



Minutes: Newtown Residents' Association Meeting 17th October 2016

Present: Rhona Carson (Chair), Steve Cosgrove (Minutes), Meta Beyers, Brendon Bonner, Penny Buckmaster, Steve Dunn, Peter Frater, Tom Law, Kevin Lethbridge Daphne Pilaar, Keith Powell, Martin Powell, Stephen Pritchard, Effie Rankin.

Apologies: James Coyle, Paul Eagle, Martin Hanley, Anna Kemble Welch, Patrick Morgan, Jane Patterson, Cheryl Robilliard.

Q – Any news about the Mary Potter Hospice Development?

Rhona and Martin H went to a meeting at MPH, including affected neighbours, on 21/9/16, to look at the new plans and the shading diagrams. The neighbours were still unhappy. We haven't heard anything further since then.

WCC Newtown Liaison Officer and Newtown office

Ray Tuffin has been appointed to this position. He has a business and community background, and will be starting on 31st October. We are looking forward to welcoming him to his new role.

Noted that the Newtown Office was mentioned in a WCC Resiliency Newsletter. The proposed office is in an empty shop next to St Vincent de Paul in Riddiford St.

Possible opening exhibition: a group of VUW landscape architecture students (they came to our meeting in July) have done a project about Newtown & Mt Cook. Their tutor is looking for a space to hold an exhibition of their work in November. If the office is available by then that will be the venue.

Discussion – could be an opportunity to gather exhibition attendees' suggestions about Newtown eg post-it notes with ideas?

WCC is moving towards more bases in the community. Other sites are Aro Valley, Johnsonville and Newlands.

Steve C suggested Ray might be able to see what Carrara Park playground users think of the proposed development at 4 Regent Street.

Neighbours' Day is approaching – 25th – 26th March. WCC funding up to \$500 per project can be applied for. The Neighbours' Day theme this year is "Zero Tolerance to Loneliness" focusing on encouraging inclusion and interaction between youth and seniors, and including isolated or elderly communities in the weekend's events

Discussion of possible events we might initiate. Martin P suggested putting down a brew at the Occasional Brewer – to explore whether there is any prospect of WCC funding this. No other concrete suggestions – Meta, Daphne, Martin P interested in exploring further.

Application needs to go to Council by the end of the month – 28/10.

Airport Runway submission

We needed to decide whether we apply to be a party to the Environment Court proceedings. No clear consensus for or against from our members, but consensus about associated concerns, as in our original submission. If we put in an application, we can make a substantive contribution later, if circumstances change.

"That the NRA supports applying to remain a party to this process" Carson/Cosgrove Passed unanimously. Patrick Morgan has volunteered to continue facilitating this process.

WCC Play Spaces consultation.

Peter and Cheryl have expressed interest in this topic.

Noted that some smaller playgrounds were slated for closure, but were kept after community intervention.

Discussion of playgrounds in Newtown, and the use of the Town Belt. Noted Carrara Park playground is on the cover of the consultation document.

Submissions close 5pm 18th November. To consider further.

Community Patrol

Tom reported that when cars were being interfered with and broken into over a few weeks a month or two ago there were complaints that the Police were not around. However in fact the Police were involved with undercover patrols, and the Community Patrol were also keeping an eye on things. The Police worked well in catching a suspect, who has been imprisoned.

There were question about the work of the Community Patrol, answered by Tom and Keith. Tom is happy to hear from people interested in joining.

Newtown School

New sign on school fence, showing artist's impression of the new school building – which will go along the Riddiford St frontage, with an entrance through the building giving access to the school grounds.

Salvation Army has hit some geotechnical issues with their building site– work on the foundations has run into an old riverbed that requires further excavation.

Keith noted that there are similar problems right along Riddiford Street, which will mean expensive future work to secure foundations, which in turn would drive out smaller owner-operated retailers. This would have major issues for the preservation of Newtown's culture.

NRA annual financial reports are still with the auditor - expect they will be presented in November.

Community Engagement Planning

This is the process for gathering community views on the redevelopment of community facilities in Newtown, and coming up with a plan for how the funds set aside in the Long Term Plan should be spent. Funds allocated with a 3 year timeframe. Need to get to know community, make connections, hear people's hopes and dreams for Newtown. Outward purpose – making decisions about building project/s – but also process can develop a vision for Newtown in a more comprehensive fashion. Timely that Ray Tuffin is starting soon, getting to know the community will be a natural part of his role.

NRA has committed to taking a lead role in coordinating the community engagement process. We need to decide on a process and engage contractor/s - community consultant with expertise in this area, possibly admin assistance. A small group (Rhona, Renee from Newtown Community and Cultural Centre, Daphne, Peter and Effie) have met and discussed an outline of how the process might look – circulated for discussion. Aro Valley are involved in a similar project and early on they had a facilitated workshop to develop plans for how to conduct their community engagement. Rhona suggested that we gather a working group to do a similar workshop, possibly facilitated by the same person (who is out of the country at present but back in about a week). Tom, Meta, Penny, Stephen and Martin P expressed interest in joining the original group to participate in this.

Further discussion covered some general issues about Newtown's needs.. Big question - where could any new building go? Vogelhorn and Aro Valley have the advantage of an old bowling green and a park, respectively, so have open space around them – nothing like that in Newtown. Demographic changes need to be taken into account; also changes to public transport – eg the effects of proposed double decker busses along Riddiford St – have already affected the plans for refreshing the streetscape there.

Congratulations to Wellingtonian of the Year nominees.

Martin H and Anna have been nominated in recognition of their 22 years involvement with the Newtown Festival. The meeting expressed hearty congratulations and good wishes to them both.

Meeting closed at 9:05