



Malvern East Group

MEG Supports **PLANNING BACKLASH**

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MEG NEWSLETTER.....NOV./DEC. 2021

From the Convenor's Desk

On November 3, I heard on the ABC News that **all** countries represented at the Climate Summit in Glasgow had committed to **ending deforestation**, including Australia. Seven Stonnington Councillors clearly missed that message because Council is persisting in deforesting Percy Treyvaud Memorial Park. The two Greens Councillors who are allegedly GREEN and, by definition, pro-trees seem to be delighted. State Government also missed the message as they continue to destroy hundreds of trees for 'the Loop' etc. Melbourne City Council missed it too as evidenced by their plans to destroy 8 trees in historic Fawkner Park to build...(you've guessed it)... a multi-purpose court, skate park and paths. Mind you, MCC wants to knock down only 8 trees while our Council is destroying 67. Council doesn't do things by halves in Stonnington. Then there's Parks Victoria that wants to put lots of paths in Wattle Park in Burwood. One despairs!

"Unrest over minister's new powers"...The Age...Nov. 20

It seems that Minister Wynne courts disfavor not only with residents...(that's not new"... but also with Councils. *"Power has been taken away from local authorities to expedite the development process for state projects including the Homes Victoria public housing renewal scheme and the Suburban Rail Loop. Meanwhile, there has been an increase in special control overlays where developers can request state intervention."*

Mr. Wynne says all of this is necessary to get major projects off the ground.

Green Wedges Coalition calls his 'Big Build' the 'Big Landfill.' MEG agrees.

"Developer lobby group Property Council of Australia was supportive"

Gosh! Now who would have thought that?

On Nov. 21, Letters to the Editor in The Age had the headlines...

Building great cities takes political will and courage. (MEG's comment ...but he's not 'building a city', he's destroying one.)

The character of our suburbs will be ruined. (From MEG...almost done!)

These targeted reforms are necessary. (OH PLEASE!)

The last nail in the coffin of inner suburban living. (Dead right!)

A snippet from Jon Faine...The Age ..Nov.21

"...any new application filed in VCAT now will not be reached until November 2023."

MEG wonders if developers will wait until November 2023 when Mr. Wynne has ALL of his reforms in place and then they will have free reign to do whatever they like! May not even have to go to VCAT to get the 'nod.'

Assault on our suburbs...also in The Age ..Nov.21

Professor Michael Buxton says the Minister's plans are "to advantage development and subvert local government and residents's rights." He says, it's "a new suite of powers to impose by stealth major projects and higher density development onto large sections of Melbourne."

"So much of what Labor is doing to Melbourne contradicts promises made in opposition." Now WHO would believe that Michael? Surely you jest!

Herald Sun ...Nov. 15 "...ghettos in the sky."

"A plan to build a wall of towers from the CBD to Sth Yarra has been described as "crap" and creating "ghettos in the sky."

Eddie McGuire backed the proposal and Sally Capp (ex-CEO of the Property Council) said, *"such proposals were welcome and showed confidence in the city."*

Spokesperson for the developer Connex was none other than Sam Amaliki, Chairman of the Caulfield Racecourse Reserve Trust.

Ted Baillieu said of the proposal, *"this would be unaffordable, family-unfriendly crap that would divide the city"* and Peter Maddison (host of TV Grand Designs) said he wasn't sure *"building disconnected people so far up and having something so out of scale with everything else around is a good thing!"*

(MEG goes for the down to earth statement by Ted Baillieu...."CRAP!")

Melbourne the knockdown capital. The Age Nov.12

It's official! The Bureau of Statistics reports that *"36,000 residential dwellings....32,000 of them in Melbourne...were demolished in Victoria between 2016 and mid-2021....."*

For example, *"in Bentleigh and McKinnon in the south-east the trend is stark with 442 dwellings knocked over since 2016 and more than 1780 new units, townhouses and apartments built."*

In the latest information from Planning Backlash there is a statement by Annette Cooper who says, *"Victoria's planning policy is leading to an exacerbation of climate change through a loss of period homes, established gardens and an increase in hard surfaces. Passive cooling features, such as verandas, porches, pitched roofs, thick insulating walls, high ceilings, relatively small windows, large gardens and shade-producing trees are on the way out."*

Councils (such as Stonnington) have tended to adopt the notion of a 'climate change emergency' and yet continue to "get rid of trees" when heavily lobbied, use synthetic surfaces instead of "real" grass, agree to the demolition of a house in a Heritage Overlay because, "it's not beautiful" ...(and not even charismatic...so help us!) ...and in doing so contribute to "global warming." Bewildering? Of course!

