

West Ward News

Editor: Terry Fogarty
cwwpanews@gmail.com
0477 299 763

Newsletter of the Chatswood West Ward Progress Association Est. 1929 - Working together for Willoughby

Rate of change increasing

Much change is afoot. Mayor Gail Giles-Gidney replaced long-serving Emeritus Mayor Pat Reilly (RIP). Council's General Manager Nick Tobin has resigned. Former Infrastructure Services Director Steven Head has not been replaced. Long-serving Director of Environmental Services (Greg Woodhams) has also resigned. The Corporate Services Director was not replaced some years back. Cllr. Mustaca has been elected Deputy Mayor for a year.

There is also structural change in the air. Council has initiated discussion with surrounding Councils prompted by the State Government's call for Council Amalgamations. This initiative is also driven by the State Government's 'Fit for the Future' review which is forcing Councils to deeply consider their long-term financial viability.

Another big change is likely to be to our rates - upwards. As previously reported, Willoughby Council, along with most other Councils in NSW, has a significant infrastructure maintenance backlog. The State Government is mandating that Councils seriously address this issue.

Over the past few years under the leadership of Steven Head, Council documented the condition of all of its physical assets. Then the

community was engaged to identify acceptable levels of service for each infrastructure category. Using the two metrics of condition and service level Steven and his team were able to calculate the funds that would be required over the next seven years to restore and maintain infrastructure assets to the desired level. Given the length of time that many Council assets have 'lain fallow', it wasn't surprising to hear that a significant rate rise would be needed to get on top of the issue. In fact, Council needs to increase rates by way of an **Infrastructure Levy of 27.37% over 7 years.**

Council then advertised the proposed increase and called for comments. The majority of people who responded did not support any rate increase. However, not only did Council ignore these views, it did not even have the courtesy to analyse responses - just count them. We hope this is not a forebinger of how this Council will handle community consultation. Finally, Council considered the matter and decided to apply to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for permission to increase rates even though ratepayers were against the concept. Subsequently, there was a rescission motion lodged but this was defeated.

We await IPART's decision.

Thank You Beth & Sophie

Willoughby over 27 years. Mayoress Beth Reilly supported Pat with all of his endeavours as Mayor. Many would recall Beth's highly colourful and inspiring couture, usually topped off with a big floppy hat as she accompanied Pat on his thousands of community events. In addition, Beth ran her Mayoress' Charity, raising funds for those in need.

Behind the scenes was Pat's daughter Sophie, affectionally known as the Mayorette. Particularly in the later years as Pat's health continued to fail, Sophie was a continuing source of joy to Pat and Beth.

With the frantic preparation for an election after Mayor Emeritus' Pat Reilly's sad passing we would like to recognise the contribution that members of his family made to

We need your email

In addition to the bi-annual, hand-delivered West Ward News, the Progress Association publishes a monthly update - the West Ward Bytes. The 'Bytes' is emailed to subscribers monthly. To subscribe to the West Ward Bytes, simply **send an email to cwwpanews@gmail.com** with the term 'Subscribe' in the subject.

Further, the Association also maintains a website (**cwwpa.org**) where breaking news is posted as it occurs.

Meetings

The Association meets monthly at the Dougherty Centre, 7 Victor St, Chatswood at 7:30PM on the 3rd Thursday Feb-May & Jul-Nov

Our Christmas Meeting is held on the 2nd Thursday of December.

Membership

Send \$10 and Name to 032-090 54-8083

Plus send your Name, Address & Ph. to cwwpanews@gmail.com

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Lane Cove Tunnel Health Concern

Before the opening of the Lane Cove Tunnel there was speculation that there would be a dire effect on the health of people in surrounding areas. A recent study by a cross-disciplinary group has unearthed some concerning results. The study methods included a questionnaire and lung capacity measurement (spirometry). The study found that there was **no consistent improvement in respiratory health** in residents living along the bypassed Epping Rd despite a reduction in traffic from 90,000 to 45,000 vehicles per day. Residents living near tunnel feeder roads reported more upper respiratory symptoms. Residents living around the tunnel ventilation stack reported more upper and lower respiratory symptoms. Conclusion: The finding of adverse health effects among residents living around the stack is unexpected and difficult to explain but might be due to unmeasured pollutants or risk factors or an unrecognised pollutant source nearby. **Article supplied by President Jim McCredie**



Rainbow

Parrots. Have you been in Victoria Avenue opposite The Concourse around dusk? Wondered who is making the racket? Many people think the noise is coming from Noisy Minors. The truth is that the majority of the birds in the trees are **Lorikeets.**

What a wonderful place we live in !

