

DOWNER COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Minutes of Management Committee Meeting, March 7, 2016

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Miles Boak (Convenor), Amit Barkay, Brain Callahan, Patti Kendall, Robyn Rennie, Stephen Sedgwick, Phillida Sturgiss-Hoy, Fiona Dickson

Jim Dehlsen (Maintenance Officer)

APOLOGIES

Denys Garden, Jacqui Pinkava, CHC (Eddie and Kim), Theo Poulos

OTHER ATTENDEES

Aniko Carey, Belinda Fos, Deependra and Jess Ranjit, Phil Andrews, Fiona Evans

MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting of February 1, 2016 were accepted.

CENTRE CORRESPONDENCE

As noted.

UPDATES ON ITEMS FROM FEBRUARY 1, 2015

Oval lighting

Miles letter to the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) triggered an inspection. It was found that the lighting did not meet legal conditions and was indeed shining directly into adjacent homes on Bonython Streets. The EPA is serving a legal notice to ACT Sports to rectify the lighting to meet approval standards.

Mural defacement

Dan McGinnity has quoted \$600 for repair of the mural. There was discussion about whether to wait for the shops to reopen prior to undertaking repair work. However, it was suggested that the established wisdom on managing and deterring graffiti is to move fast and repair any defacements quickly.

It was agreed by the DCA that repair work should commence as soon as possible.

Action: Miles Boak to schedule repair work.

DCA Newsletter

The Committee expressed gratitude to Aniko and Peter Carey for arranging the printing and distribution of the February DCA newsletter.

CHC Community Day

This was generally well attended and attracted a good age range of both current and potential future residents. Brain commented that CHC was doing a really great job of genuinely engaging and listening to community. The smoking ceremony was

Meeting room cupboard

Jim Dehlsen has now installed a bookcase which can be used for DCA archival material.

Clean up Australia Day

20+ people participated in Clean Up Australia Day activities. 20+ bags of rubbish and a laundry tub were collected. DCA thanked Barbara Burns for her organisation and dedication over the past 15 years.

Signs may have helped turn out this year, but it was hoped that Downer could do better next year.

There was some concern that the walkways between roads are regular dump sites for rubbish. Mention was made of a young Downer resident who had been supplying rubbish bags to encourage people not to litter the walkways.

CENTRE COORDINATOR'S REPORT

Centre coordinator's position

Six applications were received for the position. Many of these were of a high standard. Three applicants will be interviewed. The applicant's proximity to the centre is considered important so that the coordinator can respond flexibly and rapidly to Centre needs.

Centre Users

Stephen Sedgwick mentioned that there is a list of centre users posted in the **centre office?** should this be required.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Stephen Sedgwick reported that there has been a loss of \$1200 over the past few months due to general bills and wage payments, including tax and superannuation pay outs. Invoicing for room hire has also not yet occurred.

Meantime, there are sufficient funds to pay Dan McGinnity for the mural repair.

BUILDING MAINTENANCE & SECURITY

Miles explained the roles and responsibilities of the DCA and the ACT Government in maintaining the buildings for new members to the committee and new residents. The ACT Government has overall responsibility for building maintenance and upkeep, whereas the DCA is responsible for the every day running of the centre and room hire etc.

Amit Barkay suggested that maintenance issues that are the responsibility of the ACT Government also be identified through the "Fix My Street" website to ensure prompt action.

There was discussion about energy efficiency upgrades to the building. Originally \$100,000 worth of upgrades were proposed and committed by the ACT Government, but this has not eventuated.

Phil Andrews mentioned the current \$5.9 million Sustainability Fund. He suggested that the centre was more likely to see action on this front if the DCA joined forces with other North Canberra community groups, and put in a consortium bid for upgrades. For example, with the North Canberra Community Council.

DOMA / COLES DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION

Submissions for this development close at the end of March. Only prior respondents to the application are able to respond.

DCA members commented that it is both difficult to navigate through the submission process as well as the development plans.

