

WESTON CREEK COMMUNITY COUNCIL

- Your Local Voice -

Email: info@wccc.com.au

Website: www.wccc.com.au

Phone: (02) 6288 8975

ABN: 52 841 915 317

PO Box 3701 Weston Creek ACT 2611

Established 1991

Minutes

Monthly Meeting

7.45pm 23rd June 2004

Welcome

Ms Pat McGinn, Interim Chairperson, welcomed the committee and residents to the meeting.

Pat indicated that there was no guest speaker and a number of issues would be covered.

Apologies

Joe Baker, David Kibbey, Jacqui Burke MLA, Gary Caitcheon.

ACTION Buses

The 'area services' and 'on-demand' bus services in the evening have been trialed in Weston Creek. There were 6 services each commencing on the hour from the Woden Interchange. The buses go through the suburbs to Cooleman Court and then return by a set route to the Interchange.

The feedback has been that the service is generally good but could be extended over a longer period in the evening, perhaps an early service and a later service. In addition connections to Cooleman Court could be improved.

The proposed solution is to have 'area services' split north and south of Hindmarsh Drive which would shorten the period on the bus for the area service. Also linking the 'area service' with the 'on-demand' service can help, as the bus will return to the defined route.

There will be the ability for more departures with the same resources and less waiting time by drivers at Cooleman Court. The proposed changes would see an increase of 3 departures from Woden Interchange. The earlier service would be at 7.30pm and the draft timetable is available here at the back of the room.

Q&A

- When will the revised service commence? 19 July 2004.
- What is the timetable? There are copies at the back of the room.
- What services will be affected? Only the evening services after 7.30pm.
- There needs to be better explanation of the concept and also to tell people to go to Platform 10. Thanks for the feedback it is a good point to direct people to a platform different to what they normally expect.
- Where can we get more information? A flyer will be delivered to all Weston Creek letterboxes and this will have all the details.

Other issues which ACTION is working on include:

- An express service with a straightened route to the city, like the current route 29, which would start at the south Weston Creek terminus.
- A bus route from Tuggeranong via Weston Creek to Belconnen and return service.

Proposed 'extra role' for Community Councils

There is a proposal to expand the role of Community Councils to include a more formal position in the planning issues of a district.

The WCCC is working on a draft position paper which looks at the issues and the potential implications on the operation of a Community Council. To date Weston Creek has not had a LAPAC or a Community Planning Forum, so it is hoped that the new role is a step forward.

Some high-level policy issues have affected Weston Creek, eg DV200 to which the WCCC responded and appeared before the ACT Legislative Assembly Planning Committee. That document is on our website.

There is at present no process whereby the WCCC is formally alerted to potential planning activities in the district.

Minister Corbell is proposing that Community Councils be an avenue and conduit on planning issues. The Community Council would be invited to make comments on:

1. Zoning within the Territory Plan
2. Section Master Plans
3. Land releases
4. Changes to the Canberra Spatial Plan
5. Ability to comment on the release of a grant of land (eg to a church, club etc).
6. Any activity needing an environmental impact assessment

In terms of commenting on a DA this would need to involve buildings higher than 3 storeys, greater than 7,000 sqm or higher than 25m. Another issue which would be referred is the paying out of concessional leases.

An initial reaction from the WCCC is that there may be a single DA which is of major significance to the local community but would not be referred to the appropriate Community Council.

Other concerns are the increased workload, Community Councils could be seen as just planning forums whereas a range of issues covering health, education, police, roads, etc are in the mandate of a Community Council.

The concept appears to be based on the idea of a high level 'Planning and Development Forum' of which the Community Councils would be a member along with such bodies as ACTCOSS, businesses, etc. This group would meet quarterly and discuss such items as the Canberra Spatial Plan, the transport plan, etc.

The current debate has stalled negotiations on the Deed of Agreement between Community Councils and the ACT Government in respect of the 04/05 financial year.

