



Malvern East Group

MEG Supports **PLANNING BACKLASH**

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MEG NEWSLETTER.....SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2020

From the Convenor's Desk

This newsletter is a bit late because we waited until we had the result of a somewhat toxic Council election campaign.....as if the pandemic wasn't enough to bear! The poll was announced on November 5.

East Ward....Alexander Lew. Jami Klisaris. Polly Morgan

South Ward....Melina Sehr. Mike Scott. Niki Bagatol

North Ward....Marcia Griffin. Kate Hely. Matthew Koce

Ex-Stonnington Mayor Stefanopoulos from South Ward was defeated and sadly, for East Ward residents so was Sally Davis who has been a MEG supporter for years. Another MEG supporter has been Judy Hindle who was a councillor in South Ward.

I am pleased that Alexander Lew strongly opposed the "stadium in the park" in his campaign and Polly Morgan stated that she wants a stadium in Stonnington but NOT in that location.

Ministerial intervention grows apace

The Age Oct. 24 "*Planning Minister Richard Wynne has fast-tracked \$625 million worth of developments.....*" He's got a new program. This one's called **Development Facilitation Program**. Included in Wynne's efforts is a 58 m commercial development in Collingwood deemed "excessive" by Yarra Council and not in keeping with the area's heritage. It was deemed "*acceptable*" by Wynne's office staff because it "*responds to the **emerging character** of the area.*"

Please take note of the term **emerging character of the area**. This could spell the end of using Neighbour Character as a reason for objecting to a development near you and all those Neighbourhood Character studies done by Council staff will go out the window.

From the Victorian Planning Authority

On September 9, Stuart Moseley CEO of Victorian Planning Authority (always on the alert to help Minister Wynne) reported in Planning matters "that the Minister had approved the VPA's "**accelerated approach**" to project delivery...i.e. fast-tracking and they had identified no less than 19 projects...."*unlocking \$18.8 billion and around 89,200 homes in Victoria by mid-2021.*"

On Oct.28 Mr. Moseley was not quite so enthusiastic, writing in Planning Matters of a "*downshift in population and people wanting more space.*" This MIGHT have an impact on demand for mid-rise density close to suburban centres. (MEG has fingers crossed!) Mr Moseley says that he doesn't really know "*what sort of impact this will be*" but the VPA is "*doubling down on delivery and working to ensure that our plans get the fundamentals right and keep the options open.*"

And if you know what that twaddle means do give MEG a ring!

Planning Matters Secondary Dwelling Code...(September 10)

".....a digital assessment pathway tool has been developed to assist applicants in determining if their secondary dwelling application can be considered through the VicSmart pathway." Fast-tracking again! That means you won't be able to object to any application that involves two dwellings on a site. Everything is being done to rid developers of objectors.

Melbourne Exodus

The Age Nov.2 *"Melbourne suffered its biggest quarterly departure of residents on record as 11,746 moved out of the city."*

(MEG wonders if Mr. Wynne and Mr. Moseley know about this!)

Working from home has allowed many professionals to work from any location.....no daily commute to the CBD.

MEG has supported "decentralisation" during our entire existence. We have listened to experts telling us that this is the sensible approach to an increasing population. We have said that "Melbourne is not Victoria" and "Victoria is not Melbourne" and any STATE Government should remember that. Alas, our words of wisdom have largely fallen on deaf ears as subsequent STATE Governments focussed on development in Melbourne. It has taken a virus to open their eyes ...a bit!. We urge State Government to spend money on rail links, transport systems across the State....NOT just roads...on industry in regional cities and country towns and to give Melbourne a rest.

Minister Jacinta Allen said on Nov.2 *"boosting regional population growth was a priority for state government."* Well, Ms Allan, we hadn't noticed that the regions are a priority for this State Government until the virus visited and we think you had better tell Minister Wynne who is hell-bent on "fast-tracking" developments in this city.

25 million trees for Australia

Age. Sept.22 This is music to MEG's ears. *"Greening Australia and the pharmaceutical giant AstraZeneca will begin a project to plant 25 million trees on degraded landscapes"*

The company has promised to plant 50 million trees around the world and because of the fires in Australia this year we are to get half of those. The project began on September 22 in the NSW Southern Highlands and 5 million trees will be planted each year until 2025.

Meanwhile State Government pursues its policy of destroying mature trees in the cause of building roads in country Victoria. In The Age on Oct. 27 Miki Perkins reported, *"a towering yellow box widely referred to as the Djah Wurrung "directions tree" has been cut down and removed from the site of the controversial \$157 highway duplication between Buangor and Ararat....."* 26,000 trees to go for State Government to build the North-East link. Just how many trees are marked for destruction by this government in the name of progress?

Meanwhile Stonnington City Council is determined to destroy mature trees at Percy Treyvaud Memorial Park.....well, 5 councillors were determined to do that. One of them has retired. Let's see if the 'new' Council is as painfully ignorant of the value of mature trees.

