

Your local voice



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**Weston Creek Community Council
General Meeting, Wednesday, 28 November 2007, 7.45pm**

Tim Dalton opened the meeting at 8pm. He introduced Chris Hare from Water Security, ACTEW, who had been invited to give a presentation to the meeting.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from:

Bob Sutherland
Dr Karin Gieselhart
Wendy Groves
Dinah Withey
Tricia Hoad (Communities at Work)
Noel Tregonning
Bill Stefaniak

2. Correspondence

A membership request was received from Penny Cilento, 11 Ironside St, Weston. Tel: 6288-2638 (H); 6260-6444 (W), Mobile: 0407-066-932

3. Presentation

Chris Hare from Water Security, ACTEW gave a presentation on “Sustainable Water Use and the ACT” – see synopsis at end of these minutes.

4. Submissions on planning issues

4.1 North Weston: WCCC with representatives of Orana School and the Sikh and Bahai communities has prepared a joint submission to the ACT Government on the proposed development at North Weston. Residents of Weston had expressed considerable interest, particularly with regard to not encroaching too far on to the North Weston Ridge. A meeting at Orana School was attended by local stakeholders and ACTPLA. The submission asked for the xeriscape garden to be maintained, and for access to the ridge to be provided. The submission will be put on the WCCC website.

4.2 School sites: The WCCC tried to look at Weston Creek as a whole, at what facilities we don't have and at facilities that have been closed down. The submission asked for a whole new Weston Creek community centre—one with more meeting space, and facilities such as a library annex, swimming pool and cafe, not just squash courts. The proposed site is the large area of land (Block 2 of Section 75) opposite Cooleman Court. This proposal would mean demolition of the present community centre.

The submission also suggested developing Weston Oval with facilities such as an adventure playground, skateboard park, and a stage for community use.

With the closure of Rivett School, the Warehouse Circus and Noah's Ark Toy Library will need to find new homes.

4.3 WCCC has also received copies of 5 submissions on the Molonglo Valley development made by individuals. The Canberra Off-Road Cyclists have also made a submission that asks for more bike paths. They do not necessarily endorse the development, but IF it has to happen, then that is what they want.

5. Sewerage smells

The ACT Government has agreed to install scrubbers to reduce the smells that emanate from the sewerage pipes that remain from the former Weston treatment plant. Cost will be \$1m. WCCC would like to thank Jacqui Burke MLA, who made representations on behalf of WCCC.

6. WCCC Website

Eddie gave a brief update on the WCCC website.

7. Meeting with CROWK (Concerned Residents of West Kambah)

Eddie reported on a meeting with representatives of CROWK. This group has a very good website, and has received a grant of \$17,000 from the ACT Government. The group was started in order to focus concerns over the sale of land by the golf course, but it appears to have extended the range of its interest to the southern part of Weston Creek. There may be some relationship with the CLEAR residents' group in Rivett. CROWK's main focus seems to be preservation of the local environment and provision of nature trails, etc.

8. Narrabundah Hill

Complaints have been received from local residents that areas they use for walking and other recreation purposes have been enclosed and access restricted. Jeff Carl explained that the land was owned by Forests ACT, and that parts of Narrabundah Hill are unstable, with sink-holes that resulted after trees were burned. Cows had been put into the area as a fire-abatement measure. This is why paths have been closed off.

9. Other Business

- The *Southside Chronicle* of 27/11/2007 had a letter to the Editor about redevelopment of Holder Oval.
- Residents of Mulley Street, Holder, have written to ask if WCCC could suggest to the ACT Government that parking be prohibited on Mulley Street between 7am and 1pm on Mondays to enable collection of garbage. At present, parked cars prevent the garbage trucks from picking up the bins, so garbage is not always collected.
- Jeff Carl asked the committee to organise to change the address for bills for White Pages listing.
- It is rumoured that the community land opposite Coleman Court is the subject of a proposal for a developer to buy it for \$2m.
- It was suggested that Mirvac, the owner of Coleman Court, be invited to address a WCCC meeting.