Access to recreation areas near Weston Creek

This issue has been raised in the context of the bushfire recovery activities. There has been an increase in the construction of fencing in areas previously unfenced. The impact appears to be a reduction in public access to some areas. It is acknowledged that some fencing has been required to assist with public safety. In addition some areas appear to have been provided to rural lessees to expand their grazing areas.

The WCCC is seeking clarification on the ACT Government approach and the legitimacy of the approach in respect of the needs of residents and rural leasees.

Draft Variation(s) Stromlo and Uriarra

The WCCC has only just received these 2 proposed draft variations; unfortunately they have a due date of 9 July. The WCCC will be writing to Neil Savery, CEO of ACTPLA concerning this restricted period of public comment on important variations affecting Weston Creek.

The understanding for Stromlo settlement is that it will have double the number of buildings in the same footprint of the original village.

Mr Carl indicated that he has downloaded the Preliminary Assessment for Stromlo village from the ACTPLA website and it took 20 minutes and was 5.4MB. The material indicates housing commission homes would be 11 to 15 sq and the private homes up to 35 sq. All blocks appeared to be in the range of 1,100 to 1,300 sq m.

An issue raised was the avoidance of an 'enclave' by the ACT Government in its planning however there appeared to be no such hesitation when Weston Creek was given the Tanjil Loop Duffy solution as well as 50 Defence Forces houses in an Estate which is not called an 'enclave'.

The area appears to be declared moderate bushfire risk so different house construction standards will apply. Mr Carl indicated that he was unaware if such a designation would be placed on houses on the edge of suburbs of Chapman, Duffy, Holder etc. Mr Warwick Costin of Chapman indicated that it was his understanding that there is no change to the designation of houses in regard to bushfire risk in the existing Weston Creek suburbs.

ACT Government Bushfire Memorial

The WCCC responded some time ago to calls for ideas for the ACT Memorial. The WCCC suggested a memorial walk linking all affected Weston Creek suburbs. This would not be a monument as such but a tranquil, peaceful yet educational walk.

ACT Government has released a discussion paper with a feedback survey form. It is for individuals to respond to; as such it is not calling for submissions so the WCCC itself cannot respond. However all individuals are encouraged to respond to the survey to ensure they put forward their views.

There is a workshop on 6pm to 8pm Thursday 1st July at Duffy and the survey forms are due on Friday 2nd July. (Editorial note – the due date has been deferred to 9 July.)

Community Consultation

The Chief Minister's Department is developing a 'Community Engagement Code' which encourages ACT Government public servants to work within certain parameters when dealing with the community. There are also reciprocal obligations of the community when dealing with the government.

A variety of surveys have been undertaken to provide input to the process and an over-whelming response has been 'insufficient time to respond'. We have seen this already tonight in the deadlines for the due dates for the Draft Variation(s) on Stromlo and Uriarra and the ACT Government Bushfire Memorial.

The expected release date of the Community Engagement Code is before the October ACT Election.

Canberra Airport

The WCCC has received a document on the future planning for the Canberra International Airport and been invited to comment on the impact of flight paths over Weston Creek. On first observations this appears not to significantly affect Weston Creek, unless there is noise sharing and flight paths are re-aligned.

An attendee indicated that, depending on what happens with The Village Building Company's proposal for 'Tralee', there may be a shift in current flight paths.

AGM

The WCCC AGM will be held on the 4th Wed of August (25/8/04). Nominations are encouraged for the committee and especially a treasurer who has some legal and insurance experience. Nomination forms are available from the Council, just phone or email.

Neighbourhood Watch (NHW).

Pat McGinn called on Barbara Brinton from Rivett NHW to speak to the issue of NHW and policing in Weston Creek. Barbara indicated that there were major concerns in respect of the support of the Police to NHW. At a recent training day (40 attendees) the police forget to attend and called in an officer from leave to give a short speech to the training group. It reinforced the lack of connection between the police and 'community policing'.

Ms McGinn indicated that the ACT Police have agreed to attend the WCCC monthly meeting on 28th July.

