

## **Woden Valley Community Council Inc.**

### **Record of Meeting in Apollo Room, Hellenic Club**

#### **Wednesday 2 July 2014**

1. Vice-President, Mike Reddy, who chaired the meeting, welcomed attendees to the meeting. Apologies were received from Jenny Stewart, President, Timoshenko Aslanides, Scott Humphries, Gai Brodtmann, MHR and Steve Doszpot, MLA.
2. Minutes of the last meeting were accepted.
3. **Light Rail for the ACT.** Stephen Allday, Ben Smith and Kristin Blume presented current plans for the initial Gungahlin – Civic line and the possible future network:
  - Light rail can mix in with traffic whereas heavy rail is faster but needs a dedicated line.
  - Integrates the urban area.
  - Low floor, easy access.
  - Popular around the world and is being implemented in many cities.
  - Takes some cars off the road and so reduces congestion.
  - Congestion delays are around 20 minutes in the peak hour and will worsen as the city grows.
  - Light Rail Master Plan is under preparation and is essentially the fast network in the Transport for Canberra Plan.
  - Business case is being developed but is showing a Benefit Cost Ratio greater than 1.
  - Passenger experience is at the forefront – eg. WiFi will be available.
  - Reliable and frequent – 10 minutes during the day and 5 minutes at the peak.
  - Use ACTION's MyWay ticketing.
  - Highly accessible stops – tag on/off will be done on the platform.
  - Light rail vehicles will have a capacity of around 200 with provision for cycles.
  - Trains will mostly travel on median strips and avoid congestions. Traffic lights will give priority to trains.
  - 13 stops preferred – 15 sites are being evaluated with community input.
  - Expect it to be a wired system but could change in time.
  - Approach is to go to market with operational requirements and see what comes in.
  - Trees on Northbourne Avenue are life expired and need to be replaced anyway.
  - Aim to keep as much construction work as possible in Canberra.

Before taking questions, the Chair asked for a show of hands as to who had concerns on the cost and need for the project. It appeared that there was an even split at the meeting between those who were pro-Light Rail, anti-Light Rail and those who had yet not made up their mind. Of the attendees, it appeared that the majority were concerned with the cost of Light Rail. This was not a formal vote of the Council.

- Tag on/off on stations – would that result in many not paying? Common practice on e.g. Sydney rail stations but would need managing.
- Concern expressed about likely cost blowout. Costings were still being worked up and will take a robust approach. Ugliness of wires – Canberra is becoming more like the other capital cities.
- Doubts expressed about achieving integration with the buses.
- Seems to be aimed at simple commuter trips. Reality is the need to drop kids off at school etc. Light rail will only take a proportion of trips.
- Should have plenty of Park and Ride.
- Sprawl and car dependency. Light rail is aimed at reducing this. Want to improve the entrance to Canberra.
- Many light rail systems only offer seating for 20-25% of passenger – would be unattractive for intertown trips. Interior layouts were under consideration including the amount of seating.'
- Canberra has a low percentage using public transport. Light rail is part of the plan to increase it.

The Chair had to close off questions at 8.50pm although there were still some hands up. Kristin Blume said they had a pop-up information shop at the Civic interchange and asked the audience to have their input there or on the Capital Metro web site: <http://www.capitalmetro.act.gov.au/>

4. **Local Member Spot.** Nicole Lawder, MLA, said she has been busy with the Estimates Committee (2 Liberal, 2 Labor) – the Northbourne flats and Emergency Department service were a couple of the issues. Alastair Coe, MLA has been opposed to Light Rail. In any case, to maximise success, should start with the busiest route – Gungahlin/Civic is one of the weakest.
5. **Proposed Yarralumla Brickworks Development.** Marea Fatseas and David Harvey of the Yarralumla Residents Association raise a number of concerns which they said would also impact Woden. 1500 dwellings were proposed which would double Yarralumla's population. Low quality design and the blocks have a south-west/north-east orientation resulting in inferior solar access. No shops, restaurants or other services are to be included – residents will have to travel. No direct access to Yarralumla shops so are likely to go to Curtin or elsewhere. Cotter Road will need re-aligning. Poor access will result in rat-running through Curtin and Deakin. Most money is going into general revenue with an inadequate \$1.5 million allocated to restoring the Brickworks. They were having a public meeting at the Croatia Deakin Club.
6. **Reports.** Scott Humphries had attended the Planning and Development Forum. It had concluded with a robust discussion on concessional leases. Martin Miller said the Basin Priority Projects had \$85 million for six projects. Yarralumla Creek (aka The Drain) was one and some feasibility work on developing wetlands may be done.
7. **General Business.** Mike Reddy noted that a map showing the Mr Fluffy houses had been release with many in Woden. People had not actually been evicted from their houses, it had been left to the owners to decide to vacate. A requirement not to do unsafe work in Mr Fluffy houses is the only thing with legal sanctions. Mike Reddy thanked Martin Miller for the design of the publicity postcard which had attracted more than a 100 to the meeting.
8. **Nest meeting of WVCC.** 7.30pm, Wednesday, 6 August 2014 at the Hellenic Club, Woden.