



North & West Melbourne Association Inc.
PO Box 102, North Melbourne, Vic 3051

Ordinary General Meeting
Dewey Common Room, Bastow Institute
603–615 Queensberry Street, North Melbourne

Meeting Chairperson: Kevin Chamberlin

MINUTES

Ordinary General Meeting, Tuesday 19 November 2019, 7.32pm

Present: Nicholas Atkins, Michael Beaconsfield, Jenna Beckett (guest, Metro Tunnel), Sally Capp (Lord Mayor of Melbourne), Kevin Chamberlin, Sabrina Chapman (guest, Metro Tunnel), Sebastian Clark, Stephen Farrugia, Cecilia Gason, Peter Gerrand, Valerie Gerrand, Janet Graham, Michael Horscroft, Mary Kehoe, Jan Lacey, Graham McCallum, Dan McDonnell, Lucy Mackenzie Worters (guest, Metro Tunnel), Jane Poynter, Duncan Rouch, Lorraine Siska and John Widmer

Apologies: Bill Cook, Ray Cowling, Jacques Péril, Margaret Péril, Jacqueline Stevenson, Geraldine Suter and Carolyn Thompson

The Chair, Kevin Chamberlin, welcomed everyone to the meeting, including a team from Cross Yarra Partnership who would make a presentation on the Metro Tunnel Project: Lucy Mackenzie Worters, Jenna Beckett and Sabrina Chapman.

1. **Presentation by Cross Yarra Partnership (CYP) on the Metro Tunnel Project's development plan for an electrical intake substation**

The new substation will link the new North Melbourne station to the West Melbourne Terminal Station. The substation will be constructed on existing Metro Trains Melbourne (MTM) land, adjacent to the rail corridor and the Moonee Ponds Creek Trail on the creek's eastern bank near the site of the new station. Lucy handed over to Jenna to explain the development plan process.

Jenna said the intake substation would provide power to Metro Tunnel's rail tunnels and stations. It is a high-voltage connection to the existing AusNet West Melbourne Terminal Station on the west bank of Moonee Ponds Creek (MPC). Existing conditions include MPC and the CityLink tollroad. The existing substation is on the west bank. Not much will change; good use will be made of what is there already. The new substation will be located in the MTM Macaulay depot area, next to the CityLink tollroad bridge and the Moonee Ponds Creek Trail.

Early works: These will include: demolition of old MTM infrastructure; utilities service connection to power station by boring under MPC and existing rail tracks to install cable routes; ground excavation and grading; and removal of up to 41 trees.

The **main construction** is expected to begin in March–April 2020 following approval of the Development Plan (targeted for March 2020). External construction will take place over four months, followed by internal/electrical fit-out. Approximately 30 trees will be reinstated. The cable route is along MPC and there are also access routes. The substation is in the blue-shaded part of the map headed 'Works Area' in the CYP presentation. It's a double-storey building (see Ground Floor & Landscape Plan).

Next steps: The draft Development Plan is on public display and open for comment on the Metro Tunnel website until Friday 6 December.

Q: The site location is very good. I'm curious about the nature of the electric cables — are they underground?

A: Yes, underground. We haven't tied down the exact location, so the estimated tree numbers are higher than what will probably result. The substation is not visible from Arden Street. It's next to the MTM electrical substation.

Q: We have an increasing amount of building infrastructure. Can you make it more attractive?

A: Your submissions will be responded to.

Q: Is the building subject to any sort of planning regulation to cope with its being in a flood-prone area?

A: Yes, that's right. It complies with all standards applicable. It's raised, 11 metres high and two storeys.

Q: We are in uncertain times regarding climate change. Does the building design have any flood-proofing?

A: There's bunding. Also, there are two networks. If there's a problem in one, we can use the other. The whole of the new North Melbourne station area is in a flood overlay.

Q: The trees are not significant in that part of MPC.

A: We are not keen for most of the trees to go back.

Q: With reference to the City of Melbourne's vision for MPC, is it targeted for adding more green?

A: This part is not Council land. We are seeing what we can do to enable some of their plans.

Q: The substation is not in Council's grand plan. My advice would be not to get caught out removing more trees than necessary.

Q: There is a specific definition of what a tree is. Council, VicTrack and Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek will all be involved in consultation.

Q: Where are the proposed station exits?

A: There's one at the Laurens Street end, but the station has to be designed to allow for another exit at the western end too for future expansion.

Q: May we circulate your presentation?

A: Yes. It also includes a form for submissions. We encourage submissions.

Q: Is the substation doubling the electrical capacity? This is an important substation for the western suburbs. It's crucial to underground the power lines. The Council, and now the NWMA, have positions on the consultative committee.

The Chair thanked the team from CYP, who left the meeting. He then welcomed Lord Mayor Sally Capp, who had just arrived.

