

*Your local voice*

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## **Minutes of General Meeting Wednesday, 24 June, 2015**

### **Opening of Meeting**

The meeting was opened at 7:35pm

The Deputy Chair, Pat McGinn welcomed members and guests

**Apologies:** Chief Minister, Andrew Barr, Gai Brodtmann, Tom Anderson

**Guests:** David Collett and Paul Lewis – Environment and Planning Directorate  
Rebecca Sorenson – National Capital Authority

16 people attended the meeting.

### **PRESENTATION**

#### ***Public Housing Renewal Program – David Collett and Paul Lewis***

- The ACT government is redeveloping the public housing stock
  - ACT has nearly twice the average public housing per capita
  - the plan is to 'salt and pepper' the stock particularly through the inner south and the inner north
  - ACT has the oldest public housing stock of any jurisdiction
  - the demographics have changed. There is a greater demand for 2 bedroom housing and less for 1 bedroom and 3-4 bedrooms
  - the current stock is expensive to maintain and costly for tenants in terms of heating
  - the current multi apartment blocks are very large (100+)
  - current stock is not suitable for:
    - older people
    - people with disabilities
    - young families
  - 13 multi-unit sites will be redeveloped
  - 1288 public housing dwellings will be rebuilt
  - the quality of housing will be improved
- The funds from the sale of the properties will go to Capital Metro

- Cabinet approved a budget appropriation in 2015-16 for 352 replacement dwellings. These will be in:
  - Moncrief
  - Amaroo
  - Nicholls
  - Coombs
  - Monash
  - Chisolm
- Most of the land will come from the Land Development Agency. Some will come from developers or builders.
- Coombs will have 25-30 units. They will be high quality multi units. Wright and Tuggeranong have detached houses.

Q. Will they have lifts or just stairs?

A. It depends if they have underground parking or not.

Q. What happens if people can't use stairs?

A. We are careful who we put in to multi storey units. We Work with ACT housing regarding tenants' aspirations, needs and level of support available or needed. Each tenant will have a support plan.

Q. Can tenants buy the houses they are living in?

A. They can buy them or have a shared equity scheme but this is restricted to properties that have individual titles. ACT Housing must own them for five years before selling them (this is to try to get people off the waiting list).

Q. Tenants are being moved from areas with good public transport to areas where the public transport is poor. This seems odd.

A. There has been a lot of modelling done. The majority of public housing tenants have cars. The demographic of public housing tenants is similar to the demographics of the rest of Canberra.

Q. How much money is being made from the land sales?

A. There is an agreement with the federal government not to have a net reduction in public housing.

Q. If the public housing in Coombs is in blocks of 25 units this isn't salt and peppering. Also why aren't the blocks near the public transport in Coombs?

A. ACT Housing is experienced in managing developments of 25-30 units. Most tenants don't need public transport.

Q. Looking at the Coombs map – how many stairs will there be and how many units on each block?

A. We have started community consultation early so the designs are not yet finalised. If you look at the Community Services website and the Economic Development website you can see the types of designs.

Q. Can you be specific about the timing in Coombs?

A. The funding has been approved and there are contracts for 75 units (2 contracts). They should be finished in April/May 2016.

Q. How many people work in the Public Housing Renewal Program?

A. There are 18 people in the Economic Development Directorate who work with ACT Housing. Once the old sites are vacated they will be turned over to the Land Development Agency. We do the procurement of sites, the tendering, the financial modelling and the Territory Plan Variations.

Q. Why is there no public housing in Wright?

A. There will be in future tranches.

Q. When we bought our house Colliers told us there would be no public housing?

A. This is only a recent decision made under the public housing asset management strategy.

- The public housing asset management strategy looked at:
  - when houses were purchased
  - the historic maintenance costs
  - if tenants want to buy their property.

