



Malvern East Group

MEG Supports *PLANNING BACKLASH*

C/- 14 Chanak Street,

Malvern East Vic 3145

Phone/Fax 9572 3205

Email meg@chezsamuel.com

Web <http://www.chezsamuel.com/meghome.php>

MEG NEWSLETTER...SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2017

From the Convenor's Desk

I always wonder what to say in this section of the newsletter. This time my problem was solved by an ex-pupil who contacted me 'out of the blue' and, apart from filling me in about a re-union, started an email conversation about planning. Jim told me about the sites of demolished homes where some of "my" parents had lived in Whitehorse Rd. He said he didn't mind development around transport nodes and on main roads and then told me he had seen a film about Jane Jacobs of whom I had never heard.

I googled Jane and learned about this "doyenne of urban activism" in New York during the mid 20th century. She fought for the notion of a "village" within cities, about establishing a sense of "place" for city people. She was unrelenting in her battle to preserve one of oldest parts of Manhattan. Jane was passionate about 'preserving the village' in a city where 'developers ruled.' (*Sound familiar?*) She constantly opposed 'Bulldozer Bob' the despotic planner of New York who wanted to build 4 lane roads through neighbourhoods. Jane Jacobs was a woman who never stopped being engaged.

Membership subscriptions

Thanks to all those people who have renewed their MEG Membership. To those who have it on a list of 'things to do' would you do it as soon as you receive this reminder? If you decide not to renew your MEG subscription, we thank you for your past support.

Notice of our forthcoming AGM

The AGM will be held on Oct. 26 at 7.30 in the Kildara Centre. Our Guest Speaker is Dr. Greg Moore of Melbourne University. Greg is a well-known and passionate proponent of the need for a "green canopy." Our special guest will be Mary Drost...the 'Jane Jacobs' of Melbourne...who never stops 'being engaged' and never stops ensuring that everyone else is well and truly engaged too.

Level Crossing Authority

We have been chastised by the *Communications and Stakeholders Relations Advisor* of the Level Crossing Removal Authority. We had cited a report in the Herald Sun (May 6) in which it was stated that there would be a lightweight membrane made of highly reflective mirror-like material that would reflect the landscape and hide the concrete. The Advisor has informed us that "*the elevated rail structure will not include reflective, mirror-like material. The design was put forward by an external designer but is not being considered by our project.*"

She read our May newsletter ! Hope she chastised the Herald Sun too. If you're reading this, Charlotte, we respectfully decline your invitation for a briefing!

Residents railroaded

Matt Johnson of the H.S. reported that State Government has become a de facto landlord for dozens of homes near skyrail. Residents realise that they have lost the battle and as they see the railway line towering above their homes they are taking advantage of a voluntary purchase scheme that was set up in March 2016. The Level Crossing Removal Authority has put these homes onto the rental market. Project manager of the Authority said that benefits of skyrail would be welcomed by most residents. So there...!!!

Auditor-General's Report

(Age Aug.21) Melbourne's relentless population growth is placing stress on absolutely everything in this city. We are failing miserably in infrastructure and for the fourth time in five years the Auditor-General "*highlights poor planning by successive Victorian governments and a failure to properly deal with that rapid population growth.*" MEG really wonders why the Auditor-General bothers. He could just drag out last year's report and do copies.

In September 2014 the AG presented a report to Government re the Caulfield Racecourse Review. This week the "Trust" was abandoned and a new Trust is to be appointed. There could be members of the old 'trust' on it. The present situation will continue until late 2018...so it's not really abandoned YET! *A lease could now extend to 65 years with Ministerial approval.* So help us! Don't they EVER learn!

We thank the Auditor-General for his efforts but suggest that he has a long rest 'cos no-one's doing anything about his reports.

Caulfield Racecourse Reserve... Requiem...September 24

Glen Eira Residents Association is (GERA) is so angered by the action proposed by State Government relating to **our land** that they have invited us to a.....

Public mourning ceremony on Sunday September 24 at 11 a.m.

Entry by Booran Rd.

MEG members have shown that they care about the possibility of the destruction of the Chadstone Bowling Club. We ask you to show that you care about this wonderful Crown Land on our doorstep by supporting our sister organisation in Glen Eira on September 24.

Most liveable city

We don't think that The Economist asked the Victorian Auditor-General about this matter when they were doing their liveability list....and we needn't say one more word!

Ex-Planning Minister Guy & the developer & 661 Chapel St.

(Age Aug 15) You may remember the year of Adrian Stubbs' mayoralty . It was 2014 when Adrian and Matthew Guy had an acrimonious exchange because the then Planning Minister had arbitrarily changed the Stonnington Planning Scheme and approved a development of 31 storeys at 661 when the preferred height was 13 storeys. The developer sold the site with Mr. Guy's planning approval later in 2014 for a profit of around \$30 million.

