



Malvern East Group

MEG Supports *PLANNING BACKLASH*

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MEG Newsletter....Nov./Dec. 2022

Vale Chris Gahan

Chris Gahan was a long time councillor in both the City of Prahran and the City of Stonnington.

A Memorial Service for Chris Gahan
will be held on Wednesday December 21 at 2.30
at Malvern Town Hall.

From the Convenor's Desk

At the end of a year of wild wet weather we had a new strain of COVID, devastating floods in our State, devastating floods in Maribynong and Stonnington emerging relatively unscathed.

We saw the "same old" emerge in what is quaintly known as the Mayoral **election...** a well-organised non-event with the numbers pre-ordained. We also saw "the same old" in the State election with all that implies for planning groups such as MEG. Those who came to the MEG Meeting in October heard from Professor Michael Buxton (RMIT) and Joanna Stanley (Brunswick Network) of the Labor Party's intentions to destroy as much of the neighbourhood character of the suburbs as they can before the next election in 4 years time. Notably absent prior to the State election was any publicity from any Party about the sensitive issue of PLANNING. It was NOT MENTIONED during the campaign. I wonder why!

We have heard on the grapevine that the new Planning Minister, Sonya Kilkenny (Member for Carrum) is a good choice for the Green Wedges Coalition but her knowledge and empathy for residents of inner Melbourne is not known. We assume that she will be obliged to do what she's told.

Victoria's planning system is no longer fit for purpose...H.S. Nov.10

CEO of the Urban Design Institute wanted all political parties to put home ownership at the forefront of planning policies in the State election. The UDI is proud of its record with regard to "affordable housing."

Do have a look at the soulless mess between Normanby Rd. and Station St.

When half of it was built the UDI gave it an award!

That's what the UDI wants and that's what State Government policies (the new ones) seek to give. "Fast tracking" is the system which will be used to a greater extent than ever before to achieve this. "Fast tracking" means that you/we won't have a say in what is going UP beside, behind and in front of you.

NO OBJECTIONS...NO APPEAL RIGHTS.

THEY CALL IT "CUTTING RED TAPE."

Fast tracking is far more advanced than we know. The VPA has been promoting this method of excluding existing residents from the Planning Process for at least 4 years and it is gaining momentum each year. For example, you can no longer object to anything that a school may wish to do on any site. Soon you will not be able to object to a development of up to 5 storeys.

Designing a housing solution...The Age on November 5

"More than 60 years ago, the revered Melbourne architect Robyn Boyd was railing against poor design in our suburbs. He described 1950s suburbia as a material achievement in aesthetic calamity." If he were alive today, Boyd would surely be horrified by the quality of many of the apartments that are being built in modern Melbourne." **And so say all of us!**

Brendan Coates goes on to say that Boyd wanted "high quality design" available to everyone. He produced designs for affordable houses. That was 60 years ago. With all the knowledge available to architects and planning authorities **such as State governments** why on earth can't that be done today?

Coates says that *"the state government is doing that via the Future Homes program."* The Andrews government...(the last one)...had a competition for architects to design high-quality homes and is using *"the fast-track approval process in the City of Maribynong area"* for buildings based on any one of the four Future Homes exemplar."

The Age Editorial...November 7

"Now superannuation funds are being asked to step up and add their investment left to the Albanese government's National Housing Accord which he envisages will result in the construction of one million new homes in the five years from mid-2024."

The Federal Government says this number is "aspirational."

We assume from this statement that the Federal Government **hopes** to have a million houses built by 2029 but is none too sure that a million houses **will be built** by 2029.

"Premier Andrews is also relying on super funds to back his state's investment in renewable energy."

Between the two of them everyone on State and/or Federal Superannuation should hold a collective breath!

Big Build a big pain over summer The Age December 7

*"Victorian are being warned that roadworks across Melbourne over summer will cause delays of more than 90 minutes on popular travel routes, including the West Gate Bridge, Domain Tunnel, Monash Freeway and in the CBD. The State Government's Big Build has been pitched as a transformation of the road and rail network, but the planned works will cause **months of disruptions.**"*

There will be no trains going through the City Loop from January 2-15. Train works will disrupt the Gippsland, Bendigo, Echuca and Swan Hill services. *"Buses will replace these services from January to early March."*

"The Big Build involves 165 major road and rail projects, including the Metro Tunnel, West Gate Tunnel, North East Link, Melbourne Airport Rail and Suburban Rail Loop."

MEG wonders if anyone is counting the number of trees that have been and are to be felled for the Big Build. Residents who live in the area of the North East Link claim that it's "an environmental disaster." Are we surprised?

Report from the CEO of the VPA

Stuart Moseley wrote about the background of the new Minister for Planning who has been the MLA for Carrum since 2014.

"She was a lawyer in commercial litigation, banking and finance. She also worked for the Kimberley Land Council in Broome and was on the Board of The National Theatre and Back to Back to Back Theatre."

The VPA can also be directed by the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure and the Minister for Suburban Rail Loop. Between the four of them we can look forward to some riveting decisions about planning.

