

Your local voice



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MINUTES PUBLIC MEETING. WEDNESDAY, 30 NOVEMBER 2022

See also video of meeting, live streamed and uploaded to WCCC Facebook page

COMMITTEE IN ATTENDANCE: Bill Gemmell (Chair), Michelle Bourdet, Liam Foley, Louise Hughes, Michelle Weston, Mark Boast, Diana Terry

MURRUMBIDGEE MLAS IN ATTENDANCE: Emma Davidson MLA, Ed Cocks MLA

MLAs AS GUESTS: Jo Clay MLA, Rebecca Vassarotti MLA

MEETING OPENED: 7:32 pm. 22 signed in attendance plus 3 EPSDD guests, 4 MLAs and 7 WCCC committee members.

Unique Facebook 185 views of meeting video (as of 29 November 2022).

Welcome to members and guests. Chair, Bill Gemmell

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We are honoured to be meeting on the ancestral lands of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We acknowledge these First Australians as the traditional custodians of this land, whose cultures are among the oldest living in human history. We pay respect to the Elders of the communities in the Murrumbidgee region and extend our recognition to their descendants – past, present, and future.

7:34 pm GUEST SPEAKERS: Ben Ponton, Matthew Kamarul, Curis Gell (EPSDD)

Environment Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD) Representatives outlining District Strategies

See also PowerPoint

- Planning system is under review, Aim is for certainty and flexibility
- Height in residential RZ1. Will be non-negotiable at 2 storeys
- There are 9 draft district strategies currently out for comment
 - 5 big drivers of these strategies – blue green network (example, where to conserve environmental values, green spaces to preserve), sustainable neighbourhoods (example, diversity of housing, aging in place), inclusive centres and communities (facilities and services to support people), economic access and opportunity across the city (example, innovation and education hubs), strategic movement to support growth (transport, pedestrians, range of transport options)
 - 12 implementation pathways (feedback welcome)
- Territory Plan will have a new structure
 - A 96-page supporting document is available showing changes to structure, policy etc
- An Urban Design Guide and a Housing Design Guide will be developed over the next few months
- Consultation over the Christmas period. There will be workshops. Consultation closed 14 February 2023
 - Please give feedback on the District Strategies, Territory Plan and planning system including areas of attention, and district character

DISCUSSION

Sample questions and comments from the audience:

Audience concerns included:

- Will there be more time/opportunities for processing information?
- Comments about changes to zones. Ben Ponton said zoning will be kept
- Period of consultation isn't satisfactory over holiday period, consultation feels rushed
- Bushfire concerns for Weston Creek area specifically
- Maps are not clear, for example heat mapping
- Residents value green spaces

- Q: Who made the decision to do the consultation over the holiday period with such complicate documents? A: Decision of government. We have heard that people would like this period extended.
- Q: Technical standards in guides. What bushfire recommendations are included and what experts were consulted? A: Bushfire areas are mapped. Worked with colleagues.
- Q: What is the time frame for the potential development sites? A: we haven't done the detailed work yet. Recommend attending pop up sessions
- Q: Why isn't there an urban heat map included in the District Strategies? A: We have completed heat mapping, but not all the work is included. (Suggestion was given to include this as an appendix or link)
- Q: Planning system has not addressed housing affordability and supply of housing. A: population projections and housing need was considered but new data has come out and we need to update the information
- Q: Has a demographer been used for population projections? A: population projections come out of the central agency and census data
- Q: Is there anything in planning that will make things easier for people with disability? A: Yes, in the guides

Emma Davidson MLA, Rebecca Vassarotti MLA and Jo Clay MLA discussing the Western Edge Investigation

See also PowerPoint

- Minister for Planning, Parks and Conservation is Mick Gentleman MLA
- The Western Edge is 9 800 hectares bordered by the Murrumbidgee River, Weston Creek, Molonglo, and Belconnen
- Further investigations and surveys are still to come and will take about 17 years.
- If urban development is proposed on the Western Edge, it is about 10 years away
- Green Waste Parkwood site is in in the Western Edge Investigation Area
- Some blocks in the area are privately owned, 10 blocks have been sold in the past 10 years
- Environmental risks include- biodiversity corridors, threatened species, cumulative impacts, climate emissions
- Central Molonglo is not being considered for urban development
- Greens campaigned in 2020 to protect Bluetts' Block. The area needing protection is much bigger than this
- How will we look after people if we don't develop Western Edge? By building smaller dwellings, having a compact city and urban density, with climate smart development
- Greens Policy – 80/20 split, no development on west Murrumbidgee

DISCUSSION

Sample questions and comments from the audience:

Audience concerns included:

- Reduced tree canopy
- Heat islands and impact on communities
- Urban sprawl
- Concerns about what will actually be built on various areas

- Q: Are you going to push government for an urban development boundary? A: Different options for different people. Design guides good. Investigations important
- Q: Use of land and food choices A: Developing a food and fibre strategy
- Q: Why isn't there tree canopy targets included in Legislation? With reference to the Urban Forest Bill A: Discussions are in confidence. There are 17 recommendations asking how 30% tree canopy target will be met and retained with 2-year review
- Q: Will Lawson Grasslands be developed. A: Will follow up

Chair thanked the team presenting on the Western Edge Investigation. Invitation extended for return to a future public meeting as a high interest topic and area of concern for the audience.

Greater Canberra Community Association – group objectives and housing affordability

See also PowerPoint

- Greater Canberra Community Association is a community advocacy group committed to affordable and high-quality housing for Canberra
- Group want a city that plans for the future and builds a better quality of life for both the current and future citizens
- Concern that younger people, renters and working Canberrans don't feel heard in the planning system
- The housing crisis has many forms, including wait list for social and public housing, shortage of rental properties, and choices and costs
- Rents have consistently increased since 2015
- The ACT has low rental vacancy rates
- Greater Canberra Community Association recommends that the best way to address high housing costs is to increase supply
- Benefits of density outlined including benefits for the environment and the economy
- Greater Canberra is meeting with MLAs and providing submissions, for example to the Planning Review which is available online
- Anyone can join their group

DISCUSSION

Audience concerns included:

- Affordability costs due to high land and development costs
- Densification and the impact and/or lack of availability of services
- Population growth and housing needs
- How are estimates made when the ACT does not have an actuary?

Sample questions and comments from the audience:

- Q: Do you receive funding from other organisations? A: No funding from Government or developers
- Q: The number of future housing requirements seems high A: We need to plan for future possibilities
- Q: Where is the water usage data sourced from? A: ICON water
- Q: Clarification requested on zoning A: Would like to have allowances for subdividing one block

Audience present were also concerned about building heights in Weston Creek and the lack of clarity around this proposed development.

Please note that meeting was live streamed and recorded. Also see video recording for full conversation which will be uploaded to Council's U-Tube Channel

10:10 pm GENERAL MEETING

- Minutes of the meeting of October 2022
Moved: Rosemary Drabsch. Seconded: Mark Boast Accepted: Yes.
- Business arising from the minutes of the meeting of October 2022. None

CLOSE OF MEETING: 10:11pm

Have a joyful end of year and a peaceful new year.

NEXT WCCC PUBLIC MEETING:

At 7:30pm Wednesday **22 February 2023**

VENUE: Weston Creek Community Centre