

*Your local voice*



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## **Minutes of the General Meeting Wednesday, 27 May 2009, 7.30pm**

### **1. Opening of meeting**

1. Meeting opened 7.40pm. 32 persons were present.

### **2. Apologies**

Tim Walshaw

### **3. Minutes**

The minutes of public meetings held on 30 April were distributed.

Motion: that the minutes of the last meeting be accepted. (Moved: Barbara Brinton; Seconded Simon Hearder) Motion was passed.

[Secretary's note: After this meeting, Chair John Burke pointed out to the Secretary that he had previously asked for a change to the minutes but that this had not been incorporated. The change referred to the termination of the meeting of 30 April, and reads:

About 45 minutes after the start of the meeting, Mr Burke (Chairman of the WCCC) suggested to the meeting that Mr Hutch was not providing information about the internal and external renovations of the building that would give the attendees an indication of what the building would look like when the renovations were completed. Mr Burke said that the meeting was called primarily for this purpose. Bearing this in mind, he asked the attendees to vote (by show of hands) on whether to close the meeting. Nearly all of the attendees raised their hands in support of closing the meeting. Mr Burke then declared the meeting closed.

It is proposed that at the public meeting on 24 June 2009 the Chair will ask for a motion to amend the minutes of 25 March to include this paragraph.]

### **4. Treasurer's Report**

The Treasurer reported that WCCC has approximately \$3300 on hand, which will be enough to get through until August.

- A motion to accept the Treasurer's Report was passed. (Moved: Chris Wilson; Seconded: Susan McMaster)

### **5. Presentation: Community Parks at Former Weston and Rivett School**

Presenters Fay Hug and Diana Hill (Parks, Conservation and Lands (PCL) section, Department of Territory and Municipal Services) and Neil Hobbes and Karina Harris (landscape architects)

were introduced by John Burke.

Ms Hug said that in 2008 the ACT Government made decisions about what to do with the former school sites, and it was decided to create eight community Parks, two of which were to be at Weston and Rivett. Late in 2008, PCL did a preliminary community consultation, parallel to the consultation that GHD did on behalf of the Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services (DHCS). The results of these consultations were collated and a draft plan was drawn up. The purpose of tonight's presentation is to seek community comments on the draft plan.

### **Weston former school site**

A set of plans showing the site with possible uses were displayed. Copies of these plans were distributed to some of the tables for WCCC members to examine. Features of the plans include the following:

- The architects tried to avoid duplication of equipment that already exists at the skateboard park;
- As much as possible, elements of playground equipment, seats, pavers, etc would be re-used;
- The poles that were at the school would be put near the entrance off the higher part of Hilder Street;
- There will need to be a safety fence if play equipment is within 20 metres of a road;
- DHCS architects are looking at provision of car parking.

The budget for each park has been set at \$300,000. This amount is to include all construction costs, consultants fees, equipment, etc.

The park will include places for elderly people to walk, big areas for families to picnic, and off-leash areas for dogs. Planning for the park will include using the view to Mt Stromlo, for example, for seating that faces the view, etc. There is a bank across the site that limits the way the area can be used. There have been mixed reactions on public art for the community parks, but it is expected that the park will contain some art works.

Ms Hug said she had feedback forms and would be glad if WCCC members could complete a form with their comments and return the form to her. An on-line survey is available on the TAMS website. [**Note:** The feedback forms have been put on the WCCC website.]

### **Comments and Questions from WCCC members**

Q: Can waste water (? from sewage) be used to water the oval? Will the oval be reinstated in the future?

A: Not sure about water, but it is possible the oval may be reinstated at some time in the future. There will be no fence between the park and the oval.

Q: What about a heated pool for the whole of Weston Creek? In southern Canberra, there is only one pool, at Tuggeranong.

Q: What sort of play equipment will there be?

A: There will be a climbing wall by the skateboard area. Other equipment will include swings, slides, hoops, and some twisty metal elements. The architects are looking at traditional equipment, and are thinking of re-using equipment from other former school sites.

Q: What about a large slide or ground slide, perhaps using the bank?

Q: What surfaces will be used for the play area?

A: Rubberised surfaces are good for wheelchair and pram access, but can be damaged by heat, smells, and is frequently vandalised. Rubber avoids damage to the head, but long bones can still be broken. Bark is a good surface, because it is soft, and cheaper than rubber.

Q: What about paths to the oval, to Cooleman Court?