Out of Melbourne and in Nagambie

In The Age on Nov. 6 we read about ...

"The battle to save Nagambie's threatened 'green heart'"

"..an axe is dangling over 51 of the remaining stretch of native woodland on the main road of this township.....The trees are set to make way for a "lifestyle village" which is part of a new stage in the Elloura housing estate that backs onto the waters of Lake Nagambie."

Local people challenged Strathbogie Shire Council's permit to destroy the trees in VCAT BUT guess who stepped in earlier this year? None other than the erstwhile Minister for Getting Rid of Anything That Stands In The Way of DEVELOPMENT. You've guessed it.... Richard Wynne! Last year the Minister's own Department (DELWP) wrote to the council *"urging it to prevent the loss of very high value trees."* DELWP didn't actually oppose the removal of the trees " *but required a zoologist to be on site during removal and placement of nesting boxes to compensate for the loss of hollows."*

Is that pathetic or not???

One of the councillors said, *"the town could not afford to lose the natural habitat."*.....

The war over golf courses The Age Nov.16

A trivial issue you may think! Not so! Every golf course is public open space and developers LOVE large areas of Public open space. *"Victoria's Department of Planning has produced guidelines and a Standing Advisory Committee with the ominous aim of providing a pathway for golf course rezoning and redevelopment."*

For example, ".....the former Kingswood course that has already been sold off" ...*"and what is proposed to take the place of fairways and bushland? Crowded rows of private housing!"* Are we surprised?

Fine goes on to say that *"Over the past 50 years, we have seen more people squeezed into urban areas, greater profits for developers and yet no corresponding investment in public infrastructure, public transport, schools and open spaces."*

He writes that *"every golf course is precious and must be protected."* He mentions what the home of golf *"the Old Course at St. Andrews in Scotland.*

"Every Sunday the course is open to the public with no golf allowed."

The best news I've heard in years! Herald Sun...Nov.8

"Friends of Lorne Parade Reserve has appealed to the Supreme Court claiming Planning Minister Richard Wynne's decision to approve the Surrey Hills and Mont Albert level crossing removal project without public consultation was in breach of his obligations."

The group claims accuses the Minister of having *"an improper and ulterior purpose"* for approving the construction of a new station after demolishing both Surrey Hills and Mont Albert stations and building a new one between the two.

The group does not support *"the theft of open spaces and historic trees."*

President of the group said,

"We are making a stand...our local public reserve, trees and streets are not for free for the Andrews' government to take and tick off their "big Build Projects' list."

One resident said that he was, *"absolutely distraught' by the removal of more than 550 trees along Churchill St. which is known to the locals as the World War 1 Avenue of Honour."*

From the BRAG Facebook page on November 10....

Friends of Lorne Reserve... "The Planning Minister has now been served.

The first court date is set for later this month. We will be calling on the Minister to suspend this project voluntarily.

Planning Minister...the Hon. Richard Wynne is served with Supreme Court Action 9/11/2021...

- 1. Abuse of power with tabling of Amendment C52.03 to the Planning Act.*
- 2. Lack of consultation.*

MEG is filled with admiration of the courage of this group and sincerely hopes that the Supreme Court finds that their reasons for suing the Minister are successful.

We hope, too, that they are more successful than the Stonnington residents who tried to defend the covenants on their land which abuts Percy Treyvaud Memorial Park. Council had no reservations about spending ratepayers' money against their own residents any more than State Government will have in spending taxpayers' money against its own residents.

This court action against the Minister is being funded through 'crowd funding.'

"Green spaces to go in plan for public estate"....The Age Dec.7

In Collingwood *"The Victorian Government plans to build two apartment blocks over communal open space on the estate and take back an underground, resident-led cultural space to use for car parking. The development of 152 apartments is being fast-tracked under special rules that by-pass the council permit and waive the community' right to formally object."*

The same 'fast-tracking' is operating in Bangs St. Prahran and will happen in Sth Yarra and will operate in a variety of planning applications

Mr. Wynne just loves fast-tracking and treats it like his new toy.

