

# CRA Annual Report 2017

The Carlton Residents Association advocates for the residents of Carlton. CRA is a democratic, non-party political body. This short report highlights what CRA achieved for Carlton and the key activities of the association in 2017.

## CRA achievements and activities in 2017

### Planning issues

The Planning Working Group, led by Warren Green, analyses all proposed developments in Carlton and organizes opposition to developments which are inappropriate. The group reviewed 131 applications in 2017 and objected to 16 of those. A two-page report of the Planning Working Group's activities is attached in Appendix 1.

### Strategic Planning issues

Led by Ewan Ogilvy, CRA provided input into four strategic planning concerns in Carlton:

1. **Heritage Review:** CRA made a submission on the revised grading system and the negative outcome of that system in downgrading the heritage status of many sites in Carlton.
2. **Corkman Hotel:** CRA urged Council to develop a new Precinct Overlay including the individual heritage overlay of the former Corkman site and the heritage overlays of the sites to the east and south of the site to ensure community inclusion in future deliberations on the site.
3. **Royal Exhibition Building:** CRA opposed the development of an income generating Pavillion on the lower deck.
4. **Carlton Connect Initiative:** CRA made a submission that opposed the height of the development and noted the lack of best practice in environmental and sustainable development outcomes.

More details are in the two-page report in Appendix 1.

### Carlton Neighbour Day

The first Carlton Neighbour Day was a successful partnership between CRA, City of Melbourne and the University of Melbourne. Faraday Street, in front of Kathleen Syme Library and Community Centre was closed to traffic to ensure local residents could meet and children could play. We engaged some 500 people in a variety of ways: at the event or the Welcome Lunch, an art competition involving students from the two local Primary Schools, and international students who volunteered on the day. CRA engaged relevant organisations and local traders to provide information and services. Local Council funded play activities for kids, the Toy Library also brought along a range of games, and the Kathleen Syme Library and Community Centre set out a range of arts activities that were well used. The Welcome Lunch provided a centre point for the day providing a space where people could connect. CRA established a number of new partnerships, and engaged established partners, to provide funding and activities for the day. We are grateful to all our partners for their support and participation, noted below.

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## Support to Omotayo Daib

CRA provided support for our local KSLCC worker, Omotayo Daib, in his appeal for asylum. CRA mobilized local residents to write letters of support, broker legal expertise and raise money. Ultimately, the Minister for Immigration decided against Omotayo and he was forced to leave Australia. We have since heard from Omotayo that he was granted a visa to the USA and is currently in Dallas, Texas. He is well, safe and making connections to the local community.

## Newsflash and website

CRA produced four high quality newsletters during 2017 and these along with the website provide an excellent opportunity to keep in touch with the activities of CRA. Newsflashes included stories of local relevance as well as details on CRA's action for the local community. The website provides information about current ventures and is also a good source of history and background.

## Carlton Gardens

CRA continued to work with Friends of Carlton Gardens to advocate for better protection to the Gardens during the Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show. The Council has recently introduced additional measures to ensure the impact of the event within Carlton Gardens is managed and minimised: increase the event bond from \$30,000 to \$250,000, increase the Licence Fee from \$130,000 to \$145,000 per year, increase the Public Projects Contribution fee from \$30,810 to \$35,000, introduction of a new requirement of a Tree Protection Plan, requirement to engage a Project Arborist for the planning, delivery and close-out period of the event, requirement that reinstatement is managed by CoM at the cost of the Licensee, and that only the CoM's contractor is able to undertake reinstatement works.

