

Your local voice



www.wccc.com.au
info@wccc.com.au

PO Box 3701
Weston Creek ACT 2611

Telephone (02) 6288 8975

Minutes of the WCCC General Meeting Wednesday, 30 November 2011

1. Meeting opened

Chair Tom Anderson opened the meeting at 8.10pm. (Meeting delayed till 8pm due to workshop on Master Plan from 6 - 7.30. About fifty persons were present. Tom welcomed two members of the ACT Legislative Assembly, Ms Caroline Le Couteur and Mr Jeremy Hanson, and also welcomed Mr Peter Reynolds of *The Chronicle*.

2. Apologies: John Milne, Rose Jurd, John Burke, Katy Gallagher, Rosemary Drabsch, Bob Sutherland, Heather Hughes.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous public meeting (October 2011) were accepted as circulated. (Moved: Trevor Wilson; Seconded: Simon Hearder. Motion passed.)

4. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer reported that WCCC had a credit balance of \$2553.00. He said that WCCC would soon receive a new grant of \$12, 144 from the ACT Government.

5. Presentation: Master Plan for the Weston Group Centre, by Katharine Campbell, Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate (ESDD), ACT Government

Ms Campbell said that the study area for the Master Plan covered the area bounded roughly by Hindmarsh Drive and Streeton Drive from Cooleman Court down to the Weston Oval and the former Weston Primary School to the north and to Mirinjani retirement village on the east. It is an area that has almost no residential buildings, but is an area that draws people into it.

- The Master Plan is being done now because of the impact that development of the Molonglo Valley will have on the Weston Group Centre.
- The Master Plan will not be a statutory document but will establish a vision for the Group Centre and plant a strategy to manage development and change over time. It will take account of the unique character of the Weston Creek area and the Weston Group Centre in particular.
- The interests of all stakeholders - public/government, community, and private business - will be taken into account.
- ESDD will manage the Master Plan.
- The Master Plan will be implemented according to established ACT Government plans and processes, including:

- the Territory Plan, which provides the criteria for land use
- sale of territory-owned land, through the Economic Directorate
- capital works, which deals with infrastructure
- industry opportunities
- community involvement.
- Master Plans for Kingston and Tuggeranong have been developed in recent years, and provide examples of the kinds of matters that will be considered in the Weston Group Centre Master Plan.
- Process and Key Dates for the Weston Group Centre Master Plan:
 - 12 November 2011: Information Session at Cooleman Court; 150 feedback forms received.
 - 30 November 2011: Ideas Workshop at Weston Club
 - December 2011 - February 2012: Draft Master Plan to be drawn up
 - February - March 2012: Options workshop open to public to be held
 - May 2012: Draft Master Plan for public comment
 - June 2012: Final Master Plan ready
 - August - September 2012: Implementation Plan to be drawn up; Endorsement by ACT Government
- Information about features people want for the Weston Group Centre that were received from the Information Session at Cooleman Court and from the Ideas Workshop will be put on the ESDD website.
- Molonglo Valley will be developed in three stages:
 - Stage 1: one to five years: 7,000 - 10,000 people
 - Stage 2: five to ten years: 18,000 people
 - Stage 3: ten years plus: 55,000 people

A group centre will be built in Molonglo in Stage 2 of development; that is, in seven to ten years' time from now.

A question and answer session followed.

Q: Three years ago when the impact of development in Molonglo was being discussed by WCCC members, it was clear that the ACT Government then had no plans to improve facilities in Weston Creek. Some Weston Creek residents are concerned about the impact of people from Molonglo on the character of the Weston Creek community - the neighbourly atmosphere and the ability to satisfy all basic requirements easily and conveniently within the local area, what some call the "village atmosphere" of Cooleman Court. Residents tend to be very loyal to the local area. It is possible there may be some resentment of Molonglo residents who have to use Weston Group Centre facilities.

A: Weston Creek will have to deal with the impact from Molonglo, and it is unlikely that much improvement can be made quickly. The Government knows that parking is an issue: Canberrans like to park on the surface, near shops, but this may not be possible in the future.

Q: From the figures given tonight, it is likely that in 7 to 10 years' time there will be an extra 18,000 people who will need to use Weston Creek facilities. Is it likely that something will be done **in time** to cope with this increase?

A: Jeremy Hanson: On 17 November there was a debate in the Legislative Assembly on the Master Plan. Members of the Legislative Assembly discussed these sorts of issues.

A: Caroline Le Couteur: We are very well aware that this is a big issue for Weston Creek residents.

Q: There is no health centre or medical centre at Cooleman Court. This is a matter of concern for many residents, and should be considered in the Master Plan.

Q: The Indoor Cricket Centre brings in people from outside Weston Creek, as does ALDI supermarket. This is mainly what has caused parking problems. The ACT Government needs to think about parking **before** approving plans for development or for enlargement of existing buildings.

Q: In Stage 1 of the Molonglo development, people will start living there but will have no facilities. Why not bring development of the Molonglo group centre forward, so they have their own facilities?

Q: Will there be any local shops in the first three suburbs of Molonglo?

A: Jeremy Hanson: yes, there will be local shops and schools.

Q: If we end up with multi-storey parking, will it have to be paid parking?

A: If someone wants to buy parking land and the ACT Government sells the land, then the Government will not have any control over whether charges are made for parking. It is likely that parking at group centres **will** be pay parking.

Q: Is there any thought for encouraging long-term movement away from cars?

A: In "Transport for Canberra", the transport strategy that was released in October, this is one of the options that the Government hopes to encourage. There was a presentation on transport at the October meeting of WCCC and minutes are up on the WCCC website. There is also information about the transport strategy on the Government website.

Q: With all the suburban petrol stations in Weston Creek gone, the only petrol station left is the one at Cooleman Court. Its location makes the traffic flow in Brierley Street dangerous for both cars and pedestrians. The whole traffic flow needs to be considered and some better solution found. People will **not** come shopping on a bus, because they can't carry everything.

A: Parking is included in all master plans as a major issue.

Q: Weston Creek is seen as an area with an ageing population, but many young families are moving in, and it is likely that within the next 10 to 15 years the population will increase and the demographic will change.

Q: The community centre is very tired and needs refurbishing or replacing. We need a better community centre with better facilities.

Q: I am perturbed. Are we going to get just a plan, but no money from the government to implement it and in the end nothing will be done?

A: Jeremy Hanson: In the Legislative Assembly, the Government first rejected any debate on Master Plans, but then introduced a Master Plan for Hawker shops. The Liberal Party will either execute the Master Plan, if we win government, or we will try to force the Government to execute the plan.

Ms Campbell finished by asking members of the audience to fill out a feedback form, and this was a real chance to say what residents wanted for the Weston Group Centre.

7. General Business

Tom Anderson said he had had a meeting with the Chief Minister a week ago, and gave a summary of issues he had raised with her.

The meeting closed at 9.45pm.

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, 29 February 2012, at 7.30pm