



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 20 August 2019, 7.42pm

Present: Kevin Chamberlin, Emmy Chung, Sebastian Clark, Bill Cook, Peter Gerrand, Valerie Gerrand, Janet Graham, Michael Horscroft, Rosemary John, Jan Lacey, Dan McDonnell, Jane Poynter, Duncan Rouch, Jacqueline Stevenson, Xuan Wang (visitor) and John Widmer

Apologies: Nicholas Atkins, Stephen Farrugia, Cecilia Gason, Jacques Péril, Margaret Péril, Geraldine Suter and Carolyn Thompson

Kevin Chamberlin, the Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting. The apologies were read out and accepted.

1. Confirmation of minutes of previous meeting and matters arising

Moved Valerie Gerrand, seconded Peter Gerrand:

That the minutes of the Ordinary General Meeting held on 16 July 2019, having been circulated and taken as read, be confirmed.

Carried.

Affordable housing: There had still been no formal response from Lord Mayor Sally Capp. The Chair had followed up and Jan Lacey asked him to do so again.

2. Committee report

(a) Spring Fling Festival, Saturday 19 October 2019

The Warehouse was not available. Number 54 Errol Street (former Kitchen Capers) had been given to The Centre for a week for Spring Fling. These premises would not suit the NAC (North Melbourne Agency Collective) because (1) the space is very small and (2) the microbusinesses probably wouldn't be allowed to serve free food from there with commercial food vans set up along Errol Street.

It was thought that the Hotham History Project would be taking its usual spot outside the library. A location for NWMA still had to be sorted out. The shop was probably unsuitable and certainly would be unsuitable for North West Patch. A stall costs \$110 plus GST this year. Secretary Jane Poynter put a third proposal: do we want to be there? Kevin mentioned the Council's Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy as a theme. It had proved hard to get items from Council for last year's composting display and Jacqueline Stevenson had sourced them privately.

Moved Michael Horscroft, seconded Emmy Chung:

That the Chair and the Secretary be authorised to finalise the Association's arrangements for the forthcoming Spring Fling Festival.

Carried.

(b) Email from Yoey Maxwell

Yoey Maxwell, from Ellen Sandell's office, had sent an email on 20 August apologising for being unable to attend the meeting because of illness. She had wanted to raise two issues. (1) Parties are allowed to raise one Matter of Public Importance per year for debate in Parliament and the Greens had chosen housing and homelessness. Yoey wrote: "Unfortunately we didn't receive a lot of new information from the government, who continued to push the privatisation of public housing

in the inner city, but we know at least this issue is at the front of their minds and this is an issue we'll continue to draw attention to." (2) The Greens had created a Federation Square survey following the cancelled plans for the Apple store and the government's subsequent decision to hold a review. The survey asked people what they loved about Federation Square and how they would like to see it improved. Everyone was welcome to complete the survey.

Moved Valerie Gerrand, seconded Jan Lacey:

In the case of item (1) above, that the Secretary be authorised to circulate to the NWMA email list the information on the Matter of Public Importance debate in Parliament about housing and homelessness, including the Hansard link.

Carried.

Moved Michael Horscroft, seconded Emmy Chung:

In the case of item (2) above, that the Secretary be authorised to circulate the survey from Ellen Sandell's office regarding Federation Square.

Carried.

Moved Jan Lacey, seconded Peter Gerrand:

That the email from Our City, Our Square containing a link to the State Government Federation Square Review and survey, and offering advice on responses, be circulated to the NWMA email list.

Carried.

3. Reports from affiliated organisations

(a) Metro Tunnel Project — Arden & Parkville Community Reference Group (CRG)

First, Peter Gerrand noted that, having been nominated to be the Association's representative in the West Gate Tunnel Project Community Liaison Group, he had been interviewed on 17 July. On 19 August he had phoned the man in charge, who, somewhat embarrassed, said he would reply on Tuesday. That didn't happen, so Peter questioned him again, mentioning that the NWMA meeting was coming up and the members would be concerned about the time a decision on the appointment was taking.

The report by Rachael Palmer and Peter on the Rail Projects Victoria (RPV) Community Reference Group (CRG) meeting held on 2 August 2019 had been circulated with the NWMA agenda. Peter pointed to item A, noting the planned removal of many mature elm trees at the Parkville station site and along Royal Parade, which had prompted the Parkville Association to lodge a protest.

Further to item B, construction of the new North Melbourne station at Arden, Peter had reported flooding in Lothian Street and RPV had said it didn't affect the area. Jane refuted this, saying project workers were removing an enormous amount of soil and replacing it with 'grout' (concrete). The bottom of Lothian Street has to be stabilised before they can bore the Metro tunnel.

Under C, other matters, Peter noted that the renaming of the current North Melbourne Station to West Melbourne might take another two years because there were so many agencies involved. There was still no progress on the appointment of artists to paint the facades and platforms of the new Metro stations. The next Arden & Parkville CRG meeting will take place at the Larwill Studio in Parkville on Friday 13 September.