2. Presentation by Lord Mayor Sally Capp, followed by questions and answers

Sally Capp said she was delighted to be in the role of the 104th Lord Mayor of Melbourne. She noted that this Council had been going for 18 months, the new CEO had settled in well and activity was increasing. She said there had been some disturbing commentary that Council didn't listen but she didn't believe that was true. She had signed off on a number of new strategies including the Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy and the Transport Strategy 2030. Council had made a submission on affordable housing ahead of releasing a draft housing policy towards the end of Q1 2020.

Melbourne is in the top five fastest growing cities in the world. The question is how to manage that while addressing housing security and homelessness. A big topic is population growth. They have to manage all the challenges that go with that while maintaining livability. It's important to make the right decisions even if they are not popular. They are making good decisions about heritage. Sally said she loved history. Charles La Trobe, whose portrait hangs in the Melbourne Town Hall, is her hero. He said we must have space for parks.

She said Postcode 3000 was still regarded as transformational. Switching the preference to residential had had a great effect on the city's vibrancy and the success of the economy. The CLUE [Census of Land Use and Employment] data, which had been collected for 40 years, revealed an annual turnover of \$100 billion for Melbourne. Most growth had been in Docklands and residential areas in the city. This is the legacy we will leave for new generations — Sally said she took that responsibility seriously. "We gather strength as we go" is the city's motto. The issues had been summarised in the minutes of the Community Conversation seven months ago.

Q: Regarding affordable housing, how can the community take part in consultation?

A: A policy is coming out at the end of March 2020 latest. We had to be diverted by putting a submission to the State Government on affordable housing. This was one of the biggest distractions driven by me. The policy covers market affordability through to homelessness and public and social housing. It's been neglected for 40 years until now when it has become a crisis. We have few powers as local government as to what we can control, but we can influence and agitate to State Government. I feel it's important to be as proactive as possible. We were hurtling down the track towards making sleeping in the streets illegal. What do you think? Rough sleepers — through to the impact on students and traders — it's unacceptable. According to the street count, we are 300 beds short every night in the inner city. We are working with philanthropy to get funding to retrofit properties for emergency housing. To make that viable the councils involved have to find properties with long-term leases. Ozanam House is exemplary — how can we have more of those?

There's a big change on affordable housing. We have to change from not supporting mandatory inclusionary zoning. We have had zero affordable properties delivered under previous voluntary schemes. With population growth, it's forecast that the city will need an extra 27,500 affordable dwellings in 2056. At the Council of Capital City Lord Mayors every one identified a shortage, including Canberra — that helps with the Federal Government. There's a draft for consultation coming out. It includes what the economic benefits are, too, by applying, for example, a public benefit assessment, the same as for roads.

Q: Regarding the Local Government Bill, does any of it affect the City of Melbourne (CoM)?

A: Yes, quite a lot. I'm riveted at what's happening in Casey and am awaiting the IBAC report. Two notable points in the bill are: (1) compulsory training for council election candidates and councillors; (2) if your principal place of residence is overseas but you have a property in Melbourne, you won't automatically be on the electoral roll — that equates to about 10%.

Q: What about the requirement for Council to involve the community in making decisions?

A: We already have a 10-year financial plan. We also have a four-year annual plan and budget. I'm not sure how it will change what we're doing. If you get a certain number of signatures — what's material, the percentage.

Q: Will Council be publishing anything on the website? Some matters are clearly not covered in the Local Government Bill 2019.

A: It's on my list. A second reading is unlikely before 2020 but it should happen before the next election.

Q: What efforts has Council made to address the effects of the West Gate Tunnel?

A: It's a major consideration we're looking at constantly, from monitoring that what's proposed is being delivered, down to the number of trees. It includes the impacts of traffic-calming, trees, streetscapes, open-space impacts. There is ongoing vigilance of impacts on Spencer Street, roundabouts, etc.

Q: Have you been able to obtain any concessions, with traffic coming off the 'tunnel' into North and West Melbourne? I haven't seen any concessions.

A: We took that up after a tortuous process.

Q: I can vouch that your staff are very vigilant at the Community Liaison Group meetings with the West Gate Tunnel Authority. However, it would seem that clauses in Jeff Kennett's original agreement with Transurban make it difficult for any municipal council to introduce traffic-calming initiatives without potentially being sued by Transurban for loss of income.

A: I guess we wouldn't get any concessions. But the State Government will invest \$50 million and we will match that, to attempt to solve the problem.

Q: The reason I mention trees is that every tree removed has to be replaced with five, but it's not determined *where*. So the cheapest response is little plants along highways, which doesn't do much for us. Those trees need to be in our neighbourhood to improve conditions for *us*.

Q: With community grants through the West Gate Neighbourhood Fund designed to support inner-west communities affected by construction of the West Gate Tunnel, the CoM was left out, and thus community organisations within the CoM are ineligible to apply.

