



# Malvern East Group

MEG Supports **PLANNING BACKLASH**

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## MEG NEWSLETTER.....November/December 2020

### From the Convenor's Desk

I have just emailed the MEG submission re "Affordable Housing" to Stonnington's Strategic Planning Department and hope that those of you who received an email about it from MEG managed to take part in the discussion or the survey. I'm more than a little tired of ticking boxes... (or not ticking them)...and having my opinions put into straitjackets so I opted for a written submission. This was given the tick by the MEG Committee.

All of us at MEG wish you a Happy Christmas  
and a New Year that looks nothing like the one that has almost gone.

### A Book for you....."Where have all the trees gone?"

A MEG member living in Queensland sent us a review of this book. Professor Joe Hurley of RMIT is a co-author and Benedict Brook reviewed it in *news.com.au* (Nov.10)

*"Two-thirds of Australian urban areas are losing a vital resource that could make our cities not just unbearable but almost unliveable in years to come." Hurley said, "Green cover should be managed as **critical infrastructure**. More intensive development in inner suburban areas is responsible for tree loss" and "Temperature in urban area with trees can be 4C cooler than those without."*

MEG is hoping that the trees (and the residents) win the battle for the 67 significant trees at Percy Treyvaud Memorial Park. These are canopy trees, providing shade and countering the heat island effect. (They are '**critical infrastructure**.') At Council Meeting December 7, Crs. Lew & Morgan moved a motion regarding Council exploring other sites for that wretched stadium.

After a week of negotiation the motion moved by the two East Ward councillors was approved by all councillors. Clearly some still prefer the park and one councillor asked how many significant trees would be destroyed ...(only 67!!)...and how many saplings would be planted...as if more saplings and no canopy trees would be 'really good stuff!.'

The Council officer, who had given evidence at the Supreme Court case had explained to the Court that the replacement trees would be saplings because Council wanted Australian natives and full-size Australian native trees did not transplant well, answered the seemingly innocent questions of the councillor who had been a driving force behind the whole mess and who already knew the answers...oh, the games people play!

For how many years will our community do without the benefits of the canopies of 67 significant trees ...who knows!!! The same councillor mentioned "the garden" on the roof of the stadium as if he thought that compensated for the loss.

MEG just wonders sometimes.

Perhaps we should ask Professor Joe Hurley and/or Dr. Greg Moore to inspect the trees in the park and do some estimates of the loss for the community. What do you think?

### **Items relating to trees....Council Meeting Dec.7/2020**

There were 4 Items relating to trees on the Agenda at this meeting and contracts were awarded for each item.

Tree planting and establishment                      Programmed street tree pruning.....

Reactive Tree pruning maintenance.....Turf management & Open space management.

*(Can't wait to read the 'management of the 'open space' at Prahran Square!'*

How Council can approve expenditure on such items while spending millions on destroying all the trees in an established park is beyond our understanding!

**An Aside**....Remember the artificial turf? (See it, feel it, smell it!) The stuff that Dr. Greg Moore says is "cooking the kids" and which contributes to global warming? There'll more of that at Percy Trevaud and it's called "all-weather" surface.

### **Planning approvals fast-tracked**

Whenever we see this headline we know that it really means the residents have been removed from the planning process and we are seeing more and more of it...and it's not only for 'social housing.'

Sunday Age ...Nov. 17... **"\$5.3 billion blitz on new public housing"** ...and clearly not before time. *"After decades of under-investment, the number of households on the social housing waiting list in Victoria has ballooned to 48,529.....the equivalent of more than 400,000 people."* This will include public and community housing units and a quarter of the \$5.3 billion will go to the regional towns of Geelong, Ballarat and Bendigo where there is a high demand. Public housing tenants are charged no more than 25% of their income and those in community housing no more than 30%.

*"State Government...rather than local councils....will assess and approve all projects."*

In Bus. Age on Dec.5 we noted that "social housing" groups are actively hunting for development sites. *"...various groups are putting options of suitable sites around town on condition that they get approval under the new scheme which closes before Christmas."*

### **Meanwhile the city is marked with 'ghost homes'**

The Age Dec.2 *Landlords and owners are leaving thousands of residential properties vacant across the city as the Government fails to enforce a levy on empty properties."* Prosper Australia says that at least 4.1% of homes in Melbourne are empty. *"Ghost homes are an affront to anyone facing housing stress and must be urgently addressed," Prosper research director Karl Fitzgerald said."*

### **IBAC enquires even further into the Casey Council affair**

What a tangled web was woven at Casey! A heading in The Age on Nov. 14 reads...

*"Casey Council saga has corruption lessons for all"*

*“Twelve years ago then Victorian Labor premier pronounced that political donations were a sign of a healthy democracy.”* We haven’t heard WHAT Mr. Brumby thinks the Casey saga has done to democracy.