"These blocks in Collingwood are to be built over an outdoor grassed area, a sports court, a car park, trees and picnic seating."

Mr Wynne said that there had been *"extensive consultation with the community."*

Yarra Councillor Gabrielle de Vietri said, *"We are concerned that this proposal is being rushed through without the community being able to have their say."*

Didn't Mr. Wynne say that there had been "extensive consultation with the community?"
Is someone telling fibs?

On the grapevine.....Changes to ResCode are coming.

We don't know what these changes will mean but if Minister Wynne's usual actions tell us, whatever is in the offing will be good for developers and bad for residents. We'll let you know the details when we know them.

LOCAL NEWS

Non-Government Schools Protocol

From Council Agenda of November 29/2021...*"A new protocol is required given Council will only have 14 calendar days with a further 14 days given if Council requests more time to respond to DELWP on an application. These strict time frames do not enable adequate time to have the matter considered at a formal Council meeting.*

MEG members might remember that Amendment C180 has been introduced with the purpose of *"streamlining planning permit applications for non-Government primary and secondary schools."*

In other words you, the people, no longer have any say at all in what non-government schools can build anywhere near you. ONLY Mr. Wynne can decide **except** for applications below \$500,000. These will be determined by Council as VicSmart applications, which does not require notice if all conditions are met.

In other words, all applications from non-government schools will be **fast-tracked**.

This power-grab by Wynne is called 'democracy.'

If only Stonnington Council would take this Minister to the Supreme Court for "abuse of power" as the 'Friends of Lorne Parade' has done!

Council Advocacy re State Government Planning Reforms

Some of you may think that the word "reforms" means that Mr. Wynne has made things easier for YOU! Alas, not so! Slowly but surely you are being deprived of your right **"to have a say."** Council is also being deprived of a right to 'have a say'... and councillors are NOT PLEASED. Led by ex-Mayor Hely a group of 10 mayors sought a meeting with the Minister and he **"wouldn't meet with them."** Sent an adviser to have a chat!!

The arrogance of this man absolutely beggars belief!

MAV President has noted *"an alarming lack of open consultation with councillors and their communities in recent times."* Well that's an understatement of the obvious!

As a result of this 'TAKEOVER BY WYNNE' Stonnington Council proposed on Dec.13 to advocate to the Minister for...

- (a) greater consultation with Local Governments and the communities they represent on any proposed changes to the State and Local Planning system.
- (b) maintenance of third party appeal rights.
- (c) retention of Council's control and input into major and "State significant" developments within the municipality.

A North Ward councillor said that all the groups in Stonnington should be writing to the Minister opposing the Planning Reforms. He mentioned in particular the Malvern East Group. GREAT ISN'T? We now have a councillor from another Ward setting the agenda for us!

Stonnington Leader...September 9/2021

"An inner city council has copped a massive \$5.3 million cost blowout on a controversial sports stadium partly because it declared a climate emergency. Stonnington Council budget for its four-court stadium and other improvements to Malvern East's Percy Treyvaud Memorial park has blown out only three months after councillors voted on its location." Council will replace the gas-fired boilers with heat pumps and "did an environmental design review of the stadium so it could get a five green-star rating."

Oh, and they (we the ratepayers!) had to pay for a Supreme Court battle over covenants and, the COVID outbreak, a timber shortage and increased costs of steel and concrete. One councilor said that calling it a '*blowout*' was using extravagant language....and at that stage they hadn't costed the **plaque** and the **light refreshments!** (See below.)
MEG thinks we're up to \$50 million by now.

Percy Treyvaud Multipurpose Sports and Recreation Facility... Groundbreaking Plaque

Yes, they are going to celebrate this travesty by having the present mayor use a spade (or perhaps a shovel) to dig into the **real soil** (not synthetic) in February 2022.

*"The plaque design, fabrication and installation costs
are estimated at \$2,585 including GST*

and these costs will be funded out of the capital works budget for this project."

There was much discussion about this. It was pointed out that there had been no such plaque for Prahran Square, that concrete travesty on the old Cato St. carpark. Well, we think that's reasonable. After all there were no trees at all to destroy on the carpark like there are at Percy Treyvaud Memorial Park.

