

Record of Meeting

6 May 2009

1. The Chairman, Mr Bill O'Brien, welcomed attendees. Apologies were received from David Menzel, Gina Pinkas, John and Barbara Garrety and Val Yates.

2. The Record of Meeting for the meeting on 1 April 2009 was accepted without change.

Roads ACT

3. Tony Gill, Director of Roads ACT gave an overview of the agency and its priorities. With an annual budget of around \$30 million Roads ACT managed all roads in the ACT, 250 traffic lights, 70,000 street lights, 1000 bridges as well as public car parks, bike lanes and paths and pedestrian paths. In general, roads were resurfaced every 10-15 years (roads with a higher volume of traffic, more frequently). Other improvements such as cycle lanes and pedestrian paths were often included with resurfacing work. Traffic lights are being installed at the Melrose Drive/Yamba Drive intersection and Roads ACT has a program for replacing older streetlights with more efficient lights. The reconstruction of Tharwa Bridge (Heritage listed) was a priority. At an estimated cost of \$15 million, it was expected the bridge would be completed by 2011. Roads ACT received around 1000 enquiries a month on traffic and parking issues.

4. The meeting noted that Mr Gill would get back to the Council with responses to the list of questions that he had been given earlier. Issues raised at the meeting included: the use of Beasley Street for through traffic from Tuggeranong and the need for a reduced speed limit and a pedestrian crossing for residents of Goodwin Village; traffic issues associated with multi-unit developments in Lyons; long-term parking in Woden Town Centre; and the poor condition of the temporary cycle path near the Woden Green development.

5. Mr Gill said implementing new traffic measures was costly. There were 5-600 streets (ranked in priority) in Canberra needing attention because of schools, aged care facilities etc; and a list of 380 streets for the construction or maintenance of footpaths. The meeting noted that Roads ACT would be conducting a traffic survey in the Woden Town Centre.

Proposal for another cemetery in south Canberra

6. Hamish Horne, CEO of the ACT Public Cemeteries Authority addressed the meeting on a proposed new cemetery and crematorium on Long Gully Road to the south of Mugga Lane. There were three cemeteries in the ACT: one in Gungahlin, one in Woden and a small cemetery in Hall. The Woden cemetery (the only one in south Canberra) was expected to reach capacity in about ten years. The Authority was looking at all options for the new cemetery: a crematorium (Canberra has a 70 per cent cremation rate); conventional burials; and natural burials.

7. The Long Gully Road site had been identified as the possible site because it satisfied key selection criteria, including being about 50 hectares in size and relatively flat. If a crematorium were built on that site, it would be about 900 metres from the nearest residences.

8. Mr Horne explained the Authority was currently seeking feedback from the Canberra community about the proposed new cemetery. A survey form could be downloaded from www.canberracemeteries.com.au The closing date for submitting completed survey forms was Friday, 29 May 2009.

Requirements for a cultural centre in Woden

9. Ben Mackey, a community planning consultant, outlined the requirements for a possible Woden Community Arts and Cultural Centre. The meeting noted that a feasibility study would need to be done in consultation with user groups; and a business case prepared, identifying a site and whether a new building was required or an existing structure could be redeveloped or refitted. The WVCC had received a \$20,000 grant from the ACT Government to engage an architect to develop a concept plan. Submissions had to be lodged by September 2009.

Need for a community hall in Woden

10. Bill O'Brien reported he had written to the Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services on the need for a community hall in the Woden Valley, suggesting the former Melrose school in Chifley as being well-suited for the purpose. The meeting noted the department had yet to approach the minister on the issue.

Draft Variation No. 288 to the Territory Plan (Lyons)

11. Gina Pinkas, David Menzel and Shirley Lithgow had represented the WVCC at the hearing of the Legislative Assembly Standing Committee on Planning, Public Works and TAMs into Draft Variation No. 288 to the Territory Plan on 30 April 2009. The WVCC is opposed to the draft variation which will allow a ten-storey tower block to be built on the corner of Launceston Street and Melrose Drive, and six storeys across the site. The Planning Institute of Australia (ACT Division) and Mr Derek Wrigley OAM also gave evidence opposing the draft variation. It was pointed out that if the draft variation was approved it would have implications for other developments in Canberra.

Proposed aged care facility in Farrer

12. A special meeting of the WVCC was held on 15 April 2009 to enable the architect of the Mandir Ashram proposal for an aged care facility to explain the amendment to Mandir Ashram's development application. Unfortunately at short notice the architect said he was unable to attend the meeting.

13. Mr Krishan Aggarwal (representing Mandir Ashram) said he was unable to answer questions about the development's plan. Instead he outlined how the proposal came about and a little of how he envisaged the facility would operate: the target group would be Australians from Indian, Chinese and Sri Lankan background; multilingual carers would be employed; and residents would have DVD and video communication with carers. Concerns expressed at the meeting included: the unsuitability of the Farrer site; the overcrowding and building height of the proposed development; sustainability and solar access issues; and whether, in the present financial climate, the proponent would be able to raise the funds for the construction of and running the complex.

14. The next meeting of the WVCC will be held on 3 June 2009.