

Your local voice



www.wccc.com.au
info@wccc.com.au
PO Box 3701
Weston Creek ACT 2611
Telephone (02) 6288 8975

Minutes of General Meeting Wednesday, 25 February 2015

Opening of Meeting

The meeting was opened at 7.34pm. The Chair welcomed members and guests

Apologies: Andrew Barr, Gai Brodtmann

Guests: Georgina Connely – Chronicle

31 people attended the meeting.

PRESENTATION

Pedal Power – Richard Bush and Jason Phong

Pedal Power lobbies government to improve bicycle infrastructure.

Statistics Australia Wide

- 55% of households have a bike (75% in Canberra).
- 37% have ridden in the last year (47% in Canberra).
- 17% have ridden in the last week (24% in Canberra).
- 1.4m bikes are sold in Australia per year.

A study done in August showed that 2.6% of Canberrans ride to work. The Sullivan Creek cycle path is the busiest in Canberra. Weston Creek to Civic around Scrivener Dam is also very popular.

Q. Has any cost benefit analysis been done on the cost of building cycle paths etc?

A. \$3m pa is spent on bike lanes and footpaths. No real cost benefit has been done.

Cycling to School

- This has reduced significantly from the 1950s and 60s.
- It is now starting to increase again in the last 2-3 years as it is good exercise and safe routes are available.

Q. Why aren't more people riding?

A. Canberra:

- Distance is a factor due to the outlying town centres. People will ride up to 5km to work.
- On road bike paths are used by commuters but they can be dangerous due to the speed of the traffic.
- Pedal Power is urging the government to have separated cycle paths which several capital cities in Australia have. The roads are wide enough for this to occur. Green belts

and shared paths are being used a lot but tree roots are coming through.

- The cycle paths are not wide enough for cyclist and pedestrians.
- The government target is 6% of people riding to work. The current figure is 2.6%
- Pedal Power does a count of cyclists going to and from Civic and town centres once per year. The government uses the figures.
 - 2014 – 5000
 - 2012 – 3200
- Town Centres are a problem (including Weston Creek). There are underpasses etc. to get to the Town Centres but once you are there the paths stop and there are no defined routes – only roads and car parks. Weston Creek, Woden Town Centre and Belconnen Town Centre are all problems.

The Weston Group Masterplan recognises the issue. Brierley Street/Trenerry Square could work well as a shared space. It would slow the traffic down.

Why encourage more cyclists

- Less congestion on the road.
- Less pollution – 22% of ACT greenhouse gas emissions are from transport.
- More cyclists leads to less people prone to being a burden on the health system.

Cyclists on the Road

- A bicycle is a vehicle and has the same rules as cars.
- The vulnerable road users' enquiry has led to a government publicity campaign – same rules same rights.
- There are two trials currently occurring:
 - Overtaking distance – have to leave 1m when overtaking a cyclist up to 60kmh and 1.5m when the speed is higher than 60kmh.
 - Legal to ride at walking pace over a pedestrian crossing.
- The more bikes on the road the fewer accidents there are because motorists become more used to looking out for cyclists.

Weston Creek is especially attractive for cyclists

- It is close to Stromlo Forest Park.
- It is the beginning and end of a cycle loop around Uriarra Road and Stromlo.
- There is a good path form Streeton Drive to Scrivener Dam, around the lake and across Commonwealth Avenue without having to cross a road. This is going to be upgraded to 3m under the Greens/ALP Parliamentary Agreement.
- Molonglo Park will have bike paths.

Pedal Power

- Not for profit organisation
- It has 5300 members and is the biggest community club in Canberra outside clubs such as Southern Cross and Vikings etc.
- It has 4 part time paid staff and everyone else is a volunteer.
- Advocates for improved infrastructure.
- Runs:
 - recreation rides
 - cycling events
 - learn to ride courses
- Has a magazine put out by journalists.

Q. If 1m law is required on both sides of the road then you have to break the law sometimes by crossing onto the other side.

A. You don't have to break the law you can wait until it is safe to pass. It will make a case for government to have better verges.

