

Your local voice



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Minutes of WCCC General Meeting Wednesday, 26 September 2018

1. Opening of Meeting

Meeting opened by Pat McGinn at 7.35pm.
24 people were present.

2. Apologies: Tom and Margaret Anderson, Jenny Adams

3. Presentation

Martine Franco of Southern ACT Catchment Group (SACTCG) spoke about the work of the Catchment Group. The Group was incorporated in 2002 and is an umbrella organisation for 27 member groups in Woden, Weston Creek, Tuggeranong, and Tharwa, including ParkCare, Urban and Rural LandCare, and Water Watch.

- Southern ACT Catchment Group is a support network and will help new groups to start up. It can help with getting grants for community groups and offers financial and administrative support.
- SACTCG does a lot of promotion activity, including manning booths at local festivals and speaking to community groups.
- Capacity-building is an important activity, and Southern Catchment holds workshops to show people how to manage work in volunteer groups.
- SACTCG works with the ACT Government in a brokering role, and acts as a conduit between the Government and community groups.
- The Catchment Group has a strong role in representation, and partners with other environmental groups to achieve common goals and to make representations at the national level when necessary.
- SACTCG is driven by community interest and does not take on projects without community support.
- SACTCG helps with sub-catchment planning and strategic project planning. It works across the whole structure of government and community.
- SACTCG can deliver on-ground actions whilst building community capacity and capability and facilitates cost-effective leverage of community knowledge and activity.
- SACTCG will help groups to start but then steps back.

Holder Wetlands

Residents can contact the ACT Government through the Healthy Landscapes area of Transport Canberra and City Services (TCCS).

- At the Wetlands there is a lot of infrastructure underground.
- The vegetation needs more work
- The basins are not porous, they are field clay.
- The Government will do all the macrophyte and terrestrial plantings, but the community could do a lot in re-vegetation. There remain a lot of legacy poplars which are not good beside waterways.

Q: Why have the poplars not been removed then?

A: Because they hold the banks of the creek together while the wetlands are being built. At Yarralumla Creek all the banks eroded because the poplars were removed too soon. Native trees could be planted instead of poplars.

Q: In Molonglo, trees have been planted but no shrubs.

A: SACTCG would like to:

1. Improve community understanding about water quality and the role of wetlands;
2. Improve and maintain the wetlands, and enhance biodiversity there;
3. Build local community stewardship over the urban wetlands.

Possible Activities

1. Establish new 'Care Groups' for the Wetlands and Weston Ponds;
2. Partner with TCCS Urban Landcare Coordinator;
3. Hold community consultations on new waterway infrastructure;
4. Facilitate visits to the developing wetlands;
5. Hold field-based community workshops;
6. Provide member services for new Wetlands groups.

Q: Is there a recreational purpose for the Wetlands?

A: No, not directly, but SACTCG is fine with it being used for recreational purposes because it is an environmental group/

Q: We need a social outcome for the community in addition to just improving water quality.

A: There might be some restrictions on using the wetlands, such as no dogs at first, although that might change as the wetlands gets older. It is a given that the wetlands will encourage recreation.

Q: Who designed the wetlands?

A: A TCCS internal groups did the design but a WaterWatch representative was also involved.

Comment by Pat McGinn: Kids with bikes had built ramps near the old creek. We may need to educate and/or involve children so they know what the purpose of the wetlands is.

A: Two people have offered to start a Friends group, and both have young children.

Q: Why is the Government making wetlands?

A: The primary aim is to clean the water that will end up in the Murrumbidgee River. Lake Tuggeranong is now full of algal blooms because it is not big enough for the community that has grown around it.

Q: What community engagement is needed to make the wetlands successful?

A: The main need is maintenance, not just to empty gross pollutant traps. The main job will be weeding, which will need to be done about once a month. Water testing may also be needed to test the water quality.

Q: If you disturb the water too much to clean up weeds, it will destroy food sources for fauna and reduce oxygen in the water.

A: We don't do any activities that destroy the environment.

Q: The community will have differing ideas about the objectives of the wetlands, and conflicting priorities.

A: We will need to do collaborative planning to determine the priorities for the new wetlands.

Q: Where does funding come from?