DCA members and residents expressed concern that the ACT Government is failing the North Canberra community by looking at each Dickson development in isolation, rather than as a holistic and integrated set of proposals. This includes Section 72, the Tradies development, the Motor Registry site, the changes to, and increases in traffic volume associated with building use on Northbourne Avenue, and the DOMA / COLES development application. It was suggested that the DCA response to the DA should express this concern within its response.

DCA members and residents expressed concern about the loading bay design and impacts on the streetscape.

The proposed temporary parking arrangements at the pool would provide 70 spaces instead of the 247 spaces that currently exist.

It was suggested that letters to politicians in addition to formal DA submissions would be valuable.

Action: DCA to provide a formal submission on the COLES/ DOMA development.

ILLEGAL / UNAPPROVED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

DCA members expressed concern that some recent developments in Downer were deviating from the formally approved plans. It was suggested that the lack of resourcing of compliance officers (only 13 compliance officers Canberra-wide), that there is increasing vulnerability and erosion of development standards. However, in the case of identified deviations from approved development plans formal complaints should be made by concerned residents.

STREET PARKING ISSUES

Concern was expressed about potential overflows of parking into the suburbs because of the intense rapid development of the Dickson area and that the ACT Government does not appear to be managing or considering cumulative impacts.

Concern was also expressed about the nature strip parking associated with localised residential development within the suburb and that there was no compliance process in place to deal with vehicles parking under trees on nature strips.

LIGHT RAIL DEVELOPMENT - DICKSON REFERENCE GROUP UPDATE

Miles Boak has agreed to attend the Dickson Reference Group meetings on behalf of the DCA.

Miles reported that the government is planning to start earthworks prior to the next election in October. However, it was noted that Capital Metro and TAMS had not yet signed a formal contract.

The DCA looked at the current proposed light rail plans and expressed concern that the section from Phillip Avenue to Swinden Street will be denuded of any trees and look like a 'moonscape', with no landscaping in the centre of the avenue. There will be no trees at the Swinden Street station. This was of concern for the health and wellbeing of residents within the area and potential commuters being exposed to a hot and treeless environment, as well as the degradation of the physical beauty of the Phillip Avenue to Swinden section of road.

Concern was expressed about the accessibility of the Swinden St stop as it would be one of the few stops not services by a pedestrian bridge.

Concern was also expressed about the proposed creation of cul de sacs for slip roads along Northbourne Avenue, and consequential impacts onto surrounding streets, including increases in traffic and street parking.

Concern was also raised about the potential impacts of the Kamberra Winery site and the overshadowing of trees and nearby residences.

Concern was also expressed about Canberra Connect being the only avenue for complaints associated with the Light rail development.

It was suggested that letters to politicians, such as Simon Corbell, about the proposed development.

BUS SERVICES

The need for improved no. 39 bus services was discussed in relation to both the Downer development, and increases of commuters to and from the Dickson area. Concern was expressed that the single service that currently takes Watson and Downer residents directly into the city via a single rapid bus service may be replaced by a staged commute, requiring either transfer at the proposed Cape St bus station or onto light rail. DCA members agreed that this would be a significant disadvantage to Watson and Downer residents.

DETERIORATING CONDITION OF TREES

It was noted that many trees in the inner North were deteriorating in condition, with tree death and removal becoming more commonplace. Some trees may be reaching the end of their lives, but many others were dying due to neglect. Given that the ACT Government is currently consulting on its climate change adaptation strategies, it was suggested that a submission be made about tree maintenance as an important factor in keeping city's cool and liveable.

Action: Fiona to draft words that may also be utilised by other DCA members and residents to highlight the importance of tree maintenance.

DOWNER PRE-SCHOOL

The pre-school numbers are at an all time low, with the pre-school still feeding solely into Lyneham Primary as the default. They are now only running Thursday and Friday sessions. Robyn Rennie has agreed to liaise with the pre-school to try and improve outcomes for the Downer Community.

Miles Boak, Convener

Fiona Dickson, Secretary