

Your local voice



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Minutes of General Meeting Wednesday, 29 July, 2015

Opening of Meeting

The meeting was opened at 7.40pm

The Chair welcomed members and guests

Apologies: Gai Brodtmann, Claire Wheeton, Max Kwiatkowski, Sue Liebke

Guests: ACT Basin Priority Project: Matt Kendall and Nigel Dears
ACT Asbestos Response Taskforce: Lynette Marsh, Emily Springett

18 people attended the meeting.

PRESENTATION

ACT Basin Priority Project - Matt Kendall and Nigel Dears

- In 2008 the Federal Government approved \$85 million to improve the water quality in the ACT. The ACT Government approved a further \$8.5 million bringing the total to \$93.5 million.
- This is a National Water Initiative and is part of the Murray-Darling Basin Reform including improving water quality in the Murray-Darling Basin.
- The aim is to undertake priority projects that will:
 - substantially contribute to the improved efficiency of rural water use
 - improve the sustainability of water use
 - improve the overall health of the Murray-Darling Basin
- The ACT focus is water quality.
- The project will be done in two stages. The first will cost \$8.6 million and runs from February 2014 to February 2016. It will design, develop and implement detailed monitoring frameworks for the six identified priority, representative sub catchments. It will audit the infrastructure and it will also develop a business case outlining, among other things, baseline data and interventions.
- The six sites are
 - Riverview (West Belconnen) – green field site
 - Yarralumla Creek – developed site
 - Fyshwick – industrial site
 - Upper Molonglo – semi rural site
 - Lower Molonglo (Weston Creek)– developing catchment
 - Lake Tuggeranong – highly urbanised catchment flowing into a lake

- Phase Two will look at the results and analysis of Phase One and will determine the nature and extent of construction works. It runs from May 2016 to March 2019 and will cost \$76 million.
- The results of Phase One will determine the nature and extent of the construction works in Phase Two.
- The Governance includes:
 - Joint Commonwealth/ACT Steering Committee
 - Project advisory group including community councils and scientific experts
 - Inter-jurisdictional committee
 - ACT cross agency working group
 - Project management team
- An audit of the infrastructure project will be carried out in August 2015.

Q. What sort of assets don't perform?

A. Isabella Ponds which are 20 Years old. They were doing all right but now sediment is building up and when it rains more sediment is going in than going out. Gross pollutant traps need to be cleaned regularly otherwise a buildup of organic matter causes problems downstream.

Q. How often are traps cleared?

A. TAMS do it after a rain event or when they are more than 50% full. We are not sure if this is enough.

- Final options identification is being undertaken from April 2015 to September 2015 by GHD.
- 150 options totaling more than \$500m have been identified
- This will be reduced to 10-20
- The commonwealth government wants a benefit/cost analysis done

Q. Is GHD the only consultant you are using?

A. No, there is a range. GHD is doing one project, AECOM is doing 2, Alluvium is doing 4 and Hydro Numerics is doing three.

- The website is www.environment.act.gov.au/water/act-basin-priority
- A social expectations survey will be done by the University of Canberra during July and August 2015
- An online survey will be available with information being provided by way of a pamphlet in your letter box.
 - there is an incentive of a chance to win \$1000 gift card
 - 3000 people have responded so far
- Phase one runs to February 2016 and will prepare a business case. Timing is:
 - November 2015 – ranked options to Cabinet
 - December 2015 – draft business case to the Commonwealth
 - February 2016 – final business case

Q. How much money are the consultants getting?

A. \$8.5m

Q. Is there any chance of getting more money for the project?

A. It should get \$85m but not sure if it will get any more.

Q. Is Queanbeyan Council doing anything?

A. They are part of the Upper Molonglo area. It is looking at upgrading the sewerage

treatment plant.

- Phase two will run from May 2016 to March 2019 and is subject to a supplementary business case. It will look at design and construction
- Fact sheets are available now and more information will be available at the open house sessions.

Q. Do you have any ideas of options for the Lower Molonglo?

A. There are 20 options proposed. Existing infrastructure such as playing fields will be left alone.

Q. Does the office publish the economic benefits?

A. The benefit/cost analysis will be available in November 2015.

Q. Are there any problems in the Lower Molonglo?

A. There are several including nitrogen, phosphorous, volume and speed of water causing erosion.

Q. Are there any problems with Weston Ponds?

A. Weston Ponds has been included in the options. We are looking at further work on the landscaping and determining if we can get more variability in the volume.

Asbestos Taskforce - Lynette Marsh, Emily Springett

- There is a currently a committee enquiry on draft Territory Plan Variation 343 to allow dual occupancy on blocks 700m2+. WCCC has made a submission
- Since our last visit (May 2015) the following has occurred:
 - the buyback closed 30 June 2015
 - owners of 1014 out of the 1022 properties participated
 - five pilot houses have been demolished
 - the addresses were released on 1 July 2015
- feedback is being sought on the demolition process
- 645 houses are currently owned by the ACT government. They are being maintained and secured. There have been 7 vandalism and 6 dumping events. Any concerns can be reported on the website.
- 415 purchasers have accessed stamp duty waivers
- Weston Creek has 188 affected properties
- Of the next 38 properties to be demolished the numbers in Weston Creek are"
 - Chapman 3
 - Duffy 1
 - Fisher 0
 - Rivett 2
 - Holder 0
 - Stirling 0
 - Waramanga 1
 - Weston 1
- The broader demolition schedule will be released in August for Jan- June 2016

Q. How do you decide priority for demolition?

A. It is based on safety, efficiency and speed. We look at cluster houses, those in bushfire areas and those where home owners are seeking first rights of refusal.