"The Government has also announced Machinery of Government changes, including the creation of a new Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) which from 1 January will be the new portfolio "home" for the VPA.

MEG wonders what happened to the Environment, Land and Water!

DELWP is gone in a flash it seems!

Stuart Moseley says this is an *"exciting opportunity."*

The VPA looks forward to working with Deputy Premier Jacinta Allan, *"coordinating Minister for DTP and who remains Minister for Transport and Infrastructure, Minister for the Suburban Rail Loop and Minister for Commonwealth Games Delivery."*

The VPA will also work with *"the Treasurer Tim Pallas, the Minister for Industry and Innovation Ben Carroll and Minister for Regional Development and Commonwealth Games Legacy Harriet Shing.*

MEG does not see any mention of the VPA working with a Minister for the Environment! Apparently the environment is not a matter for a planning body!

It is, however, going to be delivering the *"very successful streamlining for growth (SFG) Program."*

Apartment rental model

In our last newsletter we told you about two developments in Stonnington which are comprised of apartments which can never be owned by the occupants. They are for rent only!

In The Age on December 8 there was a report of a fourth tenancy model. (*No, we don't know where the third one is.*)

Sophie Aubrey reported, *"Mirvac launched its CBD development, LIV Munro, yesterday providing 490 apartments with luxe amenities including a large gym, a pool, a resident app, on-site support staff, co-working and entertaining spaces, and white goods such as fridges and washing machines."*

The rent for a 2 bedroom apartment in this complex is \$900 a week...not so expensive when it's split between 3 people and there's no extra payment for services!

Gag orders, secrecy, red tape mar councils...Sunday Age December 11

The article is specifically about the Greens-led Yarra Council but we hear that it certainly could refer to a number of councils. The article refers to such actions as *"restricting ratepayers' questions and preventing councillors from talking to the media."* Residents of Yarra have called for the Council to be sacked after it slashed the number of meetings to one a month instead of a fortnightly meeting.

The Local Government Act introduced in 2020 was intended to overhaul local government.

Local Government Minister Melissa Horne said...*"We're serious about improving culture in local councils and encouraging strong levels of community engagement, public transparency and financial management."*

Well, you never know what might happen with Stonnington Council. We might even have a Ward Meeting ...or even **two** Ward Meetings a year... in the future. We have seen a glimmer of hope re **transparency** recently and have congratulated the councillors who have chosen **transparency over secrecy**.

LOCAL NEWS

Resignation of East Ward Councillor

Councillor Alex Lew resigned from Council at Council meeting on December 12. A countback by the VEC will be done in January 2023 to see who will be the new East Ward councillor.

The Age Examiner

On November 22 Liam Mannix reported that in 2021

"the World Wildlife Fund named Australia as one of the world's top deforesters

*due to tree clearing mostly to create pasture for cattle.
They called us "infamous."*

Stonnington Council 'deforested' a park to make way for a concrete stadium.
"Shame," Stonnington Council, "Shame!"

Ardrie Park

MEG member informed us of a Council notice in Ardrie Park informing residents that Council proposed to install exercise equipment in the park.

"The installation will be similar to equipment installed at Phoenix Park and Orrong Romanis and expands on councils program to provide a more diverse range of recreational amenity in open space."

MEG points out to our readers that once the 'open space' is full of equipment it is NO LONGER 'OPEN SPACE.'

If you do not want your 'open space' used for STUFF you can ring one of the 2 numbers on the notice and discuss what you would like in Ardrie Park. That's what is called CONSULTATION which we could have IF we had Ward Meetings.

25 Dixon St. Malvern

At Council Meeting November 3, Councillor Lew proposed that Council keep a Register of Properties bought by Council for 'open space.' He proposed that this Register include all related details such as the person who suggested/recommended a particular site.....and therein lies a tale. The owners of 25 Dixon had been issued with a Planning Permit for dual occupancy and the Permit would have expired on December 29/2022. The grapevine told us that an ex South Ward councillor suggested to a North Ward councillor that the site be acquired by Council for a pocket park. Council bought the property in South Ward on August 20/2022 for \$2,235,000.

We quote from p.37 of the Notice Paper re the Rationale of the Notice of Motion...

"Concerns were raised by some councillors in the way properties are brought to Council's attention and the potential for conflict of interest during the evaluation and purchase of these properties."

Planning scheme review...Notice Paper...November 14

We haven't read this report in its entirety but we did notice that "*Tree Protection and urban forest strategy*" was one of the dot points discussed in the Attachment.

Stonnington Councillors who voted to destroy 167 mature trees in Percy Memorial Park in Malvern East really NEED to study this section of the report closely and then hide their heads in shame!

Also in the Notice Paper for November 14

Some MEG members may be interested in the Panel Report for Amendment C316 Malvern Heritage Review which was adopted by Council. Crs. Lew & Koce left the chamber while this was discussed. East Ward Cr. Morgan noted that 41% of properties in Malvern were in heritage overlays.

The entire report can be accessed in the Attachment.