Both major political parties have established practices where business, lobbyists and ministers can socialise. According to Royce Millar in The Age on Nov.14 *“One of the most enthusiastic supporters of such hob-nobbing was John Woodman, the flamboyant, Ferrari-driving planner-developer, who specialised in winning unlikely planning approvals to carve up farmland in the city’s sprawling south-east and turn it into residential lots.”*

IBAC’s investigation into the Casey saga has provided insight into the “under the table” dealing between politicians and their patrons.

On Nov.14 Clay Lucas & Royce Millar reported ***“Jim’s Mowing boss in Aziz plan to control Yarra Ranges”***...but Penman *“now says the sacked councillor is a ‘disgusting ratbag’ who ‘conned’ him.”* *It’s all UNBELIEVABLE!* On Nov. 13 IBAC heard of an Aziz plan to ‘take over’ Yarra Ranges council *“the same way we’ve taken over Casey.”*

On Nov. 17<sup>th</sup> Clay Lucas wrote about Sam Aziz giving money to John Woodman and Aziz also *“described handing a suitcase filled \$600,000 in cash to Mr. Woodman.”*

Mr. Aziz admitted giving it to Mr. Woodman to keep it away from his ex-wife who was removing him from bank accounts.

(Does anyone out there in MEG LAND know anyone who stuffs \$600,000 into a suitcase?)

And there’s MORE to come!

On Nov. 20 Age headline read ***“Aziz admits to conflicts of interest.”*** Don’t you LOVE it?

### **Labor MP regrets developer meeting...The Age Dec.1**

Just a month before the last State election State Labor MP for Cranbourne , Pauline Richards told IBAC on Nov.30/2020 *“that she wished she had not met with developer John Woodman.”* She admitted to *“receiving a \$20,000 campaign donation from him.”*

### **Regional house prices going up**

MEG las advocated ‘decentralisation’ for years and it appears that this pandemic has given impetus to it. On Nov. 11 John Collett reported in The Age that regional house prices are growing at a faster rate than city homes because of *“an exodus of workers abandoning CBDs in the COVID-19 era of working from home.”*

### **A new state for Australia**

Just what we need in Oz...another government! Our Queensland member sent this news from Yahoo on Dec.4/2020.

*“Tim Quilty MP for Northern Victoria has a new state in mind, one which combines part of rural Victoria and rural NSW including major Victorian regional centres, Ballarat, Bendigo, Mildura, Wodonga and Shepparton with major N.S.W. regional centres Wagga Wagga, Albury, Orange, Bathurst and Griffith. The new state would have a population of 1.34 million.”*

He told the H.S. *“every decision the government makes is based purely around the city and there’s just no interest in the regional cities.”*

### **Meanwhile Mr. Quilty ...**

On Nov.4 The Age reports on ***“Melbourne exodus a huge hit to economy.”***

In the June quarter *“Melbourne suffered its biggest quarterly departure of residents on record as 11,746 moved out of the city.”* Data for the September quarter is expected to follow this trend. This is quite different from the usual trend of people moving into cities. *“Minister Jacinta Allan said boosting regional population growth was a priority for the State Government....”*

Well Minister, we look forward to money being spent on regional rail and transport links across the State....even a restoration of the train service to Mildura! As if....!

**Dr. Ian Butterworth warns on ‘sprawl in regions’ ...The Age Dec. 10**

Butterworth wants the Government to *“intervene now to stop Melbourne’s planning woes being replicated in regional Victoria.....to avoid ruining regional towns with urban sprawl and car dependence.”*

We have already seen this in Bendigo and Ballarat.

**Meanwhile State Government caters for Melbourne’s growth over next 30 years!**

The Age ..Dec. 9

*“A draft future strategy by government adviser “Infrastructure outlines the major construction projects that state will need as it grapples with the effects of the pandemic, bushfires and lower than expected population growth.”*

The pandemic gives the Government time to catch up and build ***“a third rail tunnel.”***

We haven’t even got the first one yet! We haven’t got a rail link to the airport yet! We haven’t got our present population housed yet! We owe TRILLIONS of dollars...and they’re going to start a third tunnel!

Do you ever feel that you’ve just walked through “looking glass land?”

## LOCAL NEWS

### **New Mayor for Stonnington**

At the first meeting of the new Council, Kate Hely from North Ward was elected Mayor of Stonnington and Melina Sehr from South Ward Deputy Mayor. Stonnington Council for the next 4 years consists of 2 men and 7 women. We have a female CEO and the new General Manager of Planning & Place is also a woman. Is this a "takeover?"

MEG wonders if one of our original MEG members would like to say a few words.

Ron of Sydare...where are you?

### **Supreme Court case ...Council sues residents**

The nerve-wracking case involving Council's desire to remove or vary the covenants at Percy Treyvaud Memorial Park is over. In February the Judge's Associate will contact all parties and tell them when a decision will be reached. We think it will be April/May. MEG is lost in admiration of the residents who have seen this situation to the bitter end. We stand in awe of their courage and stickability....and we remain appalled by Council's action in suing its own residents.