Work from home set to reshape the city

On October 29 Royce Millar and Chris Vedelago reported that prior to the pandemic 500,000 workers commuted to the CBD for work. Employers consider that *"work from*

home is set to reshape the city.” An Ipsos poll “commissioned by The Age showed one-quarter of Melburnians (are) contemplating a move either to the country or interstate.” In The Age on October 28 a Real Estate agent in Bendigo said that the number of inquiries he’d had since the pandemic was “astronomical.” 15% of metro Victorians have considered moving interstate and 10% have considered a move to regional Victoria.... and STILL the Minister approves outrageous projects in Melbourne! Beggars belief!

Parliamentary Inquiry into Heritage and Planning

Clifford Hayes, MLC for Sustainable Australia Party in Southern Metropolitan Region moved a motion on October 28 in the Legislative Council for a **Parliamentary Inquiry into Heritage Protection and Planning**. Much of what he said is what MEG and other residents’ groups in the Planning Backlash Network have been saying for years. Clifford was a member of the Planning Backlash Committee which met with Planning Ministers over a number of years in fruitless attempts to “make planning better.” As an MLC he has the opportunity to “lay bare” the entire process and he has managed to have this motion approved in the Upper House.

MEG will consider making a submission to the Inquiry and we will be speaking strongly against many of the recent changes to the planning process in Victoria such as fast-tracking which **excludes the residents from the process**. Like most of Mr. Wynne’s actions this is totally unacceptable.

We will give you the details of dates, etc. when we have them and each one of you can also make a submission. You are all MEG members BECAUSE you care about our heritage and the disastrous mess successive governments have made of our once gracious Victorian city.

‘Shovel-ready’ proposals?

Undaunted by minor irritations such as a pandemic and falling population, “*Goldfields unveils Windsor apartments.*” (Bus.Age Nov.4) Goldfields is the applicant for a development at 34 Armadale St. which is again at VCAT after a second Refusal to Grant a Permit by Council.

On the corner of Punt Rd. and Raleigh St. on 4,500 sq.m. Goldfields has a proposal for “*a 12 level tower of 300 luxury apartments and 2500 sq.m. of retail and hospitality space.*” The Taronga Group has had a 6 storey application at 196-206 High St. Windsor refused at VCAT. Will the Minister ‘fast-track’ these proposals? We shudder to think of what he’ll do next.

Village Way....Toorak Village

This is an 8 storey development which was approved by Council even though it is 3 storeys over the preferred height limit. Three objectors lodged an appeal at VCAT against Council’s decision and Minister Wynne waving his fairy wand declared it was a “**shovel ready**” project and gave it a NOD. We are pleased to inform you that one of the objectors (Tok Holdings) is taking Mr. Wynne to the Supreme Court over his decision.

The Minister’s “Development Facilitation Program “ has hit a bump! Such GOOD news!

Here’s hoping the Supreme Court finds for the appellants.

Again in Stonnington, Mr. Wynne has declared that a 6 storey building on the corner of Greville and Charles St. in Prahran need not wait for a council decision but can be started NOW. The Age reported on Sept.10 that “a proposed 6 level aged care home operated by Lifeview will cater specifically to the lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender and inter-sex community.” The project, with 122 objectors, has been refused twice by Council, once by

VCAT and once by the Supreme Court BUT not by Minister Wynne. It's another '**shovel ready**' proposal and as such it's 'meat & drink to Minister Wynne.
More facilitation! More Ministerial intervention!

LOCAL NEWS

Stadium in a Park

On September 20 Stonnington Leader reported that "*.....council wants residents affected by a contentious stadium development to walk away from a Supreme Court challenge and it's threatening to sue them if they don't.*"

Our very own council **suing residents** who are trying to protect covenants on their properties and on **our** park!! (Beware a Council which would do this to its own residents!)

Covenants are a property right and the covenants were "*put in place in the early 1900s to control quarrying and to prevent excavations in the park and surrounding homes.*" Council's action is called "financial intimidation" and was not voted for by all councillors. When the Percy Treyvaud Steering Committee voted to deal with recalcitrant residents in this way, the Minutes of the meeting reflect some doubt about doing it as they were apparently (and momentarily) concerned for "**Council's reputation and how this action would be perceived.**" Throwing cautions to the winds they decided to go ahead and frighten the residents into submission. So far that hasn't worked. Residents have been thrown a lifeline and the case will go ahead on November 30 UNLESS the newly elected council decides to put a stop to it. That would be the honourable thing to do!

Chadstone Shopping Centre

The Vicinity & Gandel-owned Centre has lodged a Planning Application to allow an exterior part of the land as an outdoor eating space **because the use is outside the Incorporated Planning Overlay. (IPO)** The office building for which they were given approval a few months ago is 8 levels outside the IPO....and, suddenly. MEG wonders why there is an IPO at all! Really, WHY bother? They will do anything they want anyway.