## Traffic, Transport, Parking and Noise Abatement

The Traffic, Transport and Parking working group, led by Lester Levinson, addressed several issues relating to its usual role. It has also expanded more formally its reach to cover Noise Abatement. Traffic was dominated by the expected effect of closing Grattan Street between Royal Parade and Leicester Street in order to allow work on the Parkville underground station, on the increased capacity being built into Queensberry Street with two extra lanes and the loss of 106 median strip parking spaces. This led to a tripartite meeting of our working group with personnel from the City of Melbourne and the Melbourne Metro Rail Authority and a subsequent correspondence. The work on traffic slowed pursuit of our concern to eliminate wanton excessive noise emitted by retrofitted motor bikes, cars and utilities focussed on Lygon, Elgin, Queensberry and surrounding streets. Nevertheless, it has involved a very informative meeting with the Environment Protection Authority, also with the City of Melbourne on the health consequences of excessive noise, and a forthcoming

meeting this month with highway patrol personnel of Victoria Police. Brian Falconer, a working group member, has made considerable progress (liaising with the EPA) on the problem of noise created by rowdy neighbours, and has outlined in our newsletter the procedure to follow to overcome much of this. More informally, we have made a start also in seeking adherence to Council-mandated hours for commercial rubbish collection so as to avoid residents being wakened late at night by trucks and rumbling dumpsters. The Working Group has established a credible presence and an experience based platform to be able to contribute in a valuable way to policy formulation if invited.

#### Heritage Tours

CRA, led by Philip Watts, collaborated with the Carlton History Group to deliver two walking tours in Carlton, one in Trades Hall in May and one in South Carlton in June 2017. Many thanks to our guide, Jeff Atkinson.

#### 2017 AGM

Mark Rubbo, Readings Bookshop, provided wonderful Carlton reflections. The following committee members and office bearers were voted in:

- Ivana Csar, President
- Trish O'Loughlin, Vice President
- Philip Watts, Treasurer
- Farida Fleming, Secretary
- Lester Levinson, Ordinary Member
- Lisa Adam, Ordinary Member
- Lyn Cracknell, Ordinary Member
- Madhana Ratnavel, Ordinary Member

#### 2017 Christmas Party

CRA was fortunate to have Professor Kim Dovey, from the Melbourne School of Design, speak at our 2017 Christmas party. Long time CRA activists, Greta and Ian Bird, were acknowledged at this event by being awarded lifetime memberships. Special thanks to La Mama for providing a wonderful venue, Brunetti for providing food, our generous raffle ticket sponsors, and our two talented musicians.

## Appendix 1: Planning Group Report for 2017

Committee: Warren Green (Convenor), Mark Cleary, Clive Miller, Ewan Ogilvy, Denis Toth, John Weickhardt  
Cameron White.

The Carlton Residents Association Planning Group monitors planning scheme amendments and issues of a strategic nature and regularly meets to consider the planning applications lodged for post code 3053. In this way, the Planning Group assists CRA to advocate on behalf of its members to:

- Support the retention of the heritage assets within Carlton and to discourage new development that fails to respect these assets.
- Maintain the quality of the public realm with a focus upon maintaining access to sunlight and sky views, and a pedestrian friendly scale.
- Interpret and apply the performance based provisions of the Melbourne Planning Scheme fairly so that the interests of no one party are unfairly privileged over the interests of another party.

### 1. Strategic Planning Issues

During 2017 CRA prepared submissions for planning scheme amendments and reviews including the following:

- The Heritage Review Planning Scheme Amendment C258
- The Corkman Hotel [Demolished without approval]
- The Royal Exhibition Building - Protection and Promotion Works
- The Carlton Connect Initiative [Site of the Former Royal Womens Hospital] Amendment C313

Details are summarised in the accompanying attachment.

### 2.Planning Applications

2017 saw a further reduction in the year on year figures for planning applications lodged, however the number of objections by CRA increased yet again. The planning committee reviewed 131 proposals and submitted 16 objections, an increase of 23 % over 2106, despite the smaller number of Carlton applications received by the municipality.

The number of complex objections still remains high which places additional demands on the planning group's limited resources.

There appears to have been less agreement between CoM and CRA on the major applications this year. Several major projects were located within the expanded Capital City Zone. An area which has limited third party objection rights. Overall the decisions this year have reflected minor concessions to CRA's preferred outcomes rather than victories.