A: Up till now it was LandCare money from the national government, but that was stopped in June 2018, when the Commonwealth decided supporting LandCare groups should be a state priority. The Ginninderra groups lobbied very hard this year but got only one year of funding. SACTCG has been very successful at getting grants, from organisations like Bendigo Bank and the Commonwealth Department of Health, but these are only for specific projects, not for long-term staff support.

Q: Who do we contact if we want to become involved?

A: Details will be put up on the WCCC website.

4. Presentation

Jodie Chamberlain and Kathy O'Neill spoke about the proposed Walk-In Medical Centre to be set up at Cooleman Court.

This will be the fourth walk-in centre in the ACT, and will be set up in the existing Community Health Centre on Parkinson Street. There will be treatment and consultation rooms, some group rooms, and the centre will have long opening hours, from 7am till 10pm. It will be a free service for minor injuries and illness, but NOT for children under 2 years of age. It will be a nursing-led service, there will be no doctors at the Walk-In Centre.

Proposed services include:

- Maternal and Child Health;
- Community Nursing;
- Continence and Stoma services;
- Occupational Therapy assessment services;
- Occupational Therapy equipment trial space;
- Gym and Group room space;
- Podiatry.

Nurse Practitioners can prescribe some antibiotics for certain illnesses, and give starter packs.

Next Steps

1. Design
2. Construction and Refurbishment, set to begin in 2019

It is planned that the Walk-In Centre will open by the end of 2019. It will be called Weston Creek-Molonglo Walk-In Centre.

There are other walk-in centres at Belconnen, Gungahlin and Tuggeranong. These see about 1100 people per week, and the waiting time is between 20 and 25 minutes.

- The Centre will be open at weekends until 10pm;
- The nurses can stitch and can order X-Rays;
- It is hoped the Centre will reduce pressure on the Emergency Departments at the public hospitals;
- Nurses will be able to make referrals, and will send information back to your GP after treatment;
- The nurses can refer you for more acute care if necessary;
- They can help to find a GP for you if you don't have one;

Q: What is the cost to set up and refurbish the old building? Is it going to be "state of the art"?

A: The design had to meet certain standards. Architects will advise on how to make the best use of the building.

Q: What will happen to the independent Living function?

A: A lot of on-line information is now available, and in time that function will transition fully to on-line. Occupational Therapists will continue to work there, but there won't be a large space for display of independent living aids.

Q: What about parking?

A: We can't expand parking at the back because that area is a floodway. There will a few more spaces provided with the re-alignment. The Centre won't get approval to progress without provision for parking.

Q: You might have to restrict parking.

A: In some places that has been done but it is difficult to police.

The presentation finished at 8.30.

Caroline Le Couteur, MLA for Murrumbidgee, said the Assembly had passed new climate change targets, aimed at zero emissions by 2045.

The Better Suburbs forum had been a successful exercise in participatory democracy. It looked at all things to do with the suburbs of Canberra. This was the result of a Greens motion in 2017 to increase participatory democracy.

Q: Is it possible to get a copy of the submissions on the targets for zero climate change?

A: The Strategy will be published next year, but I don't know about the submissions.

Q: What is the Assembly going to do about funding improved waterways? That got No. 1 priority in the Better Suburbs forum, but will the Government fund what is needed?

A: The Assembly passed a motion last year to say that the discretionary part of the TCCS budget should go where the community has priorities. Our intention was to make government better.

Q: When trees are planted, the contractor is required to maintain the trees for a certain period, which in the past was only 13 weeks. Is that enough?

General Business

1. The minutes of the August general meeting were passed (Moved: Chris Wilson; Seconded Shelby Schofield)

2. The treasurer reported that the bank account has \$13,091.68, and the Fetherston Gardens account has \$6572.98. The report was accepted. (Moved: Chris Wilson; Seconded: Janice Paull)