A: The path system links to the oval and Cooleman Court. No physical shade structure is planned but there are some existing trees.

Q: The playground that has recently been removed had wonderful shade. Why can't that area still be used?

Q: Does PLC realise that the trees and seats were originally provided by the community? This should be taken into account, and the trees and seats preserved.

Q: To what extent does the plan provide protection against prevailing wind, such as walls, plantings?

A: The site is windy, and would need a low structure, not trees, to make much difference.

Q: Will dogs be allowed?

A: Weston Oval is listed as a No Dog area, not even dogs on a leash are permitted.

Q: Is PLC aware of which areas are designated as No Dog areas?

### **Rivett former school site**

#### **Features of the draft plan**

Some trees will be kept, but some dead elms have to be removed. Screening plants will need to be planted;

There will be an entry-way from the Rivett shops;

There is an existing path, which will be kept;

A loop of the path will be built with fitness equipment along it;

There will be swings, play equipment;

Tree plantings will include fruit trees such as apricots, olives, pomegranates, etc;

There will be a BBQ area at the hub of the park.

#### **Comments and Questions**

Q: Has PLC considered that fruit trees will bring fruit fly to the area? Residents have been struggling to keep their own fruit trees clear of fruit fly and do not want to see fruit trees in the park, which may not be sprayed to keep them from getting infested, bring problems to domestic gardens.

Q: Could disabled access be enhanced and the surface of paths repaired, because access to the walkway is difficult at present?

Q: Need to improve the lighting, otherwise there may be problems at night.

A: Lighting is not included in the landscape architects' brief.

Q: Choice of trees: It is nice to have grass for kids to play on and shady trees around. If PLC were to plant gum trees, it would not be possible for kids to play in bare feet.

Q: Will the parks be irrigated? What about the water need of the trees?

A: New plants will be watered at first, but once they are established, there will be no watering. BBQs need a tap (spring-loaded, to turn off automatically) and power. These taps could be used

to fill a bucket for watering trees.

Q: Could water be collected from the shopping centre? Could the Government encourage water collection schemes?

Q: If good spaces are provided, the community will use them, which will build up community security. If building construction takes a long time, it will probably be impossible to prevent vandalism.

Q: What is the timeframe for demolition of the primary school?

A: Not sure about demolition plans, but for the community parks, after this round of consultation, a second draft will be drawn up, and this in turn will be presented to community groups about September. After that, final plans will be drawn up, then tenders will be called, and it is possible that construction will begin around October/November 2009.

Q: Have mothers' groups at pre-schools been contacted to find out what they might want in community parks?

A: PLC representatives will be at Cooleman Court on Saturday, 30 May, in the morning from 10 to 12.

### Summary

Ms Hug asked for an indication of support for particular elements for community parks.

- Fitness equipment                      General approval
- Play equipment                         General approval
- Community art                         Many approved, but not all.

Ms Hug noted that the Bush Fire Memorial was a good example of public art that most people approved. BBQs might have solid panels with images of leaves etched into them, and in the structure of roofs. Also, there might be stencils in concrete, moulding of concrete, and sign elements at the entry-way.

When asked how much money would be allocated for artworks, Ms Hug said she did not have a figure, but it might be around 5% of the total budget of \$300,000. If anyone has any ideas, please contact Ms Hug.

- Mixture of native and non-native vegetation                      General approval
- Fruit trees                                Audience divided approx. 50-50
- Re-use of play equipment              General approval

Barbara Brinton suggested that the area should commemorate the history of Weston Creek and the input of the community over the years, perhaps by putting some plaques on low walls, edges, etc.

At Weston there will be:

- Artwork
- Fitness equipment
- Play equipment
- Spaces for all ages
- Wind protection
- Seating

This ended the presentation by PLC and the landscape architects.

### **General Business**

1. **Mobile telephone tower on Eucumbene Drive:** The tower has recently been heightened and the area of its base doubled. Nearby residents were not consulted, and there are some concerns about transmissions from the tower and possible effects on local residents. In addition, landscaping that was promised when the tower was installed has not been done.

WCCC Chair John Burke asked the member to speak to him about this matter after the meeting.

2. Heated swimming pool

3. Have questions about road markings at junction of Streeton and Namatjira Drives that were raised at an earlier WCCC meeting been answered by Roads ACT yet?

The meeting was closed at 9.15.

**Next Public Meeting: WEDNESDAY, 24 JUNE 2009, 7.30pm**  
**Topic: New Southern Cemetery**