At this park in East Ward there were 100s of people opposing Council's grandiose plans ...('only a few people opposed it', according to Mr. Koce)... and, further to that, the same man said that it was appropriate for the present mayor to play a major role in this ceremony because she had suggested this site in August 2015!

As far as MEG knows, she and an East Ward Greens councillor had suggested this park as a site for a stadium at a Committee Meeting in 2015. We, the people, were not told of this decision until much later. It is whimsically known as **consultation!**

One councillor suggested that the people opposing the stadium be invited to this ceremony. Perhaps all MEG members will get an invitation as well as all the non-MEG members and they can indulge in the light refreshments afterwards...no expense spared! Some councillors thought that it would be appropriate to invite the Federal Minister for Sport to the 'ground-breaking' or even (breathlessly) the Prime Minister because the Federal Government has donated \$4 million to the imminent destruction of a park.

77 Repton Rd. Notice Paper....December 13

The application to demolish the existing dwelling in this heritage Overlay and build a 2 storey dwelling was refused by Council on May 3.2021. The decision was appealed and the plans were amended at VCAT. The new proposal is to retain the front portion of the heritage building, with a lower scale 2 storey extension at the rear.

MEG says, 'facadism is flourishes in Stonnington' and we can't help remembering the house in the Gascoigne Estate that wasn't 'beautiful' nor 'charismatic' that was given the 'go-ahead' to demolish.

AND

we STILL want to know what makes a house **charismatic**.

Stonnington News....Summer 2021

Council wants to know, "*When was the last time you ventured over to Malvern East?*"

They speak of this suburb as if it were a foreign country!

A North Ward councilor asked me earlier this year, "Where's the Urban Forest?" In this edition of "NEWS" Malvern East is termed Stonnington's '*hidden gem*' and the suburb is filled with "*quality restaurants, exceptional coffee and an abundance of charm.*"

The suburb is also "*filled with places to picnic play sport and enjoy a little slice of nature*" and we're urged not to forget the Malvern Valley Golf Course.

There's not one mention of Percy Treyvaud Memorial Park where anyone will be able to watch the destruction of a park early in 2022 AND, can you believe, that there's NOT ONE mention of Chadstone Shopping Centre, the jewel in Vicinity's crown!

MEG almost didn't recognize our very own suburb and we brought ourselves down to earth very quickly when we realized that our "*hidden gem*" occupied a very small space

on P.5. This edition was 'an as usual' chat about the **real** Stonnington which is down in the west. MEG wonders what's happening in Glen Iris. Nary a word about that suburb!

Hard copies of Council Notice Papers

East Ward Councillor Lew has informed MEG that hard copies of council's agenda for each meeting will again be available in our libraries from February 2022.

Patricia Arkoud (Library Development Officer) informed MEG that residents can go to the Council Service Centres and request staff to copy the Council Minutes and Agendas.

Some of the Planning Applications in and around Malvern East

29 Kerferd St. Pt. dem., bldg. & works to dwelling in H.O. and SBO

Church & Hall 3B Epping St. Liquor licence associated with use of site as a church in H.O.

15 Chaucer Av. Pt. dem., constr. & ext.of dwelling in H.O.

1 Dixon St. Malvern Pt. dem. Constr. & ext. on a lot less than 500 sq.m.in NRZ & NCO & H.O.

75 Stanhope St. Malvern Pt. dem. & constr.of alterations & additions to existing heritage dwelling.

6 Serrell St. Extension to dwelling in H.O. Info requested.

44 Webster St. Removal of restrictive covenant.

9 Bretonneux Sq. Renovations & ext of ground floor to dwelling in H.O.

67 Claremont Av. Malvern Constr. of building & works in H.O.

2 Acre Place. Malvern Construction of new dwelling on a lot less than 500 sq.m.

36 Brunel St. Demolition of existing dwelling as it is unfit to live in and we are unable to restore it.

14-16 The Rialto Pt. dem., bldg. & wks to existing dwelling in H.O.

6-8 Hamilton Rd. Malvern Pt. dem. & construction of extra dwelling on a lot in NRZ & H.O. and 2 lot sub-division.

873 Dandenong Rd. 8 storey bldg. with ground floor office and 7 storeys of one and two bedroom apartments...7 apartments. Approved by Council on Dec. 13.