



# Malvern East Group

**MEG Supports *PLANNING BACKLASH***

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## **MEG Newsletter....Sept./Oct. 2022**

### **From the Convenor's Desk**

In Business Age on October 22 'Little Milton' was advertised For Sale and it reminded me of a previous time this property in Albany Rd. Toorak was advertised For Sale. I went with another committee member of the then fledgling organization Save our Suburbs to "have a sticky" at this heritage house. Alas, we couldn't look inside but we could roam the grounds. The landscape design was by Edna Walling and the house was designed by Muriel Stott, one of the few women architects in the 1920s.

'Little Milton' was built in 1926 on a subdivision from the Whernside estate. Yes, even in those days subdivision was allowed. The house was designed in the 'Old English/Arts and Crafts style' possibly modelled on Great Milton, a large residence in The Cotswolds. Then I noticed in Planning Alerts that 36 Tower Rd. Glen iris is labelled "non contributory" and is to be demolished and I recall a recent decision by VCAT to allow Korowa to demolish a number of Art Deco homes on Malvern Rd. Glen Iris to build a primary school and a day care centre... (WITH global warming outdoor surfaces)... and I despair.

Have you seen what developers have done (and are doing) to our major roads? Early this century residents' groups were springing up all over this State in defiance of planning laws that allowed destruction of heritage places and our neighbourhood and some 20 years later we are seeing the slow demise of these groups along with the destruction wrought by developers.

MEG is 17 years old and at our recent meeting we had too few members to hear what State Government has in store for us if it is returned to office it is clear that residents are not interested in keeping MEG going as a 'planning' group. The combination of the death of local newspapers and the "aren't we wonderful" quarterly paper from Council have together left a gap in communication with "the people" and it seems that MEG partially fills that gap with our 'snippets'..... but that is not our aim!

***Our aim in 2005 .....To preserve, foster and improve the general appearance of the area for the advantage of residents and to ensure that Malvern East retains its present residential character.***

### **Lots of land in rail way.....H.S. Sept.4**

*"Up to 83 properties are likely to be taken over or demolished to build the Melbourne Airport Rail Link, including dozens of commercial and industrial buildings."*

57 of these properties are privately owned and are likely to be bought out and others are public buildings either owned by Councils or utilities.

*".....many of these properties are within a public acquisition overlay introduced at the start of this century when a plan to build an airport rail line was first floated....."*

MEG understands that a rail link to the airport was first floated by Henry Bolte in 1963 before Tullamarine airport was opened and it's been floating ever since! There must be no value for developers in such a link!

In The Age on September 26 Jacinta Allen said, *"The Western Rail Plan is one the vital projects our growing city and state needs...it's part of our suburban rail and road blitz."*

AND

60 years later we hear

'early works will soon begin to construct the airport line.' Gosh!!!

### **In praise of public parks and social hearts of cities The Age Oct.8**

*"The past couple of years have shown us how important parks are for our mental wellbeing."*

*"Municipal governments know the magic of public parks and their importance in making the environs greener and more liveable....."*

*"The battle with developers over public spaces continues...."*

MEG hopes that the Stonnington councillors read this article and those who fought to destroy Percy Treyvaud Memorial park feel just a twinge of guilt. Where were the Greens? Certainly not trying to SAVE a park but intent on seeing its demise under 5,000sq.m. of concrete and some artificial surfaces to add somewhat to global warming.

### **Door opens to housing scheme talks The Age Oct.8**

*"Eight months after the Property Council drove the Andrews government to shelve a plan for affordable housing through a levy on developers, the group is calling for more low-cost homes...and might agree to foot some of the bill."* Gad!!

They want cuts in red tape, incentives for private developers to create more affordable units across Victoria and they *"advocated a scheme where developers could contribute to the costs."*

If you had come to the MEG Meeting on October 12 you would have heard that if the Andrews government wins the election on November 26 one of the items on its agenda is a proposal is to fast track applications for 5 storeys of units. Fast-tracking means that YOU HAVE NO SAY! Developers do nothing for the environment in which we live unless they get something in return and with fast tracking they get the pesky residents out of the picture so there are no objections and no appeal rights.

Have you SEEN that frightful mess that the MRC has built on the land between Normanby Rd. and Station St.?

### **Planting trees grows value Domain September 24**

*"...trees and plants can add value to your property...particularly trees strategically placed in front and back yards that can provide shade over a house."* They can reduce energy costs.

