

Woden Valley Community Council Inc.

The logo for Woden Valley Community Council Inc. features a stylized green and blue graphic to the right of the text. The graphic consists of a blue square with a white shape inside, resembling a stylized 'W' or a building, with a green swoosh extending from the top right corner.

PO Box 280 Woden ACT 2606; e-mail wvcc@bigpond.net.au; ph. 62810096

Record of Meeting

7 March 2007

1. Chair David Menzel advised that an apology had been received from Richard Mulcahy, Deb Foskey, Jacque Burke and Chris Redmond.
2. Mr Menzel advised that the presentation on the Woden YMCA site had been postponed as the decision on the proposed large scale development was with the planning minister for decision. The block was classified for recreation/leisure and a land use change was required as a large scale development was planned on the basis that commercial development was required to support the pool. The WVCC was concerned that a large scale commercial development requiring a land use change should be referred for community consultation.
3. The fridge magnet leaflet on ways of reducing household consumption was with the printers and would be ready for delivery to all Woden residences shortly.
4. Mr Menzel said that he had attended two planning meetings with ACTPLA on means to break down communication barriers. Mr Menzel had made the point that the WVCC cannot support or comment on development applications unless adequate information is supplied to inform the development proposal. The Community Councils are the only body for government/community consultation on planning issues and councils should not be required to pursue development details through minister's offices.
5. The WVCC and the Woden Valley Community Services would arrange a meeting with stakeholders to discuss issues in common.
6. Dr Jenny Stewart said that she had attended two meetings on the bill to revamp ACT planning laws, the proposals had resulted in considerable political interest. The law and property councils were concerned about property rights and the Government had agreed that property laws would not change. Lease variations would also continue under current guidelines. The development industry wanted to swap between development regimes to use the most appropriate at different stages of the examination process and the government would not agree to this. The transition from the old to the new territory plan would be policy neutral if not permitted under the old plan the same would apply under the new rules. It was difficult to make comparisons between the old and new planning rules due to new zone boundaries which did not accord with previous boundaries. The draft planning laws would be available at the end of March 2007 on the ACTPLA website. The government wanted to push the new code through the assembly so that the new planning laws would come into operation from July 07.

Provisions include expedited development applications, reduced public notification periods and streamlining of processes. Dr Stewart said that the planning process was intensely political. The NCA and ACTPLA had agreed to the need to intensify development with more building around City Hill, the Albert Hall precinct and West Basin. A number of development sites would become available and all current car parks would be built on. There were proposals for landmark buildings, 18 to 20 stories. Civic would extend to the South and the East with an additional 15,000 workers. Objections have been overruled by the NCA who state that consultations have been undertaken with the public and accords with the Griffin plan for Canberra. ACTPLA had lost approximately 60 staff over the last six months and there were insufficient staff to undertake compliance planning decisions.

7. The Canberra Hospital is expanding car parking to the other side of Yamba Drive for staff parking for 580 cars. Concerns were also expressed at ad hoc development taking place on the Hospital site.

8. Chair David Menzel advised that he was continuing to have difficulty in obtaining information on the Centraplaza development in the Woden Town Centre which has a applied for retrospective approval for an additional 743sq metres without providing any information or rationale for the additions.

9. Concerns were expressed that the Woden library had reduced opening hours and which contrasted with the increase in patronage due to the closure of the Griffith library.

10. Increased traffic on Hindmarsh Drive and Melrose Drive had made exit from Chifley more dangerous and traffic lights would be required to reduce the risk to residents.