

*Your local voice*



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## **MINUTES PUBLIC MEETING. WEDNESDAY, 31 MAY 2023**

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

**COMMITTEE IN ATTENDANCE:** Bill Gemmell (Chair), Michelle Bourdet, Liam Foley, Roger Tomlins, Louise Hughes

**APOLOGIES:** Michelle Weston, Mark Boast, Dianna Terry, Rosemary Drabsch  
4 signed in attendance. Plus: Caroline le Couteur and committee members.

**MURRUMBIDGEE MLAs IN ATTENDANCE:** None.

**MURRUMBIDGEE MLAs APOLOGIES:** Emma Davidson MLA.

Unique Facebook 108 views of meeting video and 6 views on You Tube (as of 22 June 2023).

**MEETING OPENED:** 7:36 pm.

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.

**7:39 pm GUEST:** 7:35 pm GUEST: **Caroline le Couteur**, the Vice President of **Cohousing Canberra**.

**PRESENTATION:** See also Power Point presentation.

Caroline said she is a keen supporter of community councils.

### **Cohousing proposal for North Watson.**

- What is cohousing? It is intentional, place-based communities.
- Advantages include: social connection and interaction; environmental because you can share things and therefore reduce the environmental impact and running costs of the building; can have financial benefit, for example some have shared laundries.
- Urban examples outlined. Canberra examples: Urambi and Wybalena Grove which have shared and private spaces. Both are 1970s medium density developments.
- Informal cohousing can include dual occupancies, tiny houses, converted garages and sheds but these can be difficult to separate if sale needed.
- Stellulata in Ainslie is under development. This is part of the Demonstration Housing Project.
- North Watson is a possible new cohousing development. Government conditions for the development are not finalized.
- Reasons to be involved: down-sizing, retirement options, support, like minded, efficiency, and security.
- There is an interest group and architects are engaged.

- Project is looking for development partners.
- Cohousing Canberra has a website, and you can join a mailing list.

**DISCUSSION. Sample questions and comments from the audience.**

Q: What factors would make it less expensive? A: Sharing items such as washing machines. There will be a shared accommodation/bedroom, so you don't need a spare bedroom for visitors. You can have a smaller kitchen as the plan is for a large, shared kitchen.

Q: Do you have a facilitator or a leader? Is it a commune? A: It is not a commune. You are not expected to share income. In terms of decision making, the structure is an incorporated association with a committee. It is expected it will be unit title when residents move in.

Q: Would it be simple to sell? Would there be any restrictions? A: It is anticipated that there will be house rules as part of a body corporate. The communal house will be large and obvious.

Q: Are there young people interested? A: Yes, there are family groups presently interested. One problem is the unknown completion date.

Q: is there a choice in the number of bedrooms. A: There will be a range. There will be indoor and outdoor space and open space. Also, there is a park adjacent to the proposed site.

Q: What are the reasons it is not more common? A: the biggest issue in Australia is the development model and the time setting it up.

Comments from audience:

- They have lived in a with a shared laundry, and it was very successful.
- Seems like a great idea. Could be good for social housing.

8:19 pm **TOPIC:** Update on the **Planning Review and Reform**, Bill Gemmell (Chair)

Led by the Chair, Bill Gemmell.

Printed Chair report supplied at meeting and emailed to the WCCC mailing list. It is also available on the WCCC website.

- It is understood that the Planning Bill was lodged in the Assembly.
- Approximately 120 amendments have been lodged for consideration. Hopefully Council will be able to advise what these are and will upload to WCCC website when available.
- The Bill creates the law that allows the other pieces to proceed (Territory Plan and District Strategies).
- A review of governance will be undertaken.
- Council has concerns of the timing with the upcoming ACT election.
- Territory Priority Projects (TPPs) may become disallowable instruments enabling them to be debated.
- Council is concerned about the accuracy of the listening report.

**Chair report.** Bill Gemmell. See also slide presentation.

Council is drafting some submissions at the moment. Any input welcome.

- Draft Design Guide. Concerns we have heard so far include:
  - Cycleways, shared pathways.
- Urban open space management plan
- ACT preventative health action plan

Breaking news in the Riot Act on May 31 asking if Community Council funding will continue. Chief Minister advised that it will continue.

New ideas and skills are valued and appreciated. Positions available on the WCCC Committee.

**8:25 pm MURRUMBIDGEE MLAs. None in attendance.**

We always have an open invitation to all Murrumbidgee MLAs to speak at the WCCC public meetings.

#### **GENERAL MEETING**

Minutes of the meeting of April 2023

Business arising from the minutes of the meeting of April 2023. None

Moved: Roger Tomlins. Seconded: Louise Hughes. Accepted: Yes.

The Chair thanked everyone in attendance.

**CLOSE OF MEETING:** 8:32 pm

**NEXT WCCC PUBLIC MEETING:**  
At 7:30pm Wednesday 28 June 2023  
VENUE: Weston Creek Community Centre