Mr. Guy said his approval was justified apparently because part of it was a for gifted children's centre for Melbourne High School. 3 years later the centre hasn't been built but

the Malaysian developers who bought the site have almost finished their tower behind the Melbourne High School site. Clay Lucas reports in this article that in 2012 the developer who obtained approval for the towers from Mr. Guy donated \$25,000 to the Liberal Party in 2012.

In a Letter to the Editor on Aug.16 Jim Breen wrote that he had begun *"to feel slightly sorry for Matthew Guy"* because of all the publicity about the "lobster, mobster" incident until he read about *"the revolting tower looming over Melbourne High"* and then that feeling faded away.

Corkman Hotel & the developers/demolishers & the Planning Minister

Clay Lucas in the Age on July 21 reported that *"the developers who illegally demolished Carlton's historic Corkman Irish Pub-and then promised to rebuild it- are suing Planning Minister Richard Wynne in a bid to allow high-rise construction on their site."* Their legal action in the Supreme Court argues that Mr. Wynne acted with an ulterior purpose *"of seeking to punish them and implying that he did so for political reasons."* They also argue that *"forcing a replacement building....is too harsh a penalty and not a good planning outcome."* MEG wonders when, if ever, any developer is ever interested in a good planning outcome.

If they win the case they'll be able to build to a 40m height which will allow a 13 storey building. Mr. Wynne said, *"Victoria's heritage ;must be protected from rogue developers who flout the regulations for financial gain."* As if developers do anything without financial gain in sight and as if anyone gives a hoot about Victoria's heritage.' Mr. Wynne has a separate case going on at VCAT against the developers. He seeks an order forcing them to rebuild the pub.

Bet all of this is costing the Victorian taxpayer a pretty penny.

Historic CBD Building slated for demolition

The Age Sept.2 VCAT *"has granted a permit for Spacious Property Development to build a 17 storey tower at 488 Latrobe St. rejecting claims that the 130yr old Spinks Tinsmiths factory would be eligible for protection under the City of Melbourne's proposed new heritage scheme."* The Minister for Planning had declined to apply an interim protection order for the site. (Are we surprised??) Councillor Leppert slammed Density Dick for this decision. A number of historic buildings in the CBD (and elsewhere) are going to be demolished and *"Melbourne's heritage urban fabric will be replaced by a series of generic hig-rise towers."* Meanwhile thousands of dollars are being spent on the Corkman Hotel issue. Hard to fathom the workings of the minds of Planning Ministers, isn't it? What was it that Nero did while Rome burned?

Cladding risk

There is a Senate inquiry into the cladding issue. On July 15 we read in the Age that *"Fraudsters are making fake safety certificates for building products..."* The national policy research officer for the CFMEU told the inquiry that *"dodgy certificates pretending building products complied with local safety rules were rife on Australian building sites."* The inquiry was also told that thousands of buildings were potentially a high fire risk due to non-compliant flammable cladding.

On September 7 Clay Lucas reported that the Senate Committee called for an urgent ban on the importation, sale and use of polyethylene core aluminium cladding. Labor MP Kim Carr said that using the cladding was effectively ***“wrapping buildings in petrol.”*** In Council Notice Paper August 7 Councillors were briefed on the issue of combustible cladding.

Polystyrene bricks

In the H.S. on July 28 this gem appeared. Some developers are using polystyrene bricks to build homes and buyers only discover this when their houses start to leak. The builders render the foam bricks so they resemble brickwork. Roscon's general manager said that the polystyrene walls are legal because *“the National Construction Code was changed in 1996 to let builders use ‘alternative solutions’ to traditional materials.”*

The Daily Telegraph said that the Senate inquiry was told that *“fake bricks are being used in shoddy homes by dodgy builders”* and a building consultant told the inquiry that *“eco-friendly building laws are creating death traps.”* Is there no end to the deviousness of the development industry?

Developer wants to cover the tracks... (N.B. That's not **his tracks...they're ours!)**

(The Age July 28) *“Mr. McNee, a major donor to the Liberal Party during Matthew Guy's time as Planning Minister, is relying on the goodwill of the Andrews' government to help build a \$25 million project over tracks next to South Yarra station.”* He's proposing a 3 level office and retail centre over the tracks in Toorak Rd. opposite the station obscuring the Heritage listed 1892 Sth Yarra Post Office. The land and air rights belong to VicTrack. CEO of Stonnington, Warren Roberts, said that Council wanted to increase its open space and *“if a proposal was appropriate (we) would consider the land above railways as an opportunity for this.”*

MEG wonders if Council might consider the land above the railway line near Malvern Central as suitable for an open space project!