The Church of Scientology Australia (CSA) is proposing to reuse the former Acoustics Laboratory building at 126 Greville Street for administrative, educational, and related Church activities. Until recent times the site has been used as commercial office premises associated with the National Acoustic Laboratory. The CSA has prepared an initial design concept to adaptively reuse the building to enable CSA to establish a **suitable Sydney location for training and education purposes.** CSA is strongly committed to achieving a sustainable development outcome by:

- Utilising the existing building structure and associated materials
- Maintaining the existing landscape and protecting the surrounding environment
- Promoting public transport access to the site
- Continuing local resident access to the site's grounds and the

Scientology comes to Greville St

surrounding Bushland Reserve

CSA is developing a plan that contains the following operational characteristics:

- Approximately 60 per cent of the building will be used for typical administrative functions and their ancillary uses (staff kitchen, storage etc.)
- The remaining 30 per cent will be used for Theological Studies for parishioners
- Approximately 10 per cent of the building will be used for a small 120 person Chapel and a student dining area with lounges. Following evening classes, people will vacate the site before 10pm
- A maximum of 460 people (290 staff and 170 parishioners) will be on site at anyone time plus There

will be no residential accommodation on site

The majority of staff will travel to the proposed site by organised bus transport. However, it appears that there could be more than 3 times the traffic movements than if the property was used for residential.

Resident comment: "...appears to be a **comparatively low-impact option, preferable to demolition and town houses.** The walk-through of the site – sheer scale and cavernous, configurable spaces – demonstrated the negligence or nepotism of the original sale by the Commonwealth. The developer sold the site plus 23 & 25 Millwood for close to \$35 million! The proposed bus lay-by and use of it by Sydney Buses should be an improvement

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Schools Update

Projects have been progressing at our local schools. At Mowbray Public School work has continued on finalising the project and contract detail for a **completely new school**. Work is expected to commence shortly. The students will be accommodated in portable classrooms whilst the old classrooms are demolished and the new school is built in their place. Construction sites pose many issues. We trust the Mowbray School Community are able to resolve any issues that arrive swiftly in the best interests of students.

At Chatswood High School where

for years there have been concerns with the safety of the oval, there is now a **green light to install synthetic turf** and better lights. This work is funded and will be carried out by Willoughby Council. A dangerous concrete structure near the field will be removed. There will also be new change sheds. The school will also convert the old asphalt tennis courts into teacher parking.

Things seem to have been quiet at the others schools in our area. Ed. **We welcome news snippets from all schools in the Ward**

Hazard Burns

Willoughby Council conducted 6 hazard reduction burns in West Ward in the last 5 years. These were:

- Avian Crescent Nov-09
- Avian Crescent Feb-11
- Valerie Ave Mar-11
- Fullers Bridge Oct-11
- 2 x Ferndale Park Sep-12
- Greville Street May-13

In addition WCC maintain established APZ's in the West Ward. Burns in the West Ward are not programed for the 2014/15 year as WCC has planned strategic burns in the east where there are areas that have not had a burn for many years with very high to extreme fuel loads. **Clr. Saville**

TREES - Don't get caught out

New State legislation makes dealing with trees on your property even more confusing. Make sure you get it right else **you could be fined tens of thousands of dollars**.

Traditionally, the legislation covering the removal of trees has been the local Council's Tree Preservation Order. More



recently, new legislation (known as 10/50 Vegetation Clearing Code of Practice) has been enacted. In addition, your land may be covered by Native Vegetation Act or the Threatened Species Conservation Act. This new legislation makes the removal of trees and vegetation that much more complex. The best advice is to confer with your local Council before cutting down any tree on your property.

