

Your local voice



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Minutes of General Meeting Wednesday 28 August 2019

Opening of Meeting

The meeting was opened at 7.32pm

The Chair, Tom Anderson, welcomed members and guests

Apologies: John Milne, Chris Wilson, Max Kwiatkowski, Warwick Lavers, Simone Hunter

39 people attended the meeting.

PRESENTATION

The Molonglo River Reserve Management Plan - Sophie Clement and Darren La Rue

The Vision is "The reserve is our treasured front yard with its river and gorge and rich diversity providing a variety of conservation, research, recreational and educational experiences for all".

The area is:

- 1,280ha in area
- includes the Lower Molonglo River, Kama Nature Reserve and Molonglo special purpose reserve

The plan sets out the policies and actions to conserve and enhance the natural environment whilst addressing key risks, including bush fire, and catering for a variety of recreational opportunities.

Matters of National Environmental Significance protected under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC Act) are:

- 482ha Box-Gum Grassy Woodland that provides habitat for Superb and Swift parrots,
- 36ha Natural Temperate Grassland, and
- 117ha of Pink-tailed Worm Lizard habitat.

The National Environmental Significance plan, which is an outcome of the Molonglo Valley strategic assessment under the EPBC Act, outlines ACT government environmental offset commitments to protect Matters of National Environmental Significance. It takes into consideration:

- 55,000 new residents,
- 23km of river edge, and
- 2 special purpose reserves (North and South).

The Molonglo River Reserve Management Plan is:

- A 10 year document,
- very detailed, and
- prohibits dogs in Kama Nature Reserve, Barrer Hill peninsula and the Box-Gum woodland walk.

Questions and Answers:

Q. You mentioned addressing bushfire risk. How do you intend to do this?

A. It is at the forefront of government thinking. There will be some areas of strategic firefighting – asset protection zones. There will be planting consistent with fire reduction and there will be management of the bush fire fuel load.

Q. Will there be suburbs between Ryans Hill and Barrer Hill?

A. Yes, they are currently pine plantations.

Q. How do you manage the risk arising from a petrol station and fast food restaurants near the RSPCA?

A. Engineers manage the water flow.

Q. In the 2018 consultation there was discussion about the interface between the reserve and residential areas. There was talk of fencing and limited access. Is this going to happen?

A. We will control where you can access. Coombs is a good example. In the Pink-tailed Worm lizard areas there is a steel post fence. The fence has been designed that marks the reserve further up. It is a better quality fence that limits access areas.

Q. Does the fencing allow access for people to get out in the event of a fire?

A. Yes. We are conscious of not trapping people.

Q. At the last flood, willows were cleared out. Has some thought gone into flood issues?

A. We have thought about the 1 in 10 years, 1 in 50 years etc. floods. The Plan does discuss it.

Q. Several years ago plants were put along the bike paths but in the last couple of weeks they have been cut down to ground level. Do you know anything about this?

A. Not sure – we will come back to Council. They were probably exotics and they will be replaced with natives.

Q. What is happening with Coombs Peninsula?

A. It is still marked for estate development and planning and land releases. This was decided in 2010-12.

Q. Caroline Le Couteur MLA is looking at the boundaries hoping to include Coombs Peninsula.

A. Ms. Le Couteur – it will be presented at next sittings so I can't make comments.

There is a draft Territory Plan Variation 360 to change the boundaries. It has not been decided yet.

Q. Is there any limitation on water usage – fishing, boating etc.?

A. Swimming is not permitted because of potential health risks. Fishing and non-motorised vessels will be allowed.

Q. Are there any plans for designated off-street parking for walks?

A. Generally it is on-street parking. Special Purpose Reserves will have provision for parking.

Q. Is there anything on Kama Nature Reserve?

A. It has a conservation purpose. We are not wanting people to go there. There will be little signage.

Q. When we had the original meetings for the Molonglo area we didn't want any building along the river corridor. What is happening with this?

