

DOWNER COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Minutes of Management Committee Meeting, Monday June 6th, 2016

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Miles Boak (Convenor), Stephen Sedgwick, Denys Garden, Amit Barkay, Patti Kendall
Robyn Rennie, Phillida Sturgiss-Hoy, Jacqui Pinkava, Fiona Dickson

Jim Dehlsen (Maintenance Officer)

APOLOGIES

Brain Callahan

OTHER ATTENDEES

Kim Sinclair (CHC), Kieran Fordham (CHC Project Manager), Kim Werner (CHC Board?) Eddy Bourke (CHC), Peter Carey, Fiona Evans, Jo Pickles, Neal Hardy, Anthony Stannard, Mimma Gambale (other?)

MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting of May 2nd, 2016 were accepted.

CENTRE CORRESPONDENCE

As noted.

CHC @ Downer Presentation

Kieran Fordham presented on the CHC @ Downer current plans.

Progress and timing

- The feasibility Plan is now complete, and the master plan is now in development.
- The DA process is expected to progress in August 2016.
- The plan is for construction to commence in March 2017 based on pre-sale commitments

Key features of the development

- A total of 275 units, including 33 townhouses, 122 independent living units for aged care, and 120 apartments (majority two bedroom).
- There will be no central road system
- They are proposing to introduce recessed car parking along Bradfield and Frencham Sts
- More open space and connection to Downer Village (from the site itself)
- Removal of childcare facility
- Introduction of a road linking the shops to Melba St. It will not enter the development itself and will be on TAMS land.

Level of care in independent living units

- The independent living units will not be sold to resident, but residents 'buy-in'.
- The units will be low to medium care
- The units will enable aging in place (that is features can be increased as required).
- No medical staff will be present on site

General discussion

Patti Kendall said she is pleased with the development and that the plans are more in line with her views and that they are the best plans proposed by CHC to date. This view was shared by some other members of the committee.

Miles Boak inquired about the sale of the site and whether or not CHC had any negotiating power over the sale price, based on the number of units that were being proposed for the site. Kim Sinclair said the priced was based on the 300 units allowed in the Territory Plan zoning.

Removal of childcare facility

CHC wished to know if the community were comfortable with the removal of the childcare facility. They mentioned they had spoken to Northside community centre and that it would be possible to find another location for childcare within the many potential development sites in Dickson, so there would not be a net loss of childcare places in the Inner North.

Discussion about Road into Melba Street

The proposal was for a narrow road (the same width as Frencham Place) to be constructed over the current footpath, and the footpath to be reconstructed towards Downer Oval. The CHC representatives were at pains to state that the proposed road would not encroach on Downer Oval, and also that there is no current agreement to build a road.

The road onto Melba Street will service the shops and not the development itself.

Most were generally comfortable with the idea of a Melba St road to the shops.

Neal Hardy does not believe the road off Melba is essential and it may disturb the small birds that utilise the shrubby vegetation where the road will be placed.

Mr Hardy undertook to supply a list of bird sightings to CHC.

Discussion about townhouses

Kieran Fordham mentioned that CHC were going to be able to offer a greater number of townhouses than originally planned - 33 altogether, including a number of 3-bedroom townhouses.

Two bedroom = 110 square metres = 27

Three bedroom = 140 square metres = 6

Fiona Dickson commented that given the average home size in Downer was approximately 100 metres and that the demand for townhouses was coming from those who want to 'downsize' that the town house sizing might be too large. Kim Werner pointed out that at least 10 square metres would be taken up with a staircase. It was also suggested that buyers now demand two bathrooms - even in a two-bedroom residences.

Kieran mentioned that there may be some townhouses which have the master bedroom on the ground floor. Patti Kendall said that it is a shame there are no single storey townhouses, but was glad they were going to accommodate her interest in having master bedrooms on the ground floor.

Discussion about the siting of buildings within the site

Kieran Fordham mentioned how the 2-storey height limit along Frencham St side of the development has created some significant design challenges for the architect in terms of building siting - such as ensuring that buildings are not overshadowing each other.