A: I didn't know about that.

Q: Where do you find the space to plant? We are looking for substantial planting on redundant industrial land. There could be potential for getting large areas left over from the West Gate Tunnel Project. It's Peter's role to put that to the Community Liaison Group.

Q: Where are we at with recycling, street bins etc?

A: Clean Event are already under pressure with what they can recycle. They haven't stopped taking our stuff but I heard that stuff from other councils is going to landfill. We're not seeing progress. We do well when we band together with other councils. What the higher-density councils need is very different from what outer suburbs need. We do own some facilities through Citywide, so we're pursuing that. We need increased use of recycled products. In the Spring Street end of town, some roads have recycled plastic. We need to separate glass, which is the biggest contaminant. Food is next. If we could change our methods of bin placement and collection it would help a lot. But it's not enough and it's a terrible situation. We need to fix the circular economy and create a better product.

Q: It's a pleasure to be able to attend CoM meetings and have a two-minute say. Would you support more meetings at Kensington Town Hall or in North Melbourne?

A: Absolutely — I'd be keen to do that. I love the Future Melbourne Committee meetings, the random questions and seeing the passion people have for particular subjects. I will push that along.

Q: With the plane trees, love them or hate them, part of the problem is that the streets are not cleaned well enough, so the horrible seeds get in the nose and throat.

A: What other matters are there in the context of cleanliness? With public and private projects plus the high population, the city is very busy. A group of Japanese students were asked "What's the thing you love best about Melbourne?" The answer was "rubbish bins". They don't have them in Tokyo. We collect 13 million cigarette butts. We need behavioural education to address actions like balancing stuff on top of full bins. We must have clean streets when we have so much activity. A guttering person on Neil Mitchell's program said plane-tree seeds were the worst thing for blocking gutters.

Q: Street cleaners blow plane-tree debris into my front door, not away from it.

Q: We have a problem with short-term accommodation. It drives prices up. Can you monitor the behaviour of people booking it? Is there any plan to manage short-term accommodation?

A: It's terrific for tourism. There's a Brighton man going on about the scourge of Airbnb. He reported 800 people going through a neighbour's property when the owner was overseas. There's a lot of scepticism about the Airbnb Bill, that it didn't go far enough and didn't have enough powers to manage accommodation. Recent research shows that Airbnb does enter into agreements with local government. We should make an agreement to start representing residents' interests better.

Q: Developers can accept subdivision or hand over land. The Australia Post site in West Melbourne is under State Government control. Council said, "We want the money," but we said, "No, we want the land." The government said yes and the developer was happy for land on Rosslyn Street to be open space. The Public Housing Renewal Program site at Abbotsford, Curzon, Haines and Molesworth streets is now at VCAT with Duncan regarding the five-acre site. Council has said it wants the money. As a matter of good planning policy we want public land to be under the control of Council. There's a piece of land off Haines Street and another opposite Wood Street. We don't want these to be under the control of some third party as private roads. Parks should be under Council's control.

A: As a general principle, public open space is very important. We can add to open space by either buying land or taking back roads (viz Southbank Boulevard). Our team looks at land in developers' projects and decides whether it's worthy of Council's retention. We weigh up if we got the money what we would do with it. There was one case in Kavanagh Street where we wanted money, not land. We lost at VCAT. We need to show how that money will improve the neighbourhood. The best thing achieved was transparency about how contributions are applied. Stay tuned; we will look at its application in North and West Melbourne.

Kevin thanked the Lord Mayor very much for her most informative presentation. Sally Capp said she appreciated the opportunity. The meeting continued with regular business.

3. Confirmation of minutes of previous meeting and matters arising

Moved John Widmer, seconded Sebastian Clark:

That the minutes of the Ordinary General Meeting held on 15 October 2019 be confirmed as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chair.

Carried.

Kevin noted that there had been no response other than an acknowledgment of receipt to the letter sent to the Planning Minister about affordable housing on 10 October. Jan Lacey requested that it be followed up.

4. Committee report

(a) NWMA Christmas function at Bowls Club

This would be drinks and canapés at the City of Melbourne Bowls Club from 6.00pm to 8.00pm on Wednesday 11 December. There was no charge as the Association was providing food and paying the hire fee. However, attendees would have to buy their own drinks at the bar.

(b) Banking arrangements

Bill Cook and Alba Gatto are the signatories to NWMA's current account. The Association had renewed its term deposit at 1.5% interest. When the Treasurer, Jacqueline Stevenson, returned to Melbourne in early December, different sorts of online account would be looked at. Secretary Jane Poynter noted that the Commonwealth Bank's procedure was outmoded and we were trying to enter the 21st century. Discussion followed about a more flexible system.

Moved Sebastian Clark, seconded Nicholas Atkins:

(i) That this meeting authorise the Chair, the Secretary and the Treasurer to identify a more beneficial form of banking and report back to the next meeting in February 2020.