Q. Does this apply to all roads?

A. A bicycle is a vehicle and is entitled to use the whole lane. Wait until it is safe to overtake.

Q. Are Park and Ride facilities increasing the number of cyclists?

A. More people are now using them.

Q. Has the government asked Pedal Power to do a count of Park and Ride users?

A. No.

Q. The ACT government is putting in Park and Ride cages for cyclists which costs money. How are they being monitored?

A. You have to use your MyWay pass to access the cages.

Q. Has paid parking in the Parliamentary Triangle led to more cyclists?

A. Yes.

Q. What about the enforcement of rules for both cyclists and drivers?

A. Pedal Power makes submissions regularly to illustrate the importance of lower speed limits. Injuries increase exponentially as speeds increase.

Q. Can you advocate on my behalf if I am cut off by a car?

A. Yes.

Q. Do cyclists need to be easier to see?

A. They need to use lights and wear bright coloured tops.

Q. The ACT government is spending \$3m per year on cycling. With only 5000 cyclists this is \$600 per cyclist.

A. This includes pedestrians and is a small amount compared to roads.

Registration and Third Party

- Virtually everyone in Pedal Power have cars so they are paying registration etc.
- Cyclists do not wear the road out.
- Do you want children to have to pay?
- The administrative costs are high.
- There are very few injuries.
- Pedal Power membership is \$75pa and includes 3rd party insurance which costs \$20-30pa.
- The claims are very small as evidenced by the low insurance costs.

Q. How does a driver identify a cyclist who damages a car? If you have a number plate you can identify them.

A. Drivers are in a stronger position. The cyclist is more likely to be damaged.

Q. Quite often cyclist break the law. They ride across crossings at faster than walking pace, they are hard to see and are at risk of being hit.

A. It is better than cyclists having to get off and walk across. This takes more time.

Q. Can Pedal Power put some more articles in their magazine about:

- How cyclists should behave.
- The health benefits including mental health?

A. Yes

COTA – Jane Thompson and Tulene McCabe

Council on the Ageing (COTA) is a not for profit organisation that makes submissions on behalf of the elderly.

COTA has received funding to ask people in Weston and Ainslie what makes their suburb age

friendly or not. Consider things such as:

- footpaths
- access to shops
- access to transport
- internet access
- crossing roads

Ainslie and Weston were picked:

- because ACT roads has some money to make the suburbs more user friendly
- groups of organisations from the community sector and shops
 - get some grass roots movement going for COTA to do some work itself as well as giving data to government

Coolman Court is in Weston so everyone should get on board.

The survey has three questions:

1. How livable is your suburb?
2. How connected is your suburb?
3. If you could change three things what would they be?

Q. What is COTA doing in Weston Creek? There are a lot of retirement homes. Are you aware of the deficiencies? Do you go to old age homes to get input?

A. We are working with Miranjani and the retirement village association.

There are problems with people planting gardens on the nature strip, the ramp at Coolman Court is too steep and there are no high trolleys available.

Q. When do you want the surveys back in?

A. Need them by June/July.

Q. Do you have a presence in Weston Creek?

A. No. There are only six of us based in Hughes. We operate through communities@ work and other organisations.

Mr Fluffy

On Monday the Asbestos Taskforce asked if they could come to our meeting. On Tuesday they said they couldn't come. This is very disappointing. The Chair mentioned this on 2CC today.

The Chair advised that after the last meeting he was very moved. He sat down the next morning at 6.00am and wrote a submission to the government. The areas of concern were:

- WCCC can't reach people
- WCCC doesn't know how to contact people
- Mr Fluffy affects just under half the households affected by the bushfires in Weston Creek

The Taskforce has advised:

- 708 offers have been made
- 869 applications
- 124 have accepted offers
- 152 haven't done anything. Most are elderly and don't want to go. They just want to be left alone.
- 19.2% of houses are in Weston Creek

Concerns raised at this meeting include:

- no one knows who we are but names and addresses may be circulated in July
- progress has been made:
 - some people have had houses valued, got what they consider a fair thing and moved on
 - some people aren't happy with the valuation
 - government will not fund knock down rebuild (recognising that costs are an issue)
 - new circumstances are coming up all the time e.g. a dog breeder
- protection of plants in gardens:
 - knock down house and then skim off the top of the soil to test for asbestos
 - will wreck gardens
 - taskforce have said that they will limit extraction of soil to 1m around footprint of the house
- compulsory acquisition
 - this has been possible in the ACT for a long time
 - November 2014, the Taskforce said that compulsory acquisition activities under ACT law will not be undertaken
 - Andrew Barr has since said that the government may consider compulsory acquisition if you "hold out". This is tantamount to duress
 - need a more reasonable approach to dealing with elderly people who haven't put in for valuations. (If anyone knows anyone in this category they should let WCCC know).
- rezoning
 - will affect everyone around the Mr Fluffy home - once blocks are remediated and sold at new levels your ULV may change
 - if you want to buy back your home you will have to pay market price on the maximum value/use of land
 - will rezone every block over 700m² (771 of the 1021 blocks)
- land rent scheme
 - provides affordable housing
 - people can buy back former blocks – pay a small percentage of the value of the land and then pay a land rent until they can pay for the whole amount
 - there are eligibility criteria - you have to go to CIT to do a course on land rent

Q. When will you find out which houses are affected?

A. By the end of June the government expects that it will own all houses and then it may release details. But not all home owners want to sell.

Q. Why don't they put a caveat on elderly people's houses so that they can only be sold to the government and then let them stay until they die or go into care?

A. WCCC would support this.

COTA

- the COTA housing officer is working with the elderly Mr Fluffy owners to try to get a resolution
- COTA supports the caveat idea

WCCC role

- hasn't received any details from the Taskforce
- has only had people come to the meetings – has received no other approaches

- made a submission to the government

Comment from the floor

- WCCC should support the caveat idea and support the lawyers who are wanting to help the elderly people
- should hold extra meetings

BUSINESS MEETING

Minutes of the Meeting of 30 October 2014

Motion: That the Minutes of the previous meeting be approved as circulated.

Moved: Chris Wilson

Seconded: Rosemary Drabsch

Motion carried.

Business arising from the minutes of the meeting of 30 October 2014

- Nil

Treasurer's Report

- \$18,383.94 Main Account
- \$594.69 Fetherston Garden Account

WCCC has received its annual grant from the ACT Government.

Other Business

Weston Group Masterplan

- The final Masterplan was released on 23 December 2014.
- WCCC won't present on this again.
- It is up to individuals to look at the Masterplan and make recommendations as they see fit.
- WCCC spoke with Mick Gentleman and Shane Rattenbury and asked them to commit to Brierley Street/Trenerry Square and to a Community Centre in the next budget. We are not expecting anything in the budget.

Concerns were raised about the probability of the Masterplan going ahead as is because of the cost of underground parking.

Yarralumla Brickworks site

- A revised plan has been released.
- WCCC put in a submission outlining, among other things, the road access problems on the previous plan.
- The revised plan has addressed these concerns.

Planning Development Forum meeting

- Basin Plan – a grant of \$85m has been received to monitor water quality in the ACT. WCCC had a presentation on this at the October 2014 meeting.
- Light Rail – further plans for the extension of light rail were discussed.
- Vision for Northbourne Ave – a presentation was delivered showing several models for potential development of Northbourne Avenue.
- One consideration is taking part of EPIC and Kamberra Wine to put in parking

Q. What are they saying about future development of light rail?

A. Extending it to Russell and linking up all town centres leading to further densification along major roads such as Adelaide Avenue.

General Business

Political Strategy Planning

- With the next election having five electorates WCCC needs to consider its strategy planning now to ensure that its voice is heard,

Molonglo

Q. What is happening with the people in Molonglo? Are they part of WCCC?

A. We are looking after them until they are big enough to look after themselves. We will then help them form their own association.

40km limit around shopping centres

- This will start at the roundabout near the Raiders Club and was to extend to just after McDonalds.
- It will now include the child care centre.
- It is imperative that they be enforced.

The meeting closed at 10.03 pm

**Next Meeting Wednesday 25 February 2015
Weston Club, 1 Liardet St, Weston**