The meeting closed at 9.15.

Presentation made by Chris Hare, ACTEW, at WCCC General Meeting, 28/11/2007.

Synopsis

- The key responsibility of ACTEW is to maintain a safe and secure water supply for the ACT for both the short and the long term.
 - Cotter catchment has 3 dams: Cotter, Corin, and Bendora
 - Googong Dam is currently at 54% capacity
- It required little infrastructure to make it possible to enable bulk transfer of water from Cotter Dam to Googong—a bypass line and a **de-chlorination?** plant.
- Since May 2007, ACTEW has been extracting water from the Murrumbidgee. About 12 gigalitres was extracted in 2007.
- Annual consumption in the ACT is about 40 gigalitres (GL).
 - Detached homes 54% (In homes, gardens take 39%, outdoors 4%, that is, 43% of home usage. Indoor usage is 57%.)
 - Commerce 19%
 - Government 11%
 - Units 6%
 - Queanbeyan 10%
- The ACT's water strategy, *Think Water*, was introduced in 2004. Its aims were to reduce usage by 12% by 2013, and by 25% by 2023, measured in terms of per person consumption.
- Currently Stage 3 water restrictions are in place for the ACT. The daily target for spring is 112 megalitres (ML) per day, and for summer is 139ML per day. The actual daily rate of usage for spring so far was 121ML. Stage 4 restrictions could be introduced around March 2008. The level of the dams provides the trigger point for deciding what level of restrictions is appropriate, with other factors taken into consideration.
- In 2006, inflows into the ACT's dams decreased by 87% [compared with normal annual inflows]. That year the ACT used 50GL, but inflows were only 20GL. Over the last 6 years, inflows have decreased by 60%.

ACTEW initiatives:

- Waterwise Gardening workshops
- Grass Roots - turf and irrigation research (Rosary School, Weston)
- Save Water for Life campaign
- Online education section for children
- Online water-saving tips
- Enviro saver program: energy and water conservation assessments for houses

ACT Government initiatives (www.thinkwater.act.gov.au)

- Garden Smart program: assessment of gardens
- Rebates on rain-water tanks
- Workshops on smart irrigation as the Xeriscape garden in Weston

Measures ACTEW has in place

1. Extraction from Murrumbidgee River
2. Cotter to Googong bulk transfer, started in 2005, currently in use
3. Mt Stromlo water treatment plant, built after 2003 fires
4. Cotter Reservoir reinstated as part of ACT water supply in 2005

5. Googong water treatment plant upgraded
6. Trials for re-use of water increased: Fyshwick plant to recycle local sewage, North Canberra effluent re-use scheme (in one park, vineyard)

Managing water use

In October 2007, the ACT Government responded to recommendations made by ACTEW in July 2007, which included:

- Enlarging Cotter Dam from 4GL to 78GL. Design work is happening now.
- Adding to capacity to extract more water from Murrumbidgee (\$70m), by adding extra pumping capacity
- Pursuing possibility of purchasing water from Tantangara Dam (\$38m). This would involve negotiation with NSW over cross-border administration issues.
- Designing a demonstration water-purification plant (\$6m for year-long design phase). The water would NOT be for drinking purposes, although the quality would be fit to drink; it would go mainly into parks, ovals etc or for environmental flows. Purpose would be to keep open the option for purification in case rainfall remains low. Plant could be upgraded if necessary to provide 20-22GL at full production. Cost of full demonstration plant not known.
- Offsetting voluntarily the additional greenhouse gases

The ACT Government is working on:

- Modifying permanent water conservation measures
- Looking at increasing severity of water restrictions
- More investment in water-saving measures.

Chris Hare answered questions on:

- Introducing a Stage 3.5 in restrictions
- Water strategies for the Molonglo Valley development
- Water-saving campaigns in Commonwealth offices
- Costs paid by ACT for water licence
- Possible price rises