Q. Will neighbouring residents be told when demolition will occur?

A. They will be advised several months in advance of the approximate timing and the

given more information closer to the time.

Q. How long will the demolitions take?

A. 800+ houses will be done in the first three years with the remainder being done over six years allowing people to stay in their homes longer.

- Releasing the list of properties on 1 July 2015:
 - was controversial but necessary
 - was done after the buyback window was closed
 - allowed for lots of information to go on line regarding health and safety, historical connections
 - a Mr. Fluffy Record and Information Form is on the website
 -

Q. Can people who have lived in a Mr Fluffy house earlier participate in the longitudinal health study?

A. Yes, using the on-line form.

- The pilot demolitions have been carried out. The process is
 - planning and assessment
 - site set-up
 - internal asbestos removal
 - external demolition and site remediation
 - site wrap-up
- A negative air environment is used during the internal asbestos removal so fibres can't escape
- The structure is taken to West Belconnen and the loose fill to Mugga Lane

Q. I have looked at the demolished Mr. Fluffy sites and soil has been taken right up to the property boundaries. Is there some contamination?

A. We will clear it all if there is nothing to keep such as trees. It does not necessarily mean there is contamination.

Q. If the contamination goes right to the boundary will you test the neighbours' property?

A. It is unlikely to go past the footprint of the house.

Q. Do you choose days with no wind?

A. No, the water cannons suppress the dust.

Q. At what point do you say that land is ready to be sold?

A. Once it is registered as having been cleared and the certificate is in place the land can then be sold. It is in the government's best interest for the land to be turned over quickly.

Q. Are many blocks keeping the interesting trees? If the draft Territory Plan Variation goes through the trees may have to be removed.

A. Depends if the owners want first rights. If they do the trees are kept. If there are new owners they will have to remove the trees themselves.

- We have had positive feedback on our engagement with neighbours.

Q. Some of the properties listed were units. What happens with them?

A. There are a number of scenarios. If they are duplexes then decisions need to be made. If they are dual occupancy then the other owner will be inconvenienced but their

property will not have to be demolished.

Q. During the bushfires some houses would have been burned down. What happened to them?

A. In the late 1980's there were 1089 properties – now there are 1022. Some were burnt down and some were knocked down already. The government is still to make a decision about rebuilds.

Q. There are concerns for people who, in the last six years, have bought properties adjacent to Mr Fluffy houses. These concerns include contamination, demolition processes, what type of properties will be built on the blocks and lowering resale values if large houses are built on small blocks and views are taken.

A. There is no evidence to support this. After the bushfires property prices increased. The government is still working on this though.

Q. When you bought property earlier though, you knew that blocks had to be 800m² for dual occupancy and you made your decisions accordingly. You did not know that blocks would only have to be 700m².

A. There will still be a need to do a planning application.

Q. The general public is not very well informed about planning processes. It would be useful to have some easy to read information available.

A. We will suggest this to the relevant agency.

- All development applications in Weston Creek are uploaded to the WCCCC website weekly.

Q. How are you contacting tradies who worked on the houses?

A. We are consulting with the HIA, MBA and the Electrical Trades Union. They have all advised that tradies have a sense of the risk around their work and that they did not believe there would be too many concerns. There has been very little interest or feedback on the website and we are not getting a sense of stress or anxiety.

Q. Some of the tradies will have moved interstate, what is being done about advising them.

A. We are working with the national Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency. They have a National Asbestos Exposure Register.

Q. Do you have any idea what happened to the asbestos in the houses that were burnt in the bushfire?

A. The EPA said that they had more concerns about other carcinogens at the time. The asbestos would have been removed when the sites were cleared. They didn't know at the time about the asbestos but consider that everything should be ok).

BUSINESS MEETING

Minutes of the Meeting of 24 June, 2015

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

Moved: Shelby Schofield

Seconded: Janice Paull

Motion carried.

Business arising from the minutes of the meeting of 24 June, 2015

- Nil

Treasurer's Report

Main Account \$11,973-72
Fetherston Gardens \$16,806-15

General Business

- Bonfire
 - WCCC is cohosting this with ACCESS Act
 - it will run from 4.00-9.00pm
 - the bonfire will be lit at 6.00pm
 - there will be an MC during the night
 - there will be a number of food stalls
 - live music will be playing
 - the car park in Dillon Close will be closed for emergency services to use
- Car parks
 - the additional car parks in Dillon Close and Liardet Street have opened
- ACT budget
 - funding for the upgrade for Brierley Street and Trenerry Square (as outlined in the Masterplan) was approved
 - approximately \$200,000 was approved for Stromlo Forrest Park
 - Shane Rattenbury is coming to the August WCCC public meeting so we can question him about these issues
- Second service station
 - the Territory Plan Variation has been signed off
 - it is still probably 18-24 months away
- Rates
 - there have been many complaints about the rates increases
 - from 2011-12 to 2014-15 rates have increased by 50%
 - the rates have increased to cover the reduction in stamp duty
- Submissions
 - WCC has done submissions on:
 - proposed changes to the National Capital Plan
 - the Environmental Impact Statement for light rail. Weston Creek does not have very good bus services but we will have to pay for light rail
- Surveys available to be completed
 - ACT Basin Priority Project
 - WCCC survey

The meeting closed at 9.10pm

Next Meeting Wednesday 26 August, 2015
Weston Club, 1 Liardet St, Weston