Peter's report was noted. Kevin observed that railway stations in Europe are a focal point for dropping off recyclables and he wondered if there was any chance of incorporating this in the Metro stations.

(b) Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek (FMPC)

John Widmer said the first of his slides showed the only positive photograph for the month — there was no rubbish in sight because two large industrial bins had been filled. On Saturday 3 August, 26 community members had replanted the Kensington embankment between Macaulay Bridge and Arden Bridge, mainly with groundcovers to suppress weeds. Kaye Oddie had organised watering and it had been very successful. The City of Melbourne (CoM) had removed dead vegetation from the Arden–Lloyd Street corner.

Regarding the West Gate Tunnel Project campaign, Fran Araneda had attended a meeting but was becoming cynical. John suggested that the noise issue be raised at the next meeting of the Community Liaison Group. Concerning the role and responsibilities of Council, Yoey Maxwell was informed that the new electronic tower had already been broken into and graffitied.

Comparing two photos taken on 16 July and 19 August, the litter traps were still full, but John queried what had happened to the previous lot of rubbish. Dealing with rubbish was Melbourne Water's responsibility. On only one occasion when John checked had the nets been cleaned. He said Yoey was receiving photos and would continue to maintain a file on the creek. FMPC had asked for cleaning after a flood, not necessarily monthly. John suspected the litter traps were not properly designed and said graffiti cleaning was sporadic.

Kevin said the state representatives were supposed to deal with the authority and suggested getting the media onto it. Another suggestion was to get an article in the *News* with John's photos. John's report was noted.

(c) CoRBA (Coalition of Resident and Business Associations)

Bill Cook reported that CoRBA had met the previous week.

(1) The **East Melbourne Group** was getting some traction in the media regarding flight paths and aircraft noise.

(2) The **Fawkner Park proposal**, which is well advanced, includes relocation of the basketball court and re-landscaping of the area with a gently sloping lawn swale to assist drainage. The matter had gone to the Heritage Council and was refused.

(3) Issues had arisen between the Astronomical Society of Victoria and the Royal Botanic Gardens regarding underutilised land. This is a developing issue and community concern is evident.

(4) The Royal Historical Society of Victoria had made a submission to Heritage Victoria to try to stop Design and Development Overlays (DDOs) overriding heritage controls in strip shopping centres. It would appear this procedure is being used extensively by councils.

(5) The report from **Southbank Residents Group** covered many issues. The residential and business community are working on an app to extend benefits to residents when they shop locally.

(6) **Queen Victoria Market (QVM)**: Mary-Lou Howie from the Friends of Queen Victoria Market wants to convene a public forum on local government reform in Victoria. The Friends are very concerned about a Council proposal to change the status of certain stallholders at the QVM from leaseholders to licence-holders. This would remove the stallholders' right to a vote.

Peter said the Friends of QVM were focusing entirely on the views of traders and not of residents. We should be wary of their agenda, which was adding to the cost of the process. Jane said not all traders agreed with the Friends' ideas; they just wanted basic improvements.

(7) Bill said a group related to CoRBA were meeting with State Government ministers or policy advisers re **voting arrangements in the CoM**. Their third meeting was with a senior policy adviser to Gavin Jennings. The overall results of the meetings were pretty positive, especially the meeting with Local Government Minister Adem Somyurek. An incumbent only since November, he had inherited the process that resulted in matters going through the lower house but not the upper house before the election. They had come out with a new set of proposals of a more democratic nature, but not much affected the *City of Melbourne Act*. There was a fair amount of resistance to reforming the CoM. However, with a strong broom being taken to the *Local Government Act*, there were a few parts that related to Melbourne.

Kevin pointed out that, being new, Adem Somyurek was able to take a fresh approach. There had also been a turnover of staff. Peter said wards were being discussed again. One-member wards would go to the candidate with most money; three-member wards would result in a diversity of representation.

Bill's report was noted.

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

Jan Lacey said the committee had spent much time looking at crime issues at the last meeting. She was very impressed with Melbourne North Police Station. The crime statistics pointed to where the police needed to focus energy. They concentrated on issues raised, such as stolen bicycles, and there had been a significant reduction in bike thefts as a result. Another criminal activity concerned pedestrians doing silly things, like running across wet roads to get out of the rain and being hit by vehicles. Jan emphasised that people needed to report incidents to get them into the statistics.

Jan's report was noted.

4. Discussion of correspondence circulated in the past month

Nothing other than as recorded elsewhere.

5. General business

(a) Update on redevelopment of Abbotsford Street housing estate

Duncan Rouch reported on the community drop-in sessions on Tuesday 6 August. He said there was a background of poor outcomes regarding social mix at the Kensington and Carlton estates. Amy Mak, the DHHS project manager, seemed to have no knowledge of this. Duncan questioned why the North Melbourne estate was being demolished now. They were worried about vandals and the presence of asbestos and other contaminants and wanted to know the condition of the whole site.

