

Your local voice



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Minutes of the General Meeting Wednesday, 23 July 2008, 7.45pm

1. Opening of Meeting

Tim Dalton opened the meeting at 7.55, and welcomed all participants.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Bob Sutherland and Peter Farrell.

3. Minutes

Minutes of the previous meeting, which had been circulated with the agenda, were accepted as presented. (Moved Eddie Irvine, seconded Chris Wilson)

4. Presentation from ACT election candidate, Norvan Vogt

Norvan Vogt will stand as a candidate of the Community Alliance Party in the ACT election to be held on 18 October 2008. He spoke briefly about his interest in community participation and inclusiveness and his concern that community activities seem to have decreased in recent years. He also spoke about development in the Molonglo Valley and the lack of consultation by the current ACT government.

5. Presentation by Mr Viv Straw of GHD

GHD is the company that carried out a second series of consultations in relation to the redevelopment of former school sites in Canberra. Mr Straw began by explaining the differences between the consultations that had been carried out by Purdon Associates and the one carried out by GHD. Purdon, he said, looked at the condition of existing buildings on 15 sites and made recommendations to the government. The government did not accept the recommendations on eight sites, but did adopt some of the recommendations on other sites.

- **Rivett:** The recommendation re building an aged care facility on the Rivett site was accepted, but it was decided to consult the community again on other issues about the site, in light of the feelings expressed by community members against having an aged care centre. Those feelings were that if an aged care centre were to go ahead, then the community wanted some input into issues such as ensuring there would be enough open space left, height limits, and provision of a public pathway through the centre so people could still get to the shops easily.
- **Weston:** The government decided to accept some community wishes, such as in relation to the oval, but wanted more consultation for the piece of land between the school and the oval.

GHD's task was:

- To inform the community about what had happened so far;
- To hold community forums and to set up a website so that people could express their wishes;
- To report back to the government on what was said.

GHD had set up a website, and people could telephone, email or write to GHD. After the forums were held, GHD drew up a list of questions, and did a phone survey of 300 houses in the immediate area of each of the former school sites. People have until 31 July to make a submission.

In addition to the community forums, GHD held a stakeholder meeting for a wide range of stakeholder groups.

In relation to the **Weston former school site**, the school buildings are to be kept and used for community service groups. The oval will be kept for a community park. People who attended the forum on Weston said that the area between the school and the oval should be kept as open space; that it should be kept better than the oval has been kept; and that it could be used for recreation. There was NO feeling that it should be sold off.

The tender process is to be run by Territory and Municipal Services Department (TAMS), to find tenants for the buildings and for renovation. There will be a neighbourhood hall. Some other wings need renovation.

In relation to the **Rivett former school site**, the government has decided to keep some buildings for community use, but to use the rest of the site for an aged care facility. People at the forum said that this facility should be developed by the government, NOT by developers. The Shepherd Centre will be in the pre-school, and Noah's Ark will stay. There has been no decision yet on the Warehouse Circus.

The community valued open space, and also wanted to keep access through the site to the shops. The school site is the centre of Rivett, and the community wanted to retain some of these attributes, and to keep some aspects of the site for community value. The community had expressed strongly that it would not consider multi-storey high-rise, large-scale development and private ownership to be appropriate, and that the site should not be fenced off from the community.

Tim Dalton, WCCC, noted that at Fisher, the development has taken up the whole site and the community has lost access.

GHD had recommended that a building be retained for use as a community hall. There would be a separate consultation process to develop a community park on that site, and that would cost about \$300,000.

Mr Straw said that GHD was aware of the submission by WCCC on a new community centre for Cooleman Court. They want the government to think holistically about community facilities in Weston, and to link development at the former school site with the proposed redevelopment of a community centre at Cooleman Court.

GHD will report to the government by 15 August 2008. GHD does not know if the government will make their report public.

Trevor Wilson said that candidates for the election should focus on getting for Weston Creek facilities that Weston Creek has lacked.

6. General Business

- WCCC chairman Tim Dalton announced that the **Annual General Meeting would be held on Wednesday, 27 August**. He invited people to volunteer for the committee, and said that as he would be standing down, the committee would especially need a new chair-person.
- Jenni Farrell said that a group called the Friends of the Caretaker's Cottage had been formed, and would meet on 28 July in the Community Centre at Coleman Court, Room 1, at 6.30. She said that there had been several suggestions as to how the Cottage might be used in the future" as an interpretive centre, like Calthorpe House; as a museum/gallery; or as a tearoom.
- Eddie Irvine said that the sewerage smell has been reduced, thanks to the scrubbers that the government installed following pressure from WCCC.
- Tim Dalton said that in relation to North Weston, there has been no indication yet that we will get any more information until the Standing Committee has finished its deliberations. The WCCC is to meet members of the Standing Committee on Tuesday, 29 July.

Tim and John Burke had a meeting with representatives of the National Capital Authority, who were supportive of WCCC's submission on North Weston.

The meeting was closed at 9.20pm