"Avoid facadism (retain primary building volume) when developing existing buildings in the Heritage Overlay."*

### Wilmot St. Proposed Median Opening Relocation

Council Meeting April 11...Council responded to a petition from residents of Wilmot St. seeking to close the median opening at Dandenong Rd.

Council noted the complexity of the current road configuration. Residents indicated a preference for the option which closes the median at Wilmot Street and creates a new opening to the east midway between Wilmot and Macgregor Streets.

Now the broader community will be asked for comment.

### Waste Strategy

Council Meeting...April 11<sup>th</sup>...The strategy is framed around 4 overarching principles.. Leadership. Rethink and design our systems to support a circular city. Create a positive environmental impact. Work together for change.

*(We have no idea WHAT a circular city is.)*

What this strategy boils down to is that some people put stuff in the wrong bins and this causes contamination and costs money. Landfill costs are expensive so we are going to have "bin police." Some bins will be inspected by external contractors and photos will be taken of offending materials.

*"If the same property is found to have contaminated bins a second time they will receive an educational letter"* and a third offence will result in a visit or phone call from one of Council's Waste Education officers.

MEG assumes that the phone call will be in the nature of a lecture and admonition...a threat perhaps of what will happen if you put the wrong thing in the wrong bin AGAIN!"

*"Visual inspections involve lifting the lid of the bin and looking at the top 20% of materials. On occasion, inspection staff may shift a few items aside to facilitate this. Bins will not be rummaged through or emptied and no materials will be removed."*

Council's local laws require residents to use their bins correctly....or else!!!

### **Some councils have received negative publicity re changes in bin collections**

In the H.S. on April 2 it was reported that Bayside Council held an "eco-friendly" workshop *"to encourage women to experiment with reusable menstrual products such as washable cloth pads."* During the workshop the word "women" and other "gendered language" was banned so that it was *"a safe space for all."*

*"Council's chief executive Mick Cummins did not respond to questions but in a statement said that the workshop catered for women and residents "who have periods but don't identify as women."*

From July onwards Bayside will collect only a small general waste bin from each household once a fortnight.

In the Herald Sun on April 24 *"Stonnington is one of the councils that is aiming to persuade parents to stop using disposable nappies. Nappy waste accounts for about 10% of bin content."*

MEG wonders why there would be negative publicity about such forward thinking!

### **Stonnington News....April Edition**

There will be further changes in Stonnington this year *"with all households (with food and green waste services) receiving new (black) bins with (lime green lids) in line with Victorian Government standards along with an educational program to help you get used to what goes in which bin. Best of all, your old bin is being recycled."*

NEW bins! We can hardly wait! We certainly live in exciting times!

### **Council Meeting Agenda...May 2...Draft Budget**

We've had a quick look at Council's Draft Budget and, yes, there is a rate rise of 1.75%. This year Council is not permitting verbal submissions re the Budget. No, we don't know why. We can guess. As Council has banned Ward Meetings, we can only assume that they are fearful of residents. We read in **Stonnington News** that they are going to start the 'Meet your Councillor' program SOON. No, we have no idea WHEN. Will this be an opportunity for residents and ratepayers to actually say what they think...politely and respectfully, of course. We're not sure if gritted teeth are permitted.

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

**72 Kerferd St.** Double storey rear extension & open carport structure to front of property in H.O.

**10 Milton Pde. Malvern** Constr. of 2 dwellings on a lot in GRZ.

**42 Sydare Av.** 2 double storey dwellings.

**636 Warrigal Rd.** Constr. of 2 dwellings on a lot in residential growth zone.

**11 Horace St.** Constr. of new dwelling in NRZ on a lot less than 500m sq.m

**1 Villers Sq.** Pt. dem., bldg. & works to an existing dwelling in H.O.

**29 Tennyson St.** Bldg & works to existing dwelling in SBO.

**11 Carrum St.** Construction of 2 two storey dwellings.  
**4 Rotherwood Drive...**2 dwellings on a lot. Council Mtg Apr.11..Permit issued.  
**385-387 Wattletree Rd.** Constr. of a multi-dwelling in GRZ.  
**740 Warrigal Rd.** Removal of single dwelling covenant.  
**9 Chilcote Av. Malvern** Subdivision of land into 9 lots.  
**2 Heatherleigh Pl.** Pt. dem. Bldg. & works to dwelling in H.O.  
**6 Glenbrook Av.** Pt. dem, bldg. & works to dwelling & tree lopping in NCO.  
**102 Finch St.** Pt. dem. To dwelling in H.O.  
**1389 Dandenong Rd.** Construction of 6 dwellings.  
**112 Finch St.** Residential dwelling extension in H.O.  
**14 McKinley St. Malvern** Alterations & additions to dwelling in H.O.  
**1265-1267 Dandenong Rd.** Ten lot subdivision.  
**18 Thanet St. Malvern** Constr. of 2 storey addition to single storey dwelling.  
**27 Sutherland St.** 2 lot subdivision.  
**4 Thomas St.** Pt. dem., construction & extension of dwelling on a lot less than 500sq.m. in NRZ & NCO.  
**8 Oravel Av.** Pt. dem. & construction of bldgs. & works to dwelling in H.O. & SBO  
**23 Clarence St.** Pt. dem. & construction of bldg. & works to dwelling in NCO and Design & Development Overlay.