***Proposed changes to the National Capital Plan – Rebecca Sorenson***

- The National Capital Authority (NCA) is reviewing the National Capital Plan (NCP) and has released the National Capital Plan Exposure Draft 20
- The NCP sets out the Commonwealth's interest in planning in the ACT. It is 25 years old and there have been numerous amendments over that time but no proper review. The review is not looking at the detailed policy within the NCP.
- The role of the NCA is to:
  - prepare and administer the NCP
  - keep the NCP under constant review
  - carry out works desirable to maintain or enhance the character of the national capital
  - foster awareness of the national capital
  - manage National Land designated in writing as land required for the special purpose of Canberra as the National Capital.
- The *ACT (Planning and Land Management) Act 1988*:
  - set up the NCA
  - required the preparation and administration of a Territory Plan
  - makes it clear that the NCP prevails over the Territory Plan
- The object of the NCP is to ensure that Canberra and the Territory are planned and developed in accordance with their national significance.
- The Territory Plan provides the people of the Territory with a healthy, attractive, safe and efficient environment in which to live, work and have their recreation.
- There is a hierarchy of influence:
  - General Policy Plan – Metropolitan Canberra. This designates where a town centre is to be.
  - Special Requirements – Detail Land Use not assessed by the NCA. This includes:
    - national land for Defence, AFP and CSIRO
    - territory land
    - land flanking main avenues and approach routes
    - parts of Civic
    - Kingston Foreshore
  - Designated Areas – Detail Land Use and assessment by the NCA. These include:
    - hills and buffers
    - parliamentary zone
    - Forrest, Deakin
    - West Basin

Q. What type of control does the NCA have over the land flanking main avenues and approach routes?

A. Building heights, setbacks, articulation and architectural quality. In relation to Northbourne Avenue there are policies about the landscape quality of the entrance to the city rather than development plans. The NCA is developing urban design plans. The NCA has control over the road reserve and the blocks either side, immediately adjacent to the road.

Q. Do you have any influence over light rail?

A. The NCA has to approve works, trees etc. There is a transport corridor for Northbourne Avenue which does not designate the type of transport.

Q. Damien Haas (Belconnen Community Council) has said the NCA would approve Light Rail but not buses on the median strip.

A. This is not true.

Q. will we be consulted on the Exposure Draft?

A. Yes

Q. The policy about not building on hill tops. Is that yours?

A. Yes

- Matters of National Significance
  - the pre-eminence of the role of Canberra and the Territory as Australia's National Capital
  - preservation of the landscape features which gives the national capital its character and setting
  - respect for key elements of Walter Burley Griffin's formally adopted plan for Canberra
  - creation, preservation and enhancement of fitting sites, approaches and backdrops for national institutions and ceremonies as well as national capital uses
  - the development of a city which both respects environmental values and reflects national concerns with the sustainability of Australia's urban areas.

Q. There is no mention of Lake Burley Griffin?

A. It is important.

- Key principles of the review of the NCP
  - removing areas of detailed planning duplication between the NCP and the Territory Plan
  - detailed planning policy in areas over which the NCA has detailed planning responsibility (i.e. Designated Areas) is largely unchanged
  - there will be no changes to the legislation
  - the Commonwealth retains planning control over its land
  - the ACT government will have more flexibility in the planning of urban areas
  - the Commonwealth will retain powers necessary to uphold the national interest including declaration of designated areas.
- Outcomes of the review of the NCP
  - a revised and modernized NCP
  - changes to metropolitan planning arrangements to provide greater

- flexibility to the ACT government to accommodate the growth of Canberra
- reducing duplication and complexity in planning for a substantial portion of Territory Land by removing Special Requirements
- minor adjustments to areas identified as Designated Areas.
- Metropolitan Policy plan
  - NCA has picked up West Belconnen
  - Fyshwick is to become ACT commercial land
  - Gungahlin urban development will be pulled back because of environmental concerns
  - town centres are staying
  - arterial roads are staying
  - West Murrumbidgee and Eastern Broadacre areas:
    - ACT government can come to NCA in relation to developing these areas
    - if the developments meet policies the NCA can approve without ministerial or parliamentary approval.

