

WILLOUGHBY BAY PRECINCT
PART OF NORTH SYDNEY COUNCIL'S COMMUNITY PRECINCT
SYSTEM



MINUTES OF MEETING HELD
THURSDAY 9th February 2023
COMMENCING AT 7.30 PM

ATTENDANCE: 18 people attended the meeting
APOLOGIES: 4 were recorded
GUEST SPEAKER: Therese Manns, General Manager, North Sydney Council

COVID-19 MEETING SAFETY PROCEDURES

In accordance with COVID-19 meeting safety procedures, all attendees used the hand sanitiser, which was supplied and tables were wiped down before and after the meeting with the sanitiser. The COVID-19 signage was displayed. Social distancing was observed and no one reported feeling unwell. No unregistered persons attended the meeting.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes for the 8th December 2022 meeting were adopted

Motion carried: 11 in favour, 7 abstentions, 0 against

BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Woolworths Rangers Road Planning Proposal

Precinct Chair advised that on 7 December 2022 Sydney North Planning Panel rejected Woolworths PP 6/22 request for an increase in the height limit to 40 metres. However, the Panel noted Woolworths' willingness to submit a revised proposal with reductions in height and felt "elements of such a proposal would have considerable merit" but had not been formally submitted or reviewed. On 11 January Woolworths submitted its revised proposal as Planning Proposal 1/23 seeking to increase the height limit from 16 metres (for five storeys) to part 27 metres (for six storeys) and part 33 metres (for eight storeys).

The heights sought are excessive for the number of storeys and are the result of excessive floor-to-floor heights. The adjacent 9-11 Rangers Road was redeveloped with six storeys to Yeo Street in a height of 19.1 metres. The concept plans still show 350 car parking spaces although there has been a reduction in height.

Motion: THAT Willoughby Bay Precinct objects to Planning Proposal 1/23 due to excessive height which is out of scale with Neutral Bay village and will result in overshadowing, and traffic impacts due to too many car parking spaces, and authorises Precinct Chair and PM to make a mre detailed submission to Council on Precinct's behalf.

Motion carried: 17 in favour, 1 abstention, 0 against

Brothers Park

PM noted that Precinct has previously put a submission to Council concerning removing the pine tree at the northern boundary of Brothers Park and re-landscaping with a native garden, supporting residents of the neighbouring property at 1A Fernhurst Avenue. Residents ES and LS explained that the pine tree,

planted on the embankment by a resident, has grown quite a bit. There is a large area underneath the tree where no plants can grow. When it rains muddy water inundates their downstream properties. RL noted that Council had previously provided a design for a native garden to be established on the northern boundary, including this area, and Precinct is in support of the proposal.

Proposal by PW

PW suggested Precinct ask Council to reduce the pine tree and trim the horizontal branches of the adjacent tree pending the introduction of native plants. Precinct Chair and PM to write to Council. TM asked to be copied in on the submission.

CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

- Council's Response to Precinct's December 2022 Minutes

Draft DCP Amendment – Car Parking Rates – Council's Strategic Planner has advised that the Precinct Committee's Motion is noted. However, as Council has already endorsed the proposal for exhibition as prepared, based on the premise that it would apply to areas zoned B4 and R4 within 400 metres of heavy rail and metro stations, any expansion of this area would require a resolution from Council supporting the expansion of the area to apply to Cremorne and Neutral Bay.

The results of the public exhibition will be presented to Council in the form of a post exhibition report by mid 2023. Council will consider all submissions made in respect to the Car Parking Rate DCP amendment at this meeting and consider whether the area identified should be expanded.

Concerning 5 Ryries Parade – Item allocated to Council's Senior Assessment Officer.

Soft Plastics collections – Item allocated to Council's Waste Management Co-ordinator.

Building Concerns at 16 Davidson Parade Cremorne – UPDATE (8 December 2022) Council's Team Leader Building Compliance has advised that according to Council's records, the matters regarding work occurring out of hours and building debris falling onto a customer's property have been recorded and previously investigated. The customer has been contacted regarding Council's investigation.

In addition, Council's Rangers will be asked to monitor the site more frequently to ensure that works do not occur outside of permitted construction hours without an appropriate permit.