Vicinity here... Vicinity there... Vicinity everywhere!

Vicinity owns 50% of Chadstone Shopping Centre. Vicinity is involved in development at “The Glen” Shopping Centre and we learned on July 29 that Vicinity owns ALL of Box Hill Shopping Centre. We also learned from the article in The Age that Vicinity was represented at a recent Planning Panel which was conducting hearings about Box Hill's future. Vicinity told the Panel that it wanted to expand its operations (now that's a surprise!) and obtain permission for increased heights on its land. A resident who spoke against this told the panel *“that no other metropolitan activity centre has allowed the heights seen in Box Hill.”* We'd like to point out that at this very moment an obscene **50 storey** thing is under construction on the corner of Toorak Rd. and Chapel St. and that area known as the Forrest Hill Precinct is part of the Chapel Street Principal Activity Centre.

Crudden Farm

Dame Elizabeth must be turning in her grave at the very thought of part of Crudden Farm being sold off for development. The Trustees of her estate propose to carve off a third of the estate and rezone it for housing. (The Age Aug. 30) The land is zoned for rural conservation. *“Only Planning Minister Wynne can rezone the land.”* Is this going to be another Corkman Hotel debacle? Will the Minister or won't the Minister?

The author of a Letter to the Editor on Aug.31 wondered if Rupert could come up with a tiny slice of his billions to support his mother's wishes. MEG wondered that too!

Public Housing....proposals a disgrace!

(Age Aug. 28) You may have read about the plans to sell to private developers public housing sites across 8 municipalities. Listed in the article are sites at Flemington, Brunswick West, Heidelberg West (2 sites) Ascot Vale, North Melbourne, Clifton Hill, Brighton and Hawthorn. The article didn't mention **Prahran**. Clay Lucas' report says, *"Developers who succeed in buying a sitewill have to re-build the existing public housing with at least 10% additional dwellings for the poor."*

In Prahran we will **not** have 10% more public housing units. It is proposed that there will be **64 fewer public housing units** than we have now. It's an absolute disgrace. The Coalition has voted in the Upper House in favour of a motion put by Sue Pennicuik of the Greens for an enquiry into the Government's proposals for public housing sites. Stonnington Council will be presenting to the Upper House Committee and we have been told that Council will be opposing the plan outlined in Council Notice Paper March 4...2017.

ON THE LOCAL SCENE

Chadstone Bowling Club

With the release of the video of the "The Bowling Ladies" the fight against the Bowling Club as the site for a stadium has escalated. We'll attach the video just in case you haven't seen it. It went viral and was seen by more than a million viewers around the world. Alas, that was not enough for Stonnington Council to abandon the Feasibility Study into the viability of the site for the proposed stadium! MEG requested that this be done and under Local Law Cr. Davis was unable to put the motion during Urgent Business on August 7.

At Council Meeting August 21 Cr. Atwell defended himself passionately after PNA had sought to discredit him by claiming that his overt support for the Bowling Club disqualified him from taking part in Council deliberations regarding this issue. He also tabled a petition with 1591 signatures asking Council to abandon any thought of building a stadium on the CBC site.

At the same meeting a petition from the Malvern Meadows Estate with 150 signatures was tabled asking that the disused site at the 9th hole of the golf links not be considered as a suitable site but should be restored by Council to its former state as open space.

At Council Meeting September 4 there was a report on 3 alternative sites for the stadium. The car park at the East Malvern RSL was considered not suitable as was the site at the 9th hole of the golf links. The only site that was considered viable was at Orrong Romanis and with the various difficulties of the site outlined in the report the cost for a **6 court stadium** (up from 4 courts) plus 5 tennis courts would be \$51.1 million. MEG wonders what the cost would be for **4 courts** at that site and why that price wasn't included in the report. We also wonder how much the 5 tennis courts will cost.

Under Item (e) of Council Notice Paper (*Questions to Council from members of the public*) members and supporters of the Chadstone Bowling Club have submitted question after question at all 2017 meetings. In our opinion none has been answered. It seems that all will be revealed in the \$100,000 Feasibility Study due this year on November 4. No doubt that will be a packed Council meeting.

Freedom of Information Issue

A Letter to the Editor in the leader on July 17 deplores the fact that Council refused an FOI request regarding information acquired by '@Leisure', the firm that was employed by Council to gather certain information from members of the Chadstone Bowling Club. According to the letter-writer the information was refused because it *"may lead to confusion and unnecessary debate."*

Well, we certainly wouldn't want to have Council bewilder the people by providing information.. That would be a terrible state of affairs!

11-15 Chadstone Rd.