Geotech sampling and analysis is being done. Planning is taking place in 2019–2020. The developers want to be able to submit a detailed plan in September for approval. The landscaping people will be active in 2021–2023. Deep soil requirements are to be part of the detailed plan. Plant selection will be based on tenants' choice — but very few tenants are likely to return.

Jan noted that people leaving the second drop-in session had been told different things, particularly about the school. Kevin had queried what was going on with the 5000-square-metre 'education' site. He had heard a vertical school, or a stand-alone primary school not part of North Melbourne PS. Jan said staff had told people the school would be a maximum of five storeys, but this could have been necessitated by the flight-path constraint.

Duncan displayed plans of the site including the flexible floor plan — which is not so flexible because the design has to be settled when building takes place. The community gardens are at level 1, not ground level as previously understood. Regarding landscaping options, why would they ask the general public what features we wanted?

Dan McDonnell confirmed there had been a lot of contradictory information. The staff had insisted that MAB, the developer, had a 2021 deadline for building. In the interim MAB is required to install a 2-metre fence, in opaque or transparent material, around the site. There could be hoardings or shade cloth, both of which are prone to graffiti. The site will be grassed or mulched as a temporary measure. What is it going to be like in two or three years?

Jan said the drop-in organisers had told her that the PASE (Protect Abbotsford Street Estate) leaflets about the differences between public housing and community housing were incorrect; however, Inner Melbourne Community Legal had prepared the original information.

Duncan drew attention to the social housing waiting list data for 2007–2019 covering the whole of Victoria, which showed a downward trend from 2010 when only public housing was recorded. Since 2016, when community housing was incorporated in the data, the total figures had been trending up. Jan pointed out that the list was still in transition.

Kevin was concerned about the need for public open space on the site and had written a personal submission to DHHS about this. He had also suggested that public housing units be built instead of the planned shops. Rosemary John added she had been told at the drop-in session that they didn't know what would happen regarding open space.

(b) City of Melbourne Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy 2030

Jan had raised this partly because she was concerned about the long timeline for introducing improvements compared with other councils. Two years ago she had attended a CoM Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy forum but the strategy is still in a trial stage. For her, the main issue is food waste; she hates throwing out food scraps, which produce methane gas in landfill. She suggested that the Association write to the CoM (Lord Mayor Sally Capp and Cathy Oke, chair of the environment portfolio) expressing the following sentiments:

“The North and West Melbourne Association is pleased to see that Council has endorsed a Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy. However we are concerned about the long timelines for introducing improvements, particularly in relation to plans for the collection of food waste.

“Food waste amounts to around 50% of household garbage. Twenty-two out of 79 Victorian councils have introduced a kerbside collection for this waste. Yet CoM is not taking action until trials of various options have been completed.

“We contend that the need is urgent, because food waste in landfill produces methane, a greenhouse gas 25 times more potent than carbon dioxide. Surely enough can be learnt from the many councils that do have a system in place to begin a food waste collection without waiting for trials to be completed. Any new systems or modifications can be introduced as the results of trials become available.

“A significant proportion of CoM residents live in apartments where their options for disposal of food waste are limited. A collection service for apartments would be an obvious starting point, and the NWMA asks the CoM to consider this as a matter of priority.”

Xuan Wang, a visitor to the meeting and a Chetwynd Street resident, said she wanted to recycle compostable material and used to take it by bike to Brunswick. She had then found the Kensington communal compost. Later she had learnt on Facebook that Emmy Chung would take waste and other local people would accept other things. She thought there must be other people in the same situation, so she spoke to some online, asking if they would be interested if the community was able to set up a facility. She had a positive response. However, people don't want to be constrained by times. She asked what the NWMA thought the barriers from Council would be. What rules would apply to public composting bins on public land?

Jan responded that the owners corporation at her flats had installed a bin but people put syringes and other non-conforming items in it. A family bin copes with a family's waste but fills up very quickly with more people using it, so more compost is produced than people can use. An organisation called ShareWaste could be the answer. ShareWaste “connect[s] people who wish to recycle their kitchen scraps with their neighbours who are already composting, worm-farming or keep chickens”.

Jan said the CoM was looking at providing compost bins, worm farms and in-sink disposers (though there are problems with those for the sewerage system).

Xuan said she had two worm farms. Emmy agreed it made sense for Council to place bins in strategic places and the CoM should be trialling this. Kevin suggested asking someone from Council to speak, such as Victoria Clarke, CoM's Coordinator Waste and Amenity Programs, phone number 9658 8427.

Moved Jan Lacey, seconded Peter Gerrand:

That Jan's draft letter above be sent to the City of Melbourne with a fifth paragraph added to the effect that the Council be invited to provide a speaker at the Association's next meeting to talk about the Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy.

Carried.

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

Tuesday 17 September 2019, 7.30pm, at the Bastow Institute, 603–615 Queensberry Street, North Melbourne.

The meeting closed at 9.34pm.