(ii) This recommendation covers both the current account and the term deposit.

Carried.

(c) Presentation at next Ordinary General Meeting

The Environment Protection Authority (EPA) will present on noise pollution at the February 2020 meeting.

5. Reports from affiliated organisations

(a) Melbourne North Police Community Consultative Committee (PCCC)

Jan said the PCCC's annual Christmas Toy and Food Drive was a great cause and this year was supporting Ronald McDonald House. Gifts of toys and packaged or tinned food could be dropped off at the Commonwealth Bank or The Centre, both in Errol Street, until 17 December.

(b) Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek (FMPC)

John Widmer showed his November 2019 PowerPoint report. Of particular note was Kelvin Thomson's retirement as president after more than 20 years' service. Kelvin is famed for his work on addressing population growth. FMPC would be having a 30th anniversary celebration on Sunday 1 December at Oak Park Sports Pavilion. There was a photo of graffiti on the Bent Street pumping station, on the opposite side of the road to where the 'clean' pumping station is. Council subcontractors had removed the graffiti two hours after it was painted — but John queried who is responsible for what part of the clean-up of the station environment?

A significant photo revealed part of an extensive but forgotten irrigation system installed by Transurban, now damaged, ineffective and partially buried under leaves and branches. FMPC had evidence of promises of maintenance made in the early days but not kept during construction of the CityLink viaduct.

On 18 November the litter nets were empty — questions in Parliament may have been helping. The litter trap was dry because it hadn't rained. Residents, through FMPC and Kaye Oddie, had received funding to water the plants.

(c) Rail Projects Victoria — Arden & Parkville Community Reference Group (CRG)

Peter Gerrand reported that RPV seemed genuine about consultation and had improved their response times. With regard to the Legacy Art Program, the shortlisting process for the North Melbourne and State Library stations was underway, with five artists to be shortlisted for each station in late 2019. There will be a further opportunity for input by NWMA and Hotham History Project via an online submission form on the Metro Tunnel website.

Construction of the new North Melbourne station at Arden was proceeding to schedule. The surface ground remediation in Lothian Street (above the path of the planned tunnels) will continue until April 2020. This largely consists of inserting jet grouting to strengthen the road surface. Health-check doorknocks with directly impacted residents and businesses had taken place in October. TBMs 1 (Joan) and 2 (Meg) will be tunnelling from the new North Melbourne station site to the Western Portal in Kensington until Q1 2020, when they will be retrieved and transported back to North Melbourne. They will then tunnel from North Melbourne to Parkville during 2020.

According to information given at the 1 November CRG meeting, the updated tunnel depth and alignment map had been uploaded to the website; however the tunnel depth was not shown.

(d) West Gate Tunnel Community Liaison Group (CLG)

Peter noted the formality of joining this group compared with the Metro Tunnel Project's process. He had been through three levels of interview before his application was accepted. Once in the group, he was pleased to find that the other community representatives were not patsies but were tenacious questioners. However, when the reps asked questions the West Gate Tunnel people were very defensive, falling back on statements like "We've met our legislative requirements".

At the CLG meeting on 17 October questions centred on contamination and native fauna, with concern about snakes in the Stony Creek area. Contaminated soil had been found in some areas to the west of the Maribyrnong River. This was being stockpiled and covered for later removal. Stockpiles east of the river had already been removed. Landscaping was a contentious issue, as details had been provided to the city councils but not to the community reps. The TBMs, named Bella and Vida, had been assembled at the WGTP site in Yarraville. Construction of the major vehicle bridge over the Maribyrnong was underway, with installation of steel cylindrical piles each 7.2 metres wide proceeding and the piles to be driven 36 metres into the basalt stratum beneath the river. Planned completion of the bridge is mid-2021.

Peter had learnt informally at the meeting that three new shared-use bridges were planned over MPC to provide bicycle and pedestrian paths over the creek. He had met with Kaye Oddie on site south of Arden Street to discuss this, notably WGTP's intention not to provide rubbish bins, safety lighting or toilets for the proposed new accessible recreation area. With reference to the West Gate Neighbourhood Fund community grants (see Q&A with Sally Capp above), the CoM had later informed Peter that it disagreed with WGTP's assessment that organisations in the CoM were not eligible to apply for grants of up to \$100,000. Funding seemed to have been conflated with the \$50 million committed by the State Government to traffic management infrastructure.

6. Discussion of correspondence circulated in the past month

None other than as referred to above.

7. General business

Kevin reminded everyone to RSVP about the Christmas party for catering purposes.

8. Time, date and venue of next ordinary general meeting

Tuesday 18 February 2020, at 7.30pm, at the Bastow Institute, 603–615 Queensberry Street, North Melbourne.

The meeting closed at 9.35pm.