Cabrini Hospital

Cabrini is running a consistent advertising campaign on radio combined with an expensive mailout telling us that the hospital is now ready to treat you with "**compassion and efficiency.**" Touting for business? SO good to hear that patients will get some compassion.

And a bit more about Cabrini

Do you remember that we told you about the Gandel Wing at Cabrini having been nominated for an architectural award? November is the month the awards will be announced. MEG awaits the decision with bated breath while pondering the comment from a MEG member about the standards "being somewhat lowered this year!"

Council Meeting Oct.9

"A tree is worth more dead than alive." A quote from Cr. Sally Davis when debating the issue of saving trees from developers. Sally was right. Too often we have seen trees destroyed in the name of progress. This is what happens....a tree is in the way of a development. It's cut down. Some developer throws a lump of architecturally designed

concrete at the place where it stood, puts a price on it and sells it at an inflated price to someone who doesn't realise that he/she is living on a grave site.

Armadale 93 Wattletree Rd.

Located opposite Malvern Central a 5 storey building is FOR SALE. It has a Planning permit for 22 apartments and a ground floor Medical Centre.

Melbourne's key retail strip vacancy.

We noted in this report that 3 of Stonnington's shopping strips were listed. Chapel St., second only to Bridge Rd. Richmond, has a vacancy rate of 20.8%. In Glenferrie Rd. Malvern the rate is 9.7% and High St. Armadale's rate is 7.8%,

Caulfield Racecourse Reserve Trust

No! Sorry! THE PLAN for our land is STILL not ready but we noticed on the Trust's Facebook page that an area has been set aside for leashed dogs **and** another area has been designated for unleashed dogs. MEG has to admit they are making progress! We're not sure why 4-footed animals get priority over us two-footed people but there you go! It's only OUR land.

On the same Facebook was a photo of some flowers taken by someone walking in the Reserve. Riveting stuff!

MEG can't wait for the proposed stadium to be built so that Stonnington netballers can cross Dandenong Rd. and use that instead of our park.

Penpraze Park

We're sure that most of our members are aware of this park which is shared with Malvern primary School on Tooronga Rd. Well, it's not **shared** from 8.30 a.m. to 4.30p.m. when it's for school use only. We went for a "walk in the park" last week and once we were past the school buildings and a few trees and shrubs in a narrow area on Tooronga Rd. our reaction was, "There's NO PARK!" The entire area has been covered in both concrete and artificial turf....the green stuff that contributes to global warming.

As Dr. Greg Moore said at a MEG Meeting, "They're cooking the kids!" Dr. Moore was Principal of Burnley Horticultural College, is now at Melbourne University and is the National Trust's tree expert so he knows what he's talking about.

Have you ever noticed how much of that green stuff is being used by schools AND Council?

Councils fume over state 'cash grab' in new tow zones

The Age Sept.11 The Andrews Government has proposed clearway zones within a 20kms radius of the CBD with State Government collecting money from the fines and NOT the councils involved with Stonnington losing \$1.5 million a year. *"Taking this function from councils will reduce their income significantly....this is revenue that would be spent on improving local infrastructure and services," Stonnington Chief Executive Officer Jacqui Weatherill said."*

It seems to MEG that Council has plenty of money to spend on its "vanity" projects... e.g. \$70million for Prahran Square. Stacked up against such extravagance the loss of \$1.5 million in fines is a mere drop in the ocean!

Some planning Applications in and around Malvern East

There are several applications for part demolition, building and works to a dwelling in a Heritage Overlay or an NCO so we thought we would just list the addresses....

7 Ash Grove (NCO) 429 Wattletree Rd. (H.O.) 7 Kerferd St. (H.O)
20 Coonil Cr. Malvern (H.O.) 21 Central Park Rd. (H.O.)..... 16 Coppin St. (H.O)
6 Breteoneux Sq. (H.O.) 7 Belgrave Rd. (H.O.) 50 Stanhope St. Malvern (H.O)
44 McKinley St. Malvern (H.O.) 7 Central Park Rd. (H.O.)
40 Boston Av. New dwelling in N.C.O 29 Burke Rd. (H.O.)
19 Kardella St. (NCO and DDO)

(Government grants???)

38 Cawkell St. Malvern Construction of 3 dwellings.

25-35 Tooronga Rd. Use of land for food & drink premises in Public Use Zone & reduction in car parking requirements.

11 Alcalá Av. Four 2 storey development.

1975-1977 Malvern Rd. 9 lot subdivision.

4 Pine Gr. Malvern First floor timber addition to 'one of a pair' red brick Edwardian pair.

76 Glenferrie Rd. Amend Condition 3 of application to allow for 7 practitioners.

136-138 Darling Rd. 4 dwellings...two 2 storey. Council Mtg. Oct. 19....Notice of Decision to Grant a Permit.

10 Batesford Rd. 3 storey apartment building.