A. The Plan has a dual purpose – conservation and recreational use is compatible with Plan.

Q. What is happening with the fire trail at the Arboretum?

A. There are no plans to change this. We need the fire trail and there are commercial areas as well.

Q. Do you have some way of monitoring activity and environmental impact?

A. Activity – we will be using rangers and field officers. We are seeking community assistance. Environmental impact – We are using adaptive management processes. There will be research projects, monitoring of the site and land management activities.

There are lots of challenges with reserves in delivering restoration and infrastructure components. In the last four years we have been focused near Coombs, restoring the Box-Gum Grassy Woodland and the Pink-tailed Worm Lizard habitats.

In terms of ecological restoration the following are examples of what has been done:

- removal of phosphorus rich top soil
- brought in coarse timber taken from cleared lands i.e. large logs lying down providing habitat for fauna
- planted 70,000 new trees.

For the Pink-tailed Worm Lizard, 3000 tons of rock from developed land has been placed in there to help extend the habitat.

Repurposing man-made utilities such as utility poles for ecological benefits and enrichment methods has seen the return of wildlife in degraded landscapes. Multiple species and groups are benefiting such as birds and invertebrates e.g. spiders and geckos.

A life support sculpture has been made using a 400 year old yellow box that was cut down. It was an ACT government and ANU collaboration involving ecologists, architects and engineers.

Visitors infrastructure includes:

- passive low-impact facilities
- tracks and trails, lookouts, shelters and signage
- work with Ngunnawal artists.

In the Molonglo Special Purpose Reserve work is being done to:

- restore the rocky grassland
- restore the Box-gum
- get rid of the silt ponds.

Q. There used to be a road going along the north side of the river near Coppins Crossing. Is it still there?

A. There is a geological site in the river corridor on the north side near the Kama Nature Reserve. Not sure about the south side.

Meeting closed 8.37pm for Annual General Meeting.

Meeting opened 8.49pm following Annual General meeting

Murrumbidgee MLA's – five minutes

Caroline Le Couteur

Public nature strip garden plantings – guidelines

- the ACT government has released the guidelines.
- the plants can be no higher than 50cm
- you need to leave a 1.5m footpath
- if you want a structure you must get ACT government approval
- you cannot obstruct footpaths or sight line.

Q. How do you stop people parking on it?

A. This is an old compliance problem. You couldn't park on them before and you still can't. There is very little compliance work done.

Q. Do guidelines make people leave spots for bins and for people to walk to houses?

A. It is up to the individual.

Plant based food

Ms. Le Couteur has moved a motion in the Legislative Assembly to encourage more plant based food.

- there are ecological reasons – use less land space than for animal based foods
- Lancet did an issue on a planetary reference diet and advised that we should eat less animal and more plant foods
- there are animal welfare issues
- the reaction to the motion was extreme.

Q. Are you a vegetarian?

A. Yes.

Q. What is happening with the proposal to put food waste in the green bins?

A. The contracts had already been signed with the companies collecting the bins. It will be looked at when the contracts are due for renewal (2021 or 2023).

BUSINESS MEETING

Minutes of the Meeting of 31 July 2019

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

Moved: Bill Gemmell Seconded: Ryan Hemsley Carried.

Business arising from the minutes of the meeting of 31 July 2019

- Nil

Treasurer's Report

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| • Main Account | \$3,930.96 |
| • Fetherston Garden Account | \$11,324.24 |

Moved: Trevor Wilson Seconded: Pat McGinn Carried

Business arising from the Treasurer's Report

- Nil

General Business

Filming of meetings

- We had a request to live stream the meetings.

- This is not proceeding.
- The lighting and the sound quality are not good enough.
- WCCC would lose control of the data and images if Facebook or U-Tube is used.
- Some people are reluctant to ask questions or interact if they are being filmed.