*"If using trees as natural climate control...the best options are small to medium-sized Deciduous trees including maples, pyrus and crepe myrtles. They provide greater value in the summer (north or west side of the house) and allow winter sunlight into the house."*

***"What you plant can make a big dollar impact on your property."***

### **HEAVEN IN BACKYARD H.S. October 23**

*"People are wanting more green space in their gardens and are using it a lot more, so they're willing to spend more on their garden."*

Victorians are spending huge sums in a post COVID spree and landscape architects are in high demand. Apparently the budget for garden design has increase dramatically in the past few years and one landscape architect said,

*"Rarely do we see a budget less than **\$150,000.**"* (GASP from MEG!)

Another said,

*"...it is difficult to landscape for less than \$100,000 unless you want to get your hands dirty. A quarter of a million is a pretty consistent residential budget."*

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### **Labor-linked lobbyist eyes legal action The Age Sept.2**

"A Victorian shadow minister and the Liberal Party's state director have been threatened with defamation by a labor-linked lobbyist after the opposition asked whether an improper factional deal was behind his sister's promotion to the planning ministry." Louise Staley is the opposition's spokeswoman for government scrutiny and she launched "a legally protected tirade against lobbyist John-Paul Blandthorn, describing him as a 'factional hack', and called the threat of legal action "a media stunt."

MEG has not heard any more about this story. Have you?

### **Housing solution all in planning      The Age Sept.12**

Domenico Cerantino's solution to the problem of housing affordability.

"Large-scale build-to-rent projects are one practical solution and state government's Commitment to affordable housing developments is another (much needed) response to those on the brink of crisis. But a lot more could be done **if only planners would allow it.** (Groan!!! We all know what's next!)

The simple way to more housing is to "**scrap the mandatory maximum number of storeys in neighbourhood and general residential zones.**"

This is exactly what developers and those associated with the development industry have wanted since the **residential zones legislation** was introduced by Matthew Guy when he was Planning Minister during 2010-2014.

This is exactly why you joined MEG....i.e. to retain your right to object against inappropriate development proposed by those who wish to steal the neighbourhood character of the suburbs.

### **These pointless council projects just don't rate      H.S. September 2**

"It was not so long ago that Australia's local councils got on with the job of delivering on the three Rs...roads, rates and rubbish. However, barely a day passes without another example of the new "R" woke councils are obsessed with....**righteousness.**"

(If you haven't been to a Council Meeting or watched one online or even read an agenda document it's time you did.)

"An arms race using your money is under way between local councils that are going to extreme lengths to show how virtuous they are when it comes to woke ideology, whether ratepayers want it or not."

The author of this article is Dr. Bella D'Abbrera, Director of the Foundations of Civilisation program at the Institute of Public Affairs.

### **Owners face 50pc tax on Andrews' rail loop      Financial Review....Sept.2**

"Large landowners faced being slugged with a 50 per cent property tax under unprecedented new powers granted to Victoria's Suburban Rail Loop Authority to rezone land up to 1.6 kilometres around each proposed station..."

The cost of the Suburban Rail Loop has blown out to a cost of \$125 billion, from \$50 billion. The proposed 50% tax will not apply to existing homeowners in the 1.6 kilometre area.

"Fifteen stations are planned as part of the 90 kilometre tail loop. Four immediate stations are proposed for the 26 kilometre first stage from Cheltenham to Box Hill, Clayton, Monash, Glen Waverley and Burwood."

Just a couple of new snippets about the Suburban Rail Loop. Prime Minister Albanese said that the Federal Government will give \$2.2 billion towards the cost AND "the Andrews government has not submitted a business case to Infrastructure Australia for the Suburban Rail Loop and a range of experts question the benefits of the project."

**From MEG...**Have you noticed that no government talks in thousands or even millions any more?

### **Shoddy builders, plumbers exposed      H.S. Sept. 4**

"The Sunday Herald Sun can reveal more than 200 builders and plumbers were fined a total of \$1.013m by the Victorian Building Authority (VBA) in the past two financial years.

There were 6810 total complaints received by the authority regarding builders and plumbers in the 2020-2022 financial years."

There was a total of 6,810 complaints and "almost 60 practitioners' licences were suspended while 25 were cancelled and 16 disqualified."

Buyer beware!!!