About the Gascoigne Estate Domain November 19

Estate agent says, "*the area is 'as tightly held as any I've known in my career', it's not just about the exclusivity but the love and esteem for these beautiful houses.*"

(MEG says that there could be a mite of hyperbole there!)

A house in Kingston St. is to be sold and it's one of just a handful of homes overlooking Central Park.

MRC's development ...Normanby Rd. to Station St. Caulfield

A stark contrast to the Gascoigne!

Have you **seen** this? Have you **visited** this? We have been to the Coles supermarket and advise you that it was the most soulless experience we've had in a long time. We also advise you that if you are exiting the carpark on Normanby Rd. you cannot turn

right and that it's difficult to know exactly how one gets back into Stonnington! Almost felt that we were trapped forever in this 'Award Winning' development forever. The Urban Design Institute gave it an award a couple of years ago for the best high-rise development of the year. We can only despair!

There's a brand new Woolworths coming to Malvern at 2 Station Place.

We saw this advertisement in Business Age on November 26.
The site is directly opposite the Malvern Station and will be completed in 2024.
"It will be located on the ground floor of the Malvern Collective development which will be home to over 500 residents & 265 luxury apartments."
That's the 12 storey building on the corner of Dandenong & Glenferrie Rds. approved by the previous Stonnington Council despite vigorous opposition from residents as far away as Gladstone St. in Armadale.
Looks like there'll be a "Woolies here, a Woolies there and a Woolies everywhere!"

VCAT Quarterly Report...July –September 2022

This report by Stonnington's Appeals Officer is in the Notice Paper of Council Meeting November 14.

*"Twenty four cases were determined by VCAT in the third quarter of 2022."
" In this third quarter there were 9 outright wins (37.5%, 7 positions of consent were reached (29.2%)...also considered as wins as Council only consents to the matter being settled if it is satisfied with the resulting outcome. 6 cases were lost (25%). A remaining 2 matters were withdrawn/struck out before the hearing (8.3%).*
A significant loss was the application by Korowa to build a 3 storey Primary School and Childcare Centre at 1755, 1757-1759, 1761-1763 Malvern Rd. Glen Iris.

Bang goes all those Art Deco homes and bang goes residential amenity in the streets to the rear of these properties. This application was lodged prior to the edict by now ex Minister for Planning which said that there would be NO OBJECTIONS allowed in any application by any school anywhere in Victoria. This will be free reign for the cashed-up private school sector.

Some of the Planning Applications in and around Malvern East.

- 11 Gabriel Av.** Construction of 2 houses on a lot.
- 53 Webster St.** Removal of restrictive covenant.
- 72 Elizabeth St. Malvern** Pt. dem., bldg. & wks to dwelling in H.O.
- 20 Kerferd St.** Pt. dem., bldg. & works. to dwelling in H.O.
- 225 Burke Rd. Glen Iris** 16 lot subdivision in accordance with approved development.
- 931 High St. Armadale** 12 lot subdivision.
- 4 Bates St.** Extension to existing dwelling.
- 26 \$ 28A Union St. Armadale** Ext. of one dwelling on a lot less than 300 sq.m. Pt. dem. & works including a fence in SBO.
- 13 Glenbrook Av.** Secondary Consent to approved plans for minor amendments to endorsed plans for minor amendments to endorsed plans in accordance with Council's application for Enforcement Order in NCO.
- 1906 Malvern Rd.** 4 lot subdivision.
- 7 Nott St.** Wks include partial dem to rear of Californian bungalow & addn of 2 storey extension.
- 15 Brunel St.** Constr. of a dwelling.
- 103 Finch St.** Install solar panels in H.O.
- 8 Cressy St. Malvern** 2 double storey dwellings.
- 27 valetta St. Malvern** Addn of 1st floor ext to rear of dwelling above existing double brick ext.
- 2 Quentin Rd.** Proposed 2 units of double storey dwelling.
- 58 Central Park Rd.** Pt. dem., bldg. & works to extend an existing dwelling in H.O

36 Densham Rd. Dem. of 2 existing single storey dwelling in H.O. Construction of 2 storey dwelling with pool & pool house.

512 Waverley Rd. Use of land for sale & consumption of liquor on & off the premises with a food & drink permit in Commercial 1 Zone. 4 bicycle parks. No car parking. 15m south of Sycamore St. (Hotel as of right use.)

Cabrini Hospital Construction of bldg. and works associated with Section 2 land use. Alterations & bldg. of 2 internal suites.

38 Anderson St. Construction of 2 dwellings on a lot in GRZ. Permit with conditions issued at Council Meeting November 14.

31 Beatty Av. Pt. dem. & constr. of multi-level bldg. to be used as an office (as of right) in Commercial 1 zone & reduction of car parking req. Permit with conditions issued at Council Meeting November 14.

52 Claremont Av. Malvern Pt. dem. & proposed demolition to existing residential dwelling.

58 Central Park Rd. Pt. dem., bld & wks to extend an existing dwelling in H.O.

41A Brunel St. Tree removal in N.C.O.

12 Sutherland St. Dem. of existing dwelling and proposal for new dwelling.