3. Pat opened the meeting to a **Community Forum**.

- Warwick Lavers asked for an update on safety on the part of Heysen Street that goes under the Tuggeranong Parkway. He asked if some road-base would be put there so the shoulder of the road would be safer. According to the TCCS website, money for this purpose has been allocated.
- David Smith has been selected by the ALP as the candidate for the new House of Representatives seat of Bean. He has expressed interest in getting to know us and will come to the next meeting. He is happy to accept questions on specific topics, so WCCC members are invited to send questions to him, for example, on funding for the LandCare program, or on the funds from asset-recycling that are being used for public housing.
- Planning in Molonglo.
 - Section 11 was up for sale last night. It is one of the last mixed-use sites where the could be shops. It was sold, but the developer is not required to provide shops.
 - What about the idea of a tender for future sales? The situation at Coombs shops is hopeless.
 - Section 12: A Development Application (DA) to allow the building of 200 apartments has been lodged, where the site was originally slated for only 44 apartments. There are already 25 public housing apartments nearby and other apartments, but this DA will mean that there will be an 8-storey building right next door.
 - Koko will do shops but not for a couple of years. The lack of shops is a real disadvantage. Some people have to have god delivered because they have no ability to travel to get food. It is very difficult for some in public housing because there are no facilities nearby.

Pat McGinn commented that Molonglo has no community council, and that WCCC helps where we can. WCCC will try to represent the people of Molonglo on this issue because we feel someone has to say something to the government. There will be shops at Denman Prospect from around January 2019 but these will not be easy to access for people without a car as they are several kilometres from Coombs.

Q: Alison Hutchinson said she had initiated a petition on the Coombs shops. She said the residents of Molonglo need accountability and information, and have asked the Government to come to speak to their community on 1 November.

Pat said that WCCC had received an invitation from the Suburban Land Agency to meet the head of the SLA today, but were given only 5 hours' notice of the meeting. She has arranged to meet with SLA with WCCC Chair, Tom Anderson, when he returns from overseas. They will identify the planning problems in Molonglo and seek to open line of communication with the government.

Q: How are DAs approved/

A: The 8-storey one was approved last Wednesday. It is a very poor DA, and comments have to be in by 5 October.

Q: These are very important issues for the electorate of Bean, but are also a problem for the entire city. Perhaps WCCC could raise them with David Smith.

Q: Could we set up a Friends of Holder Wetlands Group, because if there is no group, then there is no channel of communication with the government?

A: Simone Hunter said she had asked Martine Franco to come to the Garden Party that will be held on 28 October to celebrate the 50th Birthday of Weston Creek. She will talk with Martine after this meeting and see what needs to be done.

Pat McGinn said that WCCC will facilitate setting up a Friends Group.

Caroline Le Couteur said that ACT Planning is handling the matter of public housing asset recycling.

Pat mentioned the Housing Choices Collaborative Hub, which is discussing affordable housing and has produced a long list of recommendations. The Government is not likely to implement many of them, for example, the matter of independent certifiers. There was an article in the *Canberra Times* last week that asked what is the Government going to do about the recommendations.

Q: LandCare is destroying habitat for native fauna. Perhaps that is why it has decided not to fund LandCare any longer.

4. Bus Network

The *Canberra Times* printed a map on Monday, 24 September, showing how far a person would have to walk to catch the Rapid Service bus and Light Rail. Weston Creek residents are urged to go to the Have Your Say website and tell the government what they think about the new network.

Q: Has the Assembly had a meeting about bus networks?

A: TCCS has said that they are going to re-jig the proposals and make some changes.

5. Community Contributions Scheme

Clubs in Canberra are required to contribute 8% of their profits from gambling to the community. The Auditor-General reported earlier that there is a feeling that some of the "contributions" do not really go to the community. The Government put out a discussion paper but got lots of objections. This has made the government re-think their proposals, and it looks like there will be no change in the 8% requirement and how clubs distribute it, but they will be asked to give a further 1% to the Hands Across Canberra group, which is doing local philanthropy.

6. Submissions

WCCC may do submissions on a number of topics:

- Waste Strategy
- Lease Variation Charge (“Betterment Tax”)
- Planning Strategy Refresh. This is a huge topic. The Themes decided in 2012 are to be refreshed in 2018. EPSD has said it is not going to let the community look at their proposals before they do their final version. The Combine Community Councils oppose this decision.

7. Second Petrol Station

The Development Application has been approved. WCCC asked for some changes to the internal traffic flow, the height of the illuminated signs, and the entry from Cotter Road.

Q: There were some traffic counters on Heysen Street but someone removed some of them.

A: The developer has consulted with the community and with WCCC, and has had open consultations. Traffic control on Heysen Street is managed by TCCS and is beyond the control of the developer. WCCC will contact Village Building Company to ask about any changes.

The meeting closed at 9.30pm.