In our last newsletter we told you that there is already a waiting list for the childcare centre which is under construction at this address. On Aug 31st there was an auction of leases for 4 childcare centres in Melbourne and this was one of them. A MEG member was able to attend the 6p.m. auction at 8 Exhibition St. on August 31. Leases were being offered for 20 years with a 10 year option and 3% annual increases. An income of approximately \$711,000 was indicated in the advertisement. He reported that bidding opened at \$11 million and quickly jumped to \$16 million at which point 3 bidders fought over the property and it was eventually sold for \$16.9 million with a 20 year lease.

A report in the Commercial Real Estate section of The Age on Sept.2 said that this portfolio-style auction attracted 150 bidders and the childcare centres sold on yields between 4.4% and 5.50%.

1-9 Sylvester Crescent

This site been bought by the Melegant Group. (Bus. Age Aug. 19) The Group plans to build townhouses and apartments and the directors of Melegant said that one of the reasons the site was chosen was the park side location. MEG wonders if they mean to call themselves *Elegant* and then thought such a name might be a bit hard for potential buyers to swallow? *"Colliers International ...said that the Sylvester Court development opportunity generated more than 100 inquiries and six unconditional offers."* The following comment was at the end of the news item*"They believe sites in the Stonnington municipality are the most sought after by builders."* (SO depressing!)

Also on Aug.19 **Bus. Age** reported that David Jones is going to add a Food Court to their Malvern Central store. During a survey by Malvern Central owners a MEG member was asked what stores he would like to see in the Centre and he responded with. "A Target would be great!" We wonder if a David Jones Food Store will suffice!

Amendment C223

On August 21 Council considered the Recommendation to the Panel regarding development in the Major Activity Centre of Glenferrie Rd Malvern & High St Armadale. The report mentions the 2 strategic sites and makes recommendations regarding 'preferred heights' for Malvern Central and the 4,300 sq.m site on the corner of Glenferrie & Dandenong Rds. 'Preferred heights' throughout the other precincts are detailed in the report. (Council Notice Paper..Aug. 21). Councillors responded to submissions from residents who had demanded a 'preferred' height of 8 storeys at the 2 strategic development sites and included that height in the Recommendation.

The Panel Hearing will commence in the week of October 30 at 1 Spring St. and is expected to take 10 days. The hearing is open to the public.

7A Isabella St. Malvern

We told you in a previous newsletter that this home had been left to Cabrini. We have learned since that proceeds from the sale of the property are to be shared between family members and Cabrini. The house has been sold for a reported sum of \$2million.

Cabrini Hospital

The Leader reported that Federal Health Minister Greg Hunt, Federal Liberal MP for Higgins Kelly O'Dwyer, State Liberal MP for Malvern Michael O'Brien and Stonnington Mayor Jami Klisaris attended the "turning of the sod" ceremony on July 27 for the 8 storey building containing 48 luxury suites. (Such a line-up of luminaries!) The CEO of Cabrini was there telling everyone that the hospital will be able to *"provide patients with access to radiotherapy and other services."* MEG has heard on the grapevine that a radiotherapy centre has recently been built at Cabrini towards the Winter St. end of the site.

The 8 storey thing is called the Gandel Wing and we were delighted to see that Cabrini has enough spare money to thank the Gandels in a half page advertisement in the Leader (Aug.1) and also to thank the Selwyns in another half-page advertisement for their support of the Emergency Department. The names of the Selwyn family are already in illuminated letters above the Emergency Department entrance.

A few of the planning applications in and around Malvern East

38 Anderson St. Multi-dwelling development in GRZ

27 Kerferd St. Amendment to approved Pl. Permit. Cladding & material changes in first ext.

1045 Dandenong Rd. Three 3 storey dwellings.

37 Paxton St. Multi-storey dev. In GRZ. Refusal of Permit. Decision appealed. VCAT hearing Oct.25

58 Repton Rd. Gr. Fl addn and additional first floor.

14 Bates St. Pt. dem.& first floor alt & addns to dwelling in H.O.

395 Wattletree Rd. Vary current use to a hotel & ass. liquor licence maintaining current no. of patrons (51) & current hours.

79 Burke Rd. Pt. dem. & ext of dwelling on a lot less than 500 sq.m. in H.O.

114 Argyll St. 2 storey dual occ. Permit approved Council Mtg. Aug. 21.

116 Argyll St. 2 storey dual occ. Permit approved Council Mtg. Aug. 21

1,3 & 5 Hurstmon St. Constr. of 4 storey bldg. with 46 dwellings & associated car pkg. in RGZ. Council Mtg. Sept.4

302-308 Waverley Rd. Pt. dem., bldg & works associated with a mixed use development in Commercial Zone 1. Heritage Overlay and Special Building Overlay. Reduction in car parking requirements.