N.B. MEG just received an email asking for volunteers for....

Percy Treyvaud Memorial Park...Stadium site review....Stakeholder Reference Group  
Any takers???

### **Christmas Decorations in Stonnington**

On Nov. 18 the Herald Sun reported that Stonnington is to spend \$300,000 on Christmas decorations.

### **Caulfield Racecourse Reserve Trust Land Management Plan**

On November 17 on Facebook a Post read, "*We are so excited to announce that there will be a tan style track around the CRRT as part of our final Management Plan.*" Again on Facebook on November 17 a park user bemoaned the fact that the water was disappearing from the lake and dogs were wallowing in the mud....and again on FB on Nov. 18 CRRT reported that speed bumps were being installed at the Glen Eira Rd. entrance to the Reserve. This is real progress!

On Tuesday December 15 from 5-6p.m. there was a community Webinar when all was revealed about the final Land Management Plan. We contained our excitement sufficiently to hear the report from Mathew Knight who, with endless patience after years and years of "being consulted," tried to attend the Webinar but encountered a technical glitch or two. His report about FINAL PLAN will be in our next newsletter.

### **Prahran Library...temporarily re-located**

We heard that the Prahran Library is to be located at Prahran Square while renovations take place at its present site.

Well, that's one way of activating that concrete eyesore! Fill the \$70 million worth of "open space"...(well, some of it)... with a library! Wonder who suggested that!

### **"Stonnington News"**

That's the paper put out by Stonnington Council where we learn about everything that Council is doing for us. We usually get it in the letter-box but we caught a glimpse of a notice on the Stonnington website that said this publication is **going digital**. Council does

not seem to realise ...(or doesn't care)...that there are many people who choose not to have a computer and rely on hard copies of Notice Papers, publications, surveys, etc.

How about, "No hard copies! No rates!"

### **Cabrini Hospital & the 'louved lovely'**

You might remember that the 7 storey addition to Cabrini was nominated for an award in the annual architectural awards. Well, it got one! It received not only any old award but a GOLD one!

MEG is lost for words! We dread to think of what will blight the landscape when Cabrini starts on the eastern side of the present building.

### **Malvern Valley Streetscape Improvements**

This Council project refers to the small shopping strip in Chadstone Rd. slightly south-east of Chadstone Shopping Centre. (MEG was unaware of its official name!)

Residents are being asked for suggestions re improvements to this rather tired area of Malvern East. MEG is delighted that this strip still operates in the face of all the competition across the road and we know that some residents have already lodged suggestions for improvements to Council. They'll have to wait for a while to see anything actually being done. The project won't start until June 21.

We advised members to say "NO" to the inclusion of any artificial turf in the area.

### **N.B. Note Planning Application for 172-176 Burke Rd. Glen Iris**

This is an application to remove combustible cladding. We were not aware that buildings with the dangerous cladding were obliged to have a Permit to remove it. Seems strange to us. We shall make enquiries about this and let you know in the next newsletter.

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

**45 Clarence St.** Pt. dem., bldg. & works to existing dwelling in NCO.

**770 Warrigal Rd.** .Removal of restrictive covenant.

**772 Warrigal Rd.** Removal of restrictive covenant.

**640 Warrigal Rd.** Constr. of 2 or more dwellings.

**25 Nyora St.** Constr. of dwelling on a lot less than 300 sq.m. in NRZ. Reduction in Car pkg. requirements

**6 Shrewsbury St.** Constr. of 2 dwellings on a lot in NRZ.

**13 Glenbrook Av.** Pt. dem. bldg. & works to dwelling in NCO.

**2 Haverbrack Av.** Removal of restrictive covenant which burdens the land.

**80-82 Finch St.** Pt. dem. bldg. & wks to dwelling in H.O.

**289 Waverley Rd.** Dem. & alterations & addns to heritage bldg.. & reduction in car pkg. req. with as of right medical centre.

**4 Batesford Rd.** Constr. of 2 dwellings.

**17 Edsall St.** Pt. dem. & ext. on a lot less than 500 sq.m. and in H.O.

**291 Dandenong Rd.** Dem. of existing bldg., constr. of 7 storey missed use and reduction in car pkg. req. (German Club Tivoli)

**35 Albert St.** Pt. dem., bldgs. & wks to dwelling in H.O.

**24 Woodmason St. Malvern** Pt. dem. bldgs. & wks to a dwelling on a lot less than 500 sq.m. and in H.O.

**172-176 Burke Rd. Glen iris** Removal of combustible cladding on proportion of 3 existing buildings.

**13 Claremont St. Malvern** Removal of easements along western boundary.

**12 Boston Av.** Constr. of two 2 storey dwellings.

**62 Bowen St.** Constr. of 2 new dwellings

**15 Washington A.** Extension to dwelling in NCO