The following is a summary of the past four years

2017	131 Applications	16 Objections
2016	149 Applications	13 Objections
2015	177 Applications	9 Objections
2014	119 Applications	2 Objections

Details of the objections submitted, including their status, can be found on our website. They related to:

TP-2016-1031	10 Magenta Place - 5 storey multi dwelling development.
TP-2017- 83	299 Lygon St - Pidapipos - installation of outdoor speakers.
TP-2017- 64	191-197 Grattan St - Prince Alfred Hotel - Renovations and additions.
TP-2016-1047	121-131 Cardigan St - 4-10 storey apartment development.
TP-2017-188	123-135 Bouverie St - Part demolition, construct 13 storey student accommodation.
TP-2016-1128	232- 234 Faraday St - Part demolition, construct 3 storeys [restaurant plus apartments]
TP-1998- 331/A	198-204 Faraday St - Crinitis - Installation of outdoor speakers.
TP-2017- 85	198-208 Queensberry St - Part demolition construct 15 storey student accommodation.
TP-2017- 486	368-386 Lygon St - Lygon Court - Modifications to Lygon St entry.
TP-2017- 616	4-12 Leicester Place - 15 Storey residential hotel development.
TP-2017 - 714	47-49 Nicholson St - Part demolition and construction of 3 dwellings.
TP-2017- 761	623-645 Swanston St - Lincoln House - 4,10 & 14 storey mixed use development.
TP-2017- 651	6 O'Connel Lane - New additions to existing dwelling.
TP-2017- 274	288-290 Drummond St - Demolition existing dwelling, construct 3 storey x 4 apartments.
TP-2017- 380	131-133 Station St - Demolition, construct 2 new dwellings.
TP-2016- 903	179 Grattan St - Demolition, construct 8 storeys plus roof terrace mixed use development.

### **3. General**

John Weickhardt reluctantly resigned mid year for personal reasons. His dedicated service was acknowledged by both the full Committee and the Planning Group at that time.

CRA has frequently been challenged by the applicant's advocate at VCAT to comment on the absence of 'those people who are most directly affected by this alleged inappropriate development'.

So, objections from individuals, especially those in close proximity to the proposed development, add considerable weight to any submission by CRA. We encourage all members to keep this in mind when inappropriate development is proposed.

We encourage any member with experience or a serious interest in planning issues, to contact the group convenor. Your input would be welcomed.

Further information on the above applications should be available on the CoM website.

[www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/BuildingandPlanning/Planning/Pages/PlanningRegisterSearch.aspx](http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/BuildingandPlanning/Planning/Pages/PlanningRegisterSearch.aspx)

CRA's Planning Group monthly reports and summaries are available on the CRA website.

Warren Green - 07 February 2018

## **Carlton Residents Association**

### **Some Strategic Planning Concerns – Review of 2017 Year**

During 2017, the CRA Planning Group maintained a limited role in the strategic planning “space”. This involved, for the most part, the preparation of submissions and letters in response to Planning Scheme Amendments, and the preparation of one submission to Heritage Victoria in response to the Promotion and Protection Works proposed for the Royal Exhibition Building.

#### **The Heritage Review Planning Scheme Amendment.**

This Review has been an ongoing commitment since 2014. In the Association’s most recent submission, we focussed upon the so-called Grading Translation exercise, a project involving the conversion of the old [and current] letter Heritage Place Gradings to the proposed new Significant and Contributory Grades. This submission included the following key observations/conclusions:

*In the Carlton area, the June 2016 **Heritage Places Inventory** includes 1,160 records of C Graded Heritage Places. The actual number of places would be higher, since many records include a pair or row of terraces. **All these records [Heritage Places] had the SAME GRADING STATUS in June 2016.** Following the Review, about 430 records [Heritage Places] translated to the new SIGNIFICANT GRADE and about 730 to the lower CONTRIBUTORY GRADE.*

*In relative terms at least, the inescapable conclusion is that for the **CARLTON area there has been a very uneven outcome in the GRADING status of our Heritage Places. Those C Grade Places in the City North Area have fared vastly better than those in that part of Carlton east of Swanston Street...** In our view, the application of different translation principles in the SAME Heritage Review, does NOT result in a credible outcome.*

#### **The Corkman Hotel “Bomb” site**

During