Fiona Dickson mentioned that she felt the run of four storey buildings proposed all along Bradfield St was 'monolithic' and would significantly overshadow all the open amenity space, make the planned amenity space very cold in Winter and it would not be well utilised or community friendly (essentially dead amenity space).

Fiona Dickson commented that the design did not take advantage of the solar orientation of the site and that the row of townhouses would be very dark.

Amit Barkay said that many of the opportunities of the site may have been lost when the ACT government agreed to a 300 unit development.

Siting of the open space

Fiona Dickson was concerned that there was no central sunny garden corridor through the site that would encourage CHC@ Downer residents to utilise the Bradfield St bus stop as well as funnel current residents through the site to the shops - suggesting the site would lead to a feeling that much of Downer is cut off from Downer Village.

Kieran Fordham said there is some space between the Bradfield Street Buildings and a corridor through site.

Robyn Rennie said that prospective CHC @ Downer residents may not want current Downer residents walking through the development to the shops.

Parking and roads

The shop developer, Njegosh Popovich felt there was still inadequate parking proximate to the shops on the development site itself.

Many felt that all the roads should be shared zones for pedestrians, bicycles and / or cars. Phillida Sturgiss-Hoy said that she thought there were some safety issues with shared zones, such as children not being able to detect when pedestrian areas turned into shared zones. She pointed out that this the case in Garema Place / Bunda Street. Amit Barkay said he felt this was a matter of developing a culture around shared use zones, such as is common in Europe.

Fiona Dickson said that the recessed parking on Bradfield Street will not do anything to reduce parking issues and that existing residents of Bradfield would probably utilise the spaces themselves. Kieran said that they could make the parking 2-hour limited and that they could arrange traffic inspectors. Fiona felt that they could already do that, without reducing the grassy verges along Bradfield Street with recessed parking.

Fiona Dickson is very concerned about the loss of amenity to current residents on Bradfield Street, future residents of the site - and the current Downer community more generally through the turning the avenue of trees into a parking lot (under the heritage listed trees) as well as the two roads from the site onto Bradfield. This includes the loss of sunny dog walking corridor under the trees, children's play space, as well as compromises to the safety of children walking to school (from Downer to Majura Primary), as well as create headlight shine into Bradfield Street residences. Kieran said they could arrange from screen to be put up to help with headlight shine. Fiona Dickson felt the imposition on Bradfield Street was both unnecessary and unfair.

DEVELOPMENTS IMPACTING DOWNER MEETING

Anthony Stannard suggested that it would be good if there was a presentation to the community about impacts of development in Dickson, along the light rail corridor, the shops and the CHC site. It was agreed to discuss how this might be put together at the next July meeting.

COURTYARD UPGRADE

Both Andrew Barr and David Dawes agreed to this upgrade. However, the costs for upgrading the corridor are not coming out of the current ACT budget, but out the sale of the Downer School site. CHC do not have to pay for the site until 2017, so the upgrade may not happen for a while.

Jim Dehlsen mentioned that the wiring to the broken courtyard clock is live and that it may be a safety issue.

FEDERAL ELECTION POLLING BOOTH

Miles Boak confirmed that the community centre would be used for polling on July 2nd. Denys Garden and Miles suggested to Jo Pickles (Downer Pre-School) that they could support the pre-school in fundraising efforts, such as through donating sausages or money for a sausage sizzle and the use of the BBQ. The event would also be advertised in the Downer newsletter. Mimma Gambale also suggested she may be able to help with a supply of bread.

CENTRE COORDINATOR'S REPORT AND BUILDING MAINTENANCE

There are some issues with a possum that may be peeing in a storage cupboard. The possum may have gained access to the roof, although there have been multiple attempts to prevent access. Jim Dehlsen is investigating.

Some centre users may be leaving heaters turned on.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The DCA is solvent. Major outgoings in the past month included building insurance.

OTHER MATTERS

As the CHC @ Downer development took up a significant proportion of the meeting, many other items were deferred for future meetings.

Miles Boak, Convener

Fiona Dickson, Secretary