The matter regarding "scaffolding constructed on resident's property" is a new matter and this will be recorded for investigation. This matter has been forwarded to a compliance officer for further investigation.

The customer is encouraged to contact Council's Team Leader – Building Compliance – on 9936 8100 to discuss any concerns they may have with the investigation or development at 16 Davidson Parade.

45 Wonga Road – Sinkhole UPDATE (29 December 2022) Council undertook an investigation which identified that there was a defect in the adjacent sewer manhole which was the cause of the sinkhole. This information has been provided to Sydney Water. The restoration of this sinkhole has also been referred to Sydney Water for their action.

139 Young Street – Abandoned car UPDATE (28 December 2022) Council's Manager Ranger and Parking Services has advised that the car is being processed in accordance with the new legislation. It has been fined and will be removed if the owners do not remove it.

- **Traffic Committee Meeting (10/12)**
- ❖ **Item 6.1** – Pedestrian Safety – Gerard Street/Macpherson Street Intersection
- **Council Meeting (12/12)**
- ❖ **Item 10.06** – Rezoning of Land at Parraween street Cremorne
- ❖ **Item 10.08** – Cremorne Plaza Langley Place and Cremorne Gateways Design Concepts and Engagement Strategy.
- ❖ **Item 10.11** – Engagement Strategy Neutral Bay Town Centre Planning Study
- **Council Meeting (16/1)**
- ❖ **Item 7.1** – Cr Dr Alanya Drummond Resignation
- **Council Meeting (30/1)**
- ❖ **Item 8** – Cammeray Reserve Care & Control
- ❖ **Item 10.1** – Organisation Structure
- ❖ **Item 10.5** – Reconfiguration of Primrose Park. A resident expressed concern about the proposed reconfiguration to increase the number of playing fields from 3 to 4. It was noted that the proposal will be on exhibition for 42 days. Precinct to consider the proposal at its March meeting.
- **Council Meeting (13/2)**
- ❖ **Item 10.8** – Environment Reference Group Membership Application – Dr Jane Theau
- **CPC Meeting (21/2)**
- ❖ CPC Meeting Agenda – Includes motion proposed by Brightmore, Neutral and Willoughby Bay Precinct for establishment of “Neutral Bay Alive” community forum to help drive the new Neutral Bay village planning study.
- **Council Memoranda**
- ❖ 19 Jan – Cremorne Plaza & Langley Place – Public Domain Upgrade
- ❖ 27 Jan – Planning Proposal 2/23, 601 Pacific Highway, St Leonards

DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

20A Wonga Road Cremorne DA Plans
 44 Ellalong Road Cremorne DA Plans (granted deferred commencement, subject to conditions)
 40 Brightmore Street Cremorne

There was discussion concerning the proposed development of a residential flat building at 40 Brightmore Street. A resident commented that the design looked like a substation and concerns were

raised about the impact on the lemon-scented gum as its location at the top of the site and adjacent to proposed excavation is a very similar situation to 17 Richmond Avenue where two Sydney blue gums were cut down in an emergency operation when it appeared they would collapse following excavation.

Motion: THAT Willoughby Bay Precinct advises the following concerns regarding DA 409/22 at 40 Brightmore Street, Cremorne

- **Inappropriate presentation of blank wall to street – Precinct feels this could be redesigned to incorporate windows to more appropriately engage with the street.**
- **Impact on lemon-scented gum – Precinct asks that the building be moved to lessen the impact on the root zone and that appropriate conditions be incorporated to ensure this tree is not lost (having regard to 17 Richmond Avenue, a similar site in the area).**
- **Excavation 9m below the water table in a zone that is unstable – Precinct asks that appropriate conditions be imposed to ensure adjacent properties are not undermined.**