Molonglo updates

- The original plans for 4 property developments were rejected.
- Two lodged reconsideration requests with virtually no changes. They have been refused.
- They all used the same planner – Peter Van Der Walt from Canberra Town Planning.
- The Suburban Land Agency didn't approve them even though they sold them the land.
- Koko, diagonally opposite the Coombs shops, did not lodge a reconsideration request. The developer is working with the government to get an appropriate development through.

Coombs shops

- The owner is renowned for keeping shops closed.

Denman Prospect IGA

- The lease was terminated due to the company running it going into administration.
- It is hopeful that the supermarket will reopen in the next couple of weeks.

Coombs Play Space

- There are issues with the design and the lack of consultation.
- The site has some contentious issues.
- There have been changes to how play spaces can be used.
- People are being asked to comment on a concept diagram with no measurements and no edge and plans that are indecipherable.
- The Molonglo Mingle held an event that they considered was consultation but it was not understood as being consultation. There were two community consultations in about one month.
- The area will comprise a basketball court, toilets. 3 types of playgrounds and 15 car spaces but the space is not big enough.
- The toilets will be visible from John Gorton Drive. There are concerns about crime in the area.
- It is too close to a residential area.
- The community wants a park but not one with so much on it.
- There is an on-line survey.
- Consultation is open for another month.

Bus network

- There has been an increase in passenger loading in Weston Creek of 9% year on year.
- The buses from Molonglo are full in the mornings.
- We have suggested that the Routes 71 and 72 form and to Tuggeranong and Kambah be separated by 30 minutes. Currently they run at the same time. There are four services to Woden – we have suggested a 10 minute service to and from Woden from Cooleman Court.

- We have suggested that there is a need for more Park and Ride. Extend the RSPCA site and put a new one in possibly in Hindmarsh Drive.

New Coleman Court carpark

- We have asked for a pedestrian crossing.

Meeting with Chris Steel MLA next week

- We will ask for a pop up police station in Molonglo.

Q. Can I send an email on suggested sites for pop up police stations?

A. Yes.

Q. Why aren't we saying that we need a permanent police station?

A. they are concerned about statistics. They indicate that we don't need one.

Rivett Shops

There are some issues with parking. People from the day care centres are parking there all day leaving no parking for shoppers. We are looking to have timed spots so people can come in have a coffee, do some shopping etc.

Village Building Company

- The estate plan has gone through
- They are meeting next week with the WCCC Committee.
- They will then come to a WCCC public meeting.

Audit of ACT Public Housing Taskforce consultation

- We met with Deloitte who are doing the audit.
- We said that is started out badly but ended well.

Meeting with David Smith MP

- Spoke with him about federal issues
- The Southside is suffering from having no tertiary facilities
- Light Rail Stage Two
- Keeping the Woden High School site for a health precinct.

Woden Community Services

- We had a good meeting. They cover Weston Creek and Molonglo as well as Woden.

Meetings with politicians planned

- Bec Cody
- Caroline Le Couteur (this week)
- Jeremy Hanson
- Guilia Jones

Q. the footpaths outside Coleman Court slope. What can we do about it?

A. It is a Mirvac issue.

Upcoming meetings

September

- Shane Rattenbury on the new Climate Change policy

October

- Bushfire briefing

November

- May have a Molonglo meeting.

Village Building Company will probably present at one of those meetings.

Fetherston Gardens Friends want to come and talk as well about what they have planned for the money in their account.

Q. The ACT government looking after the Coombs Play Space have said they are coming to talk at the September meeting.

A. We told them that we wanted to talk about amenity in the existing developments rather than more land releases and we haven't heard back.

The consultation on the playground was an issue. It was not at an appropriate venue and there was only four days' notice of the meeting. The meeting was said to be about services such as PCYC, Communities@Work, and Woden Community Services etc. but instead was consultation on the Coombs playground.

The meeting closed at 9.41pm

**Next Meeting Wednesday 25 September 2019
Raiders Club, Liardet Street Weston**