### **Sex work from home H.S. Oct. 29**

"Sex workers will be able to set up shop next to kindergartens, schools and churches in a 'free-for-all' when new state government reforms are rolled out across Victoria. Changes to the Victorian Planning Provisions will allow sexual services to be offered without a permit from any house.

Ratepayers Victoria spokesman Dean Hurlston said the changes 'go too far."

He went on to say, "Sex work will be allowed anywhere anytime."

According to a DELWP spokesperson, "...the owner and occupier of a home-based business was responsible for ensuring they did not **adversely affect the amenity of the area.**"

The department will not be listening to any complaints about this.

If it happens in your street you must complain to the council ...

.and MEG wishes you all the luck in the world!!

### **Great Wall of Yarra falls after citizens take a stand The Age Sept.2**

"A council meeting desk barricade that angered Yarra ratepayers last week will be removed, as officials insist it was never intended to drive a wedge between councillors and their community." Really!!

## **Local News**

### **Some Snippets**

News of the day is that CEO of Stonnington resigned prior to the review of her work by councillors, which was due on Oct. 18. It has been reported that she has been employed by Greater Dandenong Council as CEO and starts works there on December 19/2022. The most recent rumour is that our previous CEO, Warren Roberts, will act in this role until councillors appoint a new CEO. It's just a rumour!

Lots of comings and goings in Stonnington!

### **News of the Ward Meetings that aren't really Ward Meetings**

On Stonnington FB page it was reported that **30** people were with South Ward councillors at the 'meeting at a table' ..(3 tables actually...one per councillor)....and **50** met around the 3 tables with North Ward councillors.

East Ward councillors will meet with residents 'around 3 tables' on November 3 at 1650 High St. on November 3 at 7p.m. Can't wait!!!

### **Councillors strike over \$1.8m fund Sunday Age Oct.23**

"A group of Stonnington city councillors is boycotting special meetings to prevent the abolition of a controversial \$1.8million marketing scheme that may have been misused by local traders associations."

There are Traders Associations in Chapel St., Toorak Village, Toorak Rd. Sth Yarra Glenferrie Rd. and High St.

Traders pay a levy to Council and \$1.8 million is given to these groups "to provide them with marketing and promotions support via their trader associations."

Councillors Sehr, Klisaris, Morgan and Koce want this scheme to cease and are holding meetings which 4 of the other councillors are boycotting. Cr. Scott has a conflict of interest and is not present at any of these meetings.

We... (that's you and me) ...paid \$158,000 to Deloitte to prepare a report on the scheme and Deloitte recommended that the scheme be continued with some changes.

"Local government minister Melissa Horne met with Stonnington council this week....."

She will hold further meetings with them because it's possible that the councillors who are absent from these meetings are in breach of the Act as **councillors are expected to carry out their duties. (Wow!)**

Following that titbit about our erstwhile councillors , at Council Meeting on October 23 two of the 'striking councillors' were no longer 'striking.' A quorum was achieved and the Mayor could use her casting vote to end the the arrangement council had with the trader organisations. The meeting started at 6.30p.m. and Crs Griffin and Lew were unable to attend.

### **From a long time Greens voter**

In a letter to the Editor of The Age on October 20 a Greens voter said,

*"The Greens need the courage to become once again not a single issue Party but one focussed around a single issue,,,the environment."*

MEG hopes that this message gets through to Greens councillors not only in Stonnington but throughout the State. The Party is a far cry from the one led by Bob Brown.

### **Stadium in a Park...An Environmental Disaster**

Stonnington Residents and Ratepayer Collective....October 10

*"\$50 million and counting*

*5,000 sq.m of concrete and counting*

*148 trees felled and counting*

*The group informs Greens councillor that the project is not one bit GREEN.*

*Improved facilities for sports but at what cost to the environment."*

MEG agrees wholeheartedly with the views of this group regarding the 'stadium in a park.'

### **Corner of Glenferrie & Dandenong Rds....site opposite The Angel**

We saw in Bus. Age on Oct.23 a For Sale notice for this site. A 12 storey building will occupy The Angel site in the not too distant future so it's faintly possible that the new owner of this site could do the same....just to even things up a bit! The auction is on November 18/2022.