Motion carried: 17 in favour, 1 abstention, 0 against

Guest Speaker – Therese Manns General Manager, North Sydney Council

Background

- Having grown up in the country, she has a strong sense of community and that is because as a child she was involved with community groups through her family; her grandfather was a Shire President and her father, a General Manager.
- Her first Council was Leeton in the Riverina, then Lachlan Shire in Condobolin.
- After Condobolin, she opted out of Local Government, had two children (Georgia now 18 and Max now 16) and returned to private practice in finance in a partnership looking at Australian business and entrepreneurial projects worldwide such as an aquatic centre in India.
- Returned to Local Government at the urging of the Mayor at Boorowa Council who was very passionate about her community, TM jumped into her first General Manager's role at Boorowa.
- At the time only 8 out of 152 Councils had a female General Manager.
- From Boorowa she went out to Broken Hill, again, inspired by the Mayor, who was passionate about his city. Broken Hill was the most challenging role for TM. While there, Broken Hill got a heritage listing.
- From there she came to Sydney and started as a Director Corporate Services at Sutherland Council (at the time one of the largest Councils in the State.)
- From there General Manager at Randwick Council for the last four years – one of the most rewarding roles in her career
- Approached by people in the industry to look at North Sydney position "because the Mayor is looking for someone who can bring leadership to the position for the next ten years."

Role of the General Manager

Leadership, Strategy and Culture

Strategy is very important. North Sydney Council is an organisation of between 350-400 people. Councils have a more diverse range of services and infrastructure than other organisations. Establishing specific goals in those strategies is really important.

Culture is the way things are done; behaviours and expectations that people have learned over a long period of time that they need to exhibit in order to get ahead or to fit in.

Balancing the Budget is a big part of the GM's role. We have limited revenue, rates rises are limited. There are cost of living pressures, interest rates rising, skilled shortages, vacancies across the board. So how does North Sydney Council present itself as a Council of choice?

Assets are a key part of the GM's role.

NSOP – before applying for her current role the GM did a 10 year analysis of North Sydney’s financial situation. She discovered wages did not go up, and nor did materials. Depreciation of assets is a huge cost.

Reviewing the Organisation – this has started already – at the end of January the GM took a report to Council cutting senior staff down from six to three – reflective of a Council of our size. The GM says the Council is top heavy.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Cremorne Plaza and Langley Place Upgrades

Preliminary feedback invited to inform the new design closed on 31 January 2023. Council has resolved that detailed concept design options for the Cremorne Plaza be placed on public exhibition from Wednesday 14 December 2022 to Wednesday 15 March 2023 and that consultation with the community on the concept design options for Cremorne Plaza, Langley Place be undertaken. **Precinct Members supported the idea of a presentation by the landscape designers / community workshop and requested to be advised of any presentation or workshop.**

Pathways Cremorne Seniors Housing – declared State Significant Development

Precinct Chair advised Pathways the developer proposing the Seniors Housing Development in Parraween Street opposite the Orpheum held a drop-in community information session on 4/2/2023 and will hold an online session on 13/2/2023. There has been a lot of concern in the community about the loss of the cottages in Parraween Street. Council voted for an Interim Heritage Order and further heritage studies are underway. Council is also trying to rezone the area from R4 (which would support 4 storeys) down to R2 (which would support only 2 storeys.)

A key issue is that has only just come to light is that the project has been declared State Significant Development (SSD) which takes it out of Council’s hands. The Secretary’s Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) letter setting out the list of things which the developer has to address in their environmental impact statement was dated 22 October 2022. However it appears that noone, including Council, was aware of the SSD declaration prior to the developer’s community information session. The SEARs makes no mention of any heritage assessment or considerations, although the development is opposite the Orpheum Theatre and the site is subject to an Interim Heritage Order.

The conceptual block plan shown to residents by the developer at the drop-in session indicates they propose four buildings, three facing Parraween Street up to 4 storeys high and a building on Gerard Street of 8 storeys with an area of public park which extends from Gerard Street to Parraween Street. It is proposed the Seniors Housing Development will include everything from independent living to high care.

There was discussion by residents with concern expressed about the project being declared State Significant Development and what appears to be a lack of transparency over the Minister’s decision on this.

Abandoned Car in Fifth Avenue

This vehicle is on the park side of Fifth Avenue and is covered in dirt and debris and has been there for many months. **Can Council arrange for a Ranger to inspect please?**

Interim Heritage Order Holt Avenue

A Precinct member asked what the outcome was regarding the Holt Avenue, Land and Environment Court decision. The Interim Heritage Order expires on 11 March 2023 and residents have been making representations to the Minister to extend it.

Meeting closed at 9.40pm

Next meeting will be on Thursday 9 March 2023

Council Contact Details:

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