An attendee indicated that perhaps the reason for the disconnect between the police and their expected role by the community was that it was a contracted police presence from the AFP. There appeared little that the ACT Government could do to influence where resources were placed in the ACT.

There was some discussion on whether it was appropriate to invite ex- police officers, the AFP police association or the ACT Minister for Police. It was considered appropriate to keep it at a local level and invite officers who could speak on policing issues directly affecting Weston Creek.

Any Other Business

Ms McGinn called for other business

Community Councils

A resident indicated that he believed it would be a good step to expand the role of Community Councils in the area of planning but was aware that the resources required could be very high. He also indicated that councils should continue to cover all issues brought to them. Another important issue would be 'to what extent would councils be involved if the developer was the Government?'

ACT Roads

A resident asked of a response from ACT Roads to the questions of last month? Ms McGinn indicated that the questions asked but not answered, as well as questions sent in by email were compiled and have been sent to Tony Gill for a reply. His reply has not yet been received.

Fencing in recreation areas.

A resident asked if Mr Lincoln Hawkins, who was the guest speaker at the February 2004 WCCC meeting, had responded to the questions asked which he could not answer on the night? Ms McGinn indicated that she would follow up with Mr Hawkins.

Notification of planning in Weston Creek.

An attendee asked what would be the formal process to be consulted on planning issues on which the Councils view will be sought. Ms McGinn indicated that that level of detail was yet to be determined.

A resident indicated that if the process was one way the council would continually be reactive and not able to be pro active in seeking outcomes for the benefits of residents.

Would the Council be given the resources to doorknock and deliver information to all households? Perhaps the difference between now and the future is at present there is no process.

An attendee indicated that were 3 types of consultation – 1 being informed of the decision, 2 – informed of the decision and informed why the decision was made and 3 haven't made the decision yet but may consider other views. The 'new role' is probably the latter but how much influence will there be? Probably not much.

The GDE is probably an example of over-consulting, no definitive decisions are made and there is no agreement to proceed. It was indicated that some residents do not feel consulted if the decision taken is 'not my view'.

A resident voiced concerns that the incorporation of Community Councils into formal government processes is an area in which Community Councils need to be very wary and seek legal opinion on their responsibilities in what will appear to be a collective agreement.

Signs

A resident asked when the CHAPMAN sign at Darwinia Tce will be replaced after the Bushfires, Ms McGinn commented that the HOLDER sign was also missing. Another resident advised the meeting that the district map at the corner of Brierly St and Liardet St near the small roundabout has 'Guide to Woden', the ACT Department responsible for this is definitely lost.

WCCC and ACT Forests in newspaper reports

A resident indicated that the WCCC was mentioned in *The Canberra Times* in an article regarding Tony Bartlett Director of ACT Forests in respect of the community not wanting fuel reduction work carried out in Weston Creek. The resident asked why the WCCC had objected to fuel reduction.

Ms McGinn called on Mr Carl (former Chair) during the period to respond to the resident.

Mr Carl indicated that in 1999 ACT Forests came to a WCCC to explain the harvest cycle of the commercial plantations adjacent to Weston Creek. There was to be a staged harvest from 2001 through to 2009. The plantation at Narrabundah Hill was to be cleared to the edge of Eucumbene Drive with a minor buffer of mature pine left in place. A numbers of residents of that area were of the opinion that more trees should be left in place and the buffer strip should be wider.

The plantation was harvested and a wide buffer strip was left in place. The debates then moved to the method for controlling weed & pine re-growth after harvest and this was the debate on mechanical or aerial application of weed control chemical. Trials indicated that because of the high number of native trees in the area aerial spraying would not be an effective means of application of the chemicals. Some tree debris was also burnt within the harvested areas to reduce the fire risk and some residents had objected to the smoke.

Ms McGinn thanked Mr Carl for the information

Ms McGinn called for further business. As there was none forthcoming Ms McGinn closed the meeting and thanked residents for their attendance.

Meeting closed 9.30pm

Next meeting

28th July 2004 ACT Police