

*Your local voice*



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**Draft Minutes of the WCCC General Meeting  
Wednesday, 24 February 2010**

**Open Forum on Weston Creek District Park (Former CIT Arboretum Site)**

1. Chairman Tim Dalton opened the meeting at 7.35. Sixty-five (65) persons were present.
2. Apologies were received from John Milne, Steve Blume, Katy Gallagher, Caroline Le Couteur, Greg O'Regan, Ian Collier, Jeremy Hansen, Tracey Jones.
3. The **Open Forum** commenced immediately. Tim Dalton displayed a large-scale map of the arboretum site and showed the boundaries that have been agreed by the ACT Government. An extensive area has been retained for the District Park, and includes a significant garden area as well as the large plantings of a wide range of trees. Mr Dalton said he hoped that by autumn 2011 it will be possible to have a Weston Creek Autumn Festival at the site. He took questions from the floor.

Q: Who will maintain the park?

A: It is expected that the Department of Territory and Municipal Services (TAMS) will continue to maintain the grounds and will ensure the area is adequately watered. Establishing an adequate water supply for the future has high priority.

Q: What will be the capacity of the big carpark at the site?

A: Don't know yet.

Q: What is the time-frame for the refurbishment of the park?

A: WCCC would like the park to be open to the public by 2011. It is hoped that there will be some provision in the next ACT Government Budget for the necessary work. Further development will come gradually.

Q: Has anything come of the proposal for a walking track/cycle trail to Woden?

A: Tim does not know of any current plans.

Q: Is there a WCCC sub-committee working on this?

A: WCCC would love to set up a Working Group if there are any people willing to volunteer. Anyone interested should give their name to the Secretary after the meeting and we will set up a Group.

Q: Could we organise a walk through the gardens?

A: Yes, how about midday one Sunday?

It was decided to set the date of Sunday, 21 March 2010, at 12 noon, for WCCC to lead a walk. Those interested should meet in the carpark. WCCC will put this date up on the website.

Phil Unger, a former staff member of the CIT, said there are 2 Chinese tulip trees, several hazelnuts, some tea shrubs, and some unusual honeysuckles in the gardens.

Q: Will the park be fenced?

Q: Has WCCC had any contact with Stromlo High School about the development of the District Park? If the school has a horticulture department, the students might be able to avail themselves of the arboretum and help with some of the maintenance.

Q: Will there be a playground for children within the park? What about facilities such as toilets, BBQs, signage, water bubblers, and so on? Will there be any paths or trails? Will the paths be wheel-chair friendly?

A: There are many little paths already. We will have to see what is there and then decide if we need more.

Q: If equipment is installed, we need to ensure that it is good, nature-friendly equipment. We will need to consider the possibility of vandalism and how to prevent it. Also, what lighting will be needed?

Q: The former CIT arboretum is the wrong place for a district park. We should be looking to develop a park and facilities at Weston Oval.

A: Tim Dalton explained that the WCCC is trying to preserve the arboretum, and that if we had not lobbied for a district park, the ACT Government would have taken the land for residential development.

Q: What will be the capacity of the carpark at the top of the site, near the area that is to be developed for Defence housing? Will it be sufficient to take the number of cars that might come for a festival?

A: Tim said that Ross McKay is facilitating discussion on such issues for the Chief Minister's Department, and WCCC will address these questions to him, as well as to other government departments.

Tim explained that there will be road along the top of the park site on to Heysen Street, and that this road will join Unwin Place, allowing better access to North Weston from the south. A new roundabout will be installed at the junction of Streeton Drive and Unwin Place, and Dixon Drive will be re-aligned to meet the roundabout opposite Unwin Place.

Q: Will another playground be put in at the former Weston Primary School site?

A: Yes, a Community Park is being developed already and work has commenced.

One member of the audience suggested that the park could be named 'Tony Featherstone Park', in honour of Tony Featherstone who was the first principal of the CIT School of Horticulture. Tim Dalton suggested that the park would give Weston Creek a venue and facility that could become a focus for community activities, like Gardening Australia or The School Next Door.

Q: What about the xeriscape garden?

A: That will be absorbed within the Islamic School.

Q: Members of the Horticulture Society are still tending the xeriscape garden. Would they be able, perhaps, to continue looking after it in cooperation with the Islamic School, in order to preserve the garden? The xeriscape garden is better than the similar garden in Melbourne, and is about 25 years old. It is a real asset, and has benefited from the application of a lot of technology right from its beginning. There was a lot of cooperation between ACTEW and the CIT when the xeriscape garden was first set up.

Q: Could the park become a site for weddings?

The Chairman closed the Open Forum and there was a short break for tea and coffee.

#### **4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes as distributed were approved. (Moved: Lance Williamson; Seconded: Simon

Header)

## 5. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer reported that WCCC has \$4055.49 in the bank. Bills paid include: \$427 for printing of flyer; \$103 for Transact phone connection (January) and \$133 (December); \$176 for website maintenance; \$832.86 for insurance (through the ACT Government).

**Motion:** That these bill be passed for payment. (moved: Chris Wilson; Seconded: Tom Anderson) Motion was passed.

## 6. General Business

1. As an indication of the amount of community interest in the former CIT arboretum, there have been 547 hits on the Arboretum information on the WCCC website since 4 February this year (i.e., in 21 days).
2. There will be a public information session on the **South Canberra Cemetery** at the Southern Cross Club tomorrow night, 25 February, from 6pm.
3. There will be two information sessions about the **residential development of the Molonglo Valley** on 1 March (3 – 6 pm) and 4 March (5 – 8pm), at St Peter's Church, Weston.
4. **Parking at Cooleman Court:** Roads ACT has done a survey and has noted that the carparks are at full capacity during peak demand periods. They will look at parking at the gym. Contracts have been let for construction of the first stages of John Gorton Drive, the arterial road from Streeton Drive into the southern part of the Molonglo Valley, and work will probably start in 6-8 weeks from now.
5. WCCC has written to TAMS about maintenance of the **garden in Trenerry Square**, and it is to be hoped that some work will be done in the next budget year.
6. Simon Header reported that although contracts have been let for **construction of the playgrounds at the former Weston and Rivett Primary School sites**, play equipment will not be installed until April and will not be ready for use until may 2010.
7. Flyers for WCCC meetings are being done by a new printer, a Weston Creek person.

The meeting closed at 9.35pm.

### NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, 31 March 2010, at 7.30pm

**Anne Murray, president of Woden Seniors Club will speak on "Woden Seniors Development Proposal and the Future for Seniors"**