### **Malvern Valley shops in Chadstone Rd. Stonnington Leader...September 6**

*"Council spent \$1 million on digging up and re-building road and footpaths with the assurance that no shops would need to close.*

*As access to these shops was fenced off the traders had to close."*

It was reported to us by Stonnington Residents & Ratepayers that the works have major defects so it all had to be dug up AGAIN and shops had to be closed AGAIN.

More concrete and asphalt.

No plants. No trees.

### **Chadstone Shopping Centre H.S. September 7**

*"Chadstone shopping centre will undergo a \$71 million expansion, which will include dodgem cars, bowling and a new range of eateries. The Social Quarter at Chadstone, which will have a staggered opening from November spanning more than 10,350 sq.m will include six new dining retailers.....dodgem cars, Strike Bowling, Holey Moley and Hijinx Hotel....." (Truly unspeakable!)*

*"The precinct was designed in collaboration with leading architects....."*

SO PLEASED that they employed LEADING architects!

More about this expense of \$71 million came from "Vicinity Centres chief development officer Carol Viney said "the centre's team was 'proud' to be adding something unique to Chadstone."

### **Does this patch of grass earn more money than you?" Sunday Age ..Aug.28**

*"it doesn't hold down a job but this empty block of land in Toorak is set to make more money in a year-and-a-half than most workers would dream of. If it sells within its price*

*guide, the land will have increased in value by at least \$570,000 or up to \$1.75 million within 18 months."*

The block is at 7 Martin Court and was last traded in March 2021 for \$5,725,000. The site has approved plans for either 2 townhouses or a 'luxury' home. Stamp Duty on the sale of this land is \$315,000.

The agent for this land said, "*Land is the ultimate test of the market. Land is still sought after and still going up. They are just not making any more of it.*"

### **Planning Applications refused by councillors on October 24**

An application on Malvern Rd. Glen Iris (See final paragraph for street numbers.) for a four storey building, comprising 40 dwellings and 50 car spaces was recommended for approval with conditions by the Planning Department and subsequently refused by councillors. Another 4 storey building in High St. Malvern was also recommended for approval with conditions by the Planning Department and also refused by councillors. Both were in Garden Suburban Zones and both were the usual 'over the top' applications....developers trying to get as much as possible on a site. We now hold our collective breath in the hope that a VCAT member (or two) finds a way to stem the disaster that our major roads have become.

### **Shops in Caulfield Plaza**

No doubt you are all aware that Caulfield Plaza is owned by Monash University and no doubt you have heard rumour of its imminent closure at some time over the last 12 years or so. Here's another rumour! Staff at the pharmacy told a visitor to Melbourne that within about 9 months that business will be moving to the new shopping centre in the middle of the mess that the MRC has built between Normanby Rd. and Station St. and MEG was told that from the train a 'Click & Collect' Coles sign can be seen. We haven't been to "***Coles Caulfield Boulevard at 10 Station St.*** to see if a shopping centre is in operation already but we have been told that a Coles site at 3 Normanby Rd. will be opening very soon. That needs to be checked. Rumours abound! Apparently the 'old' Coles in the Plaza will be there for quite a while.

### **Just a bit more about the MRC and Caulfield Racecourse.**

We saw that there's a Planning Application at 31 Station St. (Glasshouse)  
*"To use the land for a hotel. To use land to sell and consume liquor. To reduce bicycle requirements and to install and use gaming machines."*

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

**33 Nott St.** Pt. dem. bldg. & works to dwelling in H.O.

**41 Manning Rd.** Pt. dem. bldg. & works to dwelling in H.O.

**1A & 1B Central park Rd.** 2 lot subdivision in H.O. (Single covenant on lot.)

**47 Webster St.** 3 townhouses.

**65 Wheatland Rd. Malvern** Pt. dem. & alterations to existing dwelling.

**3 Devonshire Rd.** Pt. dem. bldg. & works on a site less than 500sq.m. in H.O.

**5 Horace St. Malvern** . Dwelling alterations & vehicle crossings.

**15 Nirvana Av.** External alterations in H.O.

**36 Tower Rd. Glen iris** To be demolished.

**1667-1669 & 1671 -1673 Malvern Rd. Glen Iris.** 4 storeys, 40 dwellings and 50 car spaces. Refused by councillors at Council meeting Oct. 24. Garden Suburban Zone.

**1287,1289,1291, 1923 & 1295 High St. Malvern** 4 storeys, 28 dwellings and 78 car spaces. Refused by councillors at Council Meeting Oct. 24. Garden Suburban Zone.