Woolworths

After many years absence from Chatswood, **Woolworths has finally returned**. A small store is opening at the Railway Interchange on the 4th December. The store is opposite the ticket counters, up an escalator. In Smith St, East Chatswood, Council recently refused an application by Woolworths for a large store. Woolworths are appealing the decision and still hope to bring an alternative to Coles into the city.

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North West Rail Link

Tunneling for the North West Rail Link (NWRL) is well underway. When completed, the rail service will be the first Australian fully automated (driverless) rail system. The existing Epping to Chatswood line will be 'downgraded' to accommodate the new single-storey rapid transit service. This will cost

millions of dollars on a line that is just a few years old. There is also concern that Sydney is reverting to past poor practice and adopting a '2nd gauge' system. Trains from the NWRL will not be compatible with the rest of the railway network.

Implementing the system will take years. It also means closing the Chatswood to Epping line for nearly two years. During this time, buses will create havoc in the streets around Chatswood Station. Many existing parking bays in Victoria

Avenue will be commandeered to be used as bus lay-over spots. The biggest concern is the possibility of congestion on Chatswood Station. TNWRL stations will be equipped with glass platform doors that only open when the train is at the station. The NWRL will be delivering passengers to Chatswood every five minutes. However, on the other side of the platform, City Rail trains will be much further apart. NWRL commented that it is **'City Rail's' problem to solve any overcrowding of the platforms.**

Traffic speed and volume counts were recently undertaken in Dulwich Road, Peckham Road, Anglo Street and Tessa Street. The counts showed that in Dulwich Road the 85th percentile speed (the speed at which 85% of vehicles travel at or below) was 53km/h, which is slightly above the speed limit for the street. This is considered acceptable, particularly as the count was taken near the bottom of a dip in the street, where cars would be more likely to drive at higher speeds. The

Traffic in Dulwich, Peckham, Anglo & Tessa

85th percentile speed for the other roads was found to be below the 50km/h speed limit, indicating that **speeding is not a problem in these streets.**

The traffic counts however did show a noticeable increase in traffic traveling towards Fullers Road between 7am and 9am. However this was less than 100 vehicles per

hour, which is considered to be a fairly low figure, and well within the environmental capacity of these streets. Given the results of the traffic counts, the introduction of traffic calming measures in these streets could not be justified. Due to space constraints, it would be unlikely that a 2nd right turn lane from Pacific Highway into Fullers Road could be constructed.

Mowbray Precinct

At a recent meeting many residents are concerned that traffic in the area between Epping Rd, Mowbray Rd and the Pacific Highway has increased. Of particular note are the introduction of the lights at Beaconsfield Rd and large scale development along the Lane Cove side of Mowbray Rd. A recent Consultant's Report stated that generally there had not been any significant increase in traffic in local streets since the lights went in. The traffic figures were many months old. Residents say the increase has primarily been in the past 3 months.

There was also concern expressed that the traffic counts were done in early December when private schools are already on holidays. Coolaroo residents presented a petition about increased traffic. There was discussion about allowing a right-hand turn from Beaconsfield Rd into Mowbray Road. Another request was for a set of lights at Dalrymple. There was no discussion of increased traffic in Goodchap Rd but there has been significant comments on this issue. The Consultant's stand was that issue causing the problem was the operation of the intersection of the Pacific Highway and Mowbray Rd.

They indicated that to resolve that problem could cost hundreds of millions of dollars (so highly unlikely).

It was decided that everyone in the study area would be letter-boxed. There will be public meeting on the issues. A Safety Audit will be undertaken in the winding streets in the area. After the Safety Audit, the Consultants are to develop proactive solutions to protect the residential amenity. Subsequently, Beaconsfield Rd residents lodged a petition that there be no changes made to the lights. **We are all waiting for the promised public meeting.**

LJ Hooker

Chatswood

Property Management

Residential Sales



Linh Ngo
Accounts
84 58 6500

Anthony Zaman
Property Manager
0425 242 999

Trish Duncan
Property Manager
0425 242 999

Lorraine Johnson
Property Manager
0417 241 412

SCOTT HODDINOTT
Licensee & Managing Director
0425 211 211

Nathan Mainhoff
Senior Sales Executive
0488 783 888

Coco Liu
Sales Associate
0425 211 211

Porscha Epiha
Administration
84 58 6500

Chris Lee
Personal Assistant
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