Q. Will the Mitchell commercial area, EPIC and the Racecourse be changed?

A. Yes, potential future urban development

Q. What are the plans for the West Basin area near the Arboretum?

A. There are no plans at the moment.

- Special Requirements
  - removal of all but Kingston Foreshore and flanking main avenues and approach routes
  - will still have general requirements for Namadgi National Park
  - other areas are considered low risk.

Q. What about the Murray Darling Basin?

A. Requirements will still exist but will be updated. Management plans are in place for the Murray Darling Basin.

Q. There are no changes to the Murrumbidgee Corridor?

A. There are no changes.

Q. Are you removing the administrative burden from the NCA and giving it to the ACT government?

A. There is no administrative burden currently just policies.

Q. What was the impetus for the change? We have looked to the NCA in the past to protect land and ensure that it is not all urban development. This takes away control over the ACT government when it may be needed e.g. Yarralumla Brickworks development and the buffer between Inner South and Woden.

A. Yarralumla Brickworks is already mostly urban. NCA only looks at areas of special significance.

Q. Are the buffer areas going?

A. Not really, NCA will still maintain control.

Q. Why the Kingston Foreshore?

A. It is the only area not covered by a Designated Area.

- Changes to Designated Areas
  - AIS is going into the Designated Areas
  - removal of airport as the *Airports Act* doesn't allow for NCA approval
  - alignment of land management boundary at Anzac Parade

- inclusion of Constitution Avenue sites such as the convention centre
- introduction of Diplomatic Land Use in Barton, Constitution Avenue and Civic
- adoption of EPBC principles to assess heritage matters. NCA does have a legislative basis for considering heritage issues.

Q. Who signs off the changes?

A. It is not at a statutory process stage yet. The NCA is garnering ideas before the amendment process starts. After this the statutory process starts (about September/October). The changes require approval from the Minister then goes on the list of legislative instruments and then is tabled in both houses of parliament. The comments on the Exposure Draft close on 22 July 2015. It is currently at the consultation of amendment process stage. The details are on the website.

Q. What about the City to the Lake development?

A. The NCA will have approval of the ACT government process.

## **BUSINESS MEETING**

### **Minutes of the Meeting of 27 May, 2015**

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

Moved: Max Kwiatkowski                      Seconded: Janice Paull                      Motion carried.

### **Business arising from the minutes of the meeting of 27 May, 2015**

- Nil

### **Treasurer's Report**

- \$12,697.12                      Main account
- \$14,338.74                      Fetherston Gardens account

Moved: Janice Paull                      Seconded: Trevor Wilson                      Motion carried

### **Other Business**

- Budget Update
  - \$860,000 has been allocated in the ACT budget for the upgrade to Trenerry Square and Brierley Street
  - the new parking (from last year's budget) in Liardet Street and Dillon Close is almost finished
  - Q. Has the Park and Ride moved to Cotter Road? There is still a sign near McDonalds saying the Park and Ride is there.
  - A. We will follow up and get sign removed.
- Website update
  - the WCCC website can now be accessed via tablets and smartphones
  - we are hoping to make the site more interactive
  - we have put up a survey asking residents what there priorities for Weston Creek are
- West Basin
  - a draft paper has been issued seeking feedback on the proposed development from Commonwealth Avenue to the Museum
  - comments close 29 June
- Fetherston Gardens
  - DHA are seeking to do a Memorandum of Understanding in relation to

- Fetherston Gardens
  - Friends of Fetherston Gardens are working on this
  - they will need to get a legal opinion
- Draft Territory Plan Variation 343 (Mr. Fluffy)
  - WCCC has done a submission (as previously advised)
- ACCESS
  - Canberra Connect is changing into ACCESS
  - they would like to put on an event – a bonfire – at the old Weston Primary School oval near the skate park

Q. What is happening with the service station?

A. The approval is in train. There were some objections from the residents of North Weston but it is expected that it will still go ahead.

Q. Is it appropriate that it is near Weston Ponds?

A. We will advocate for planting and screening.

The meeting closed at 9.05pm

**Next Meeting Wednesday 29 July, 2015**  
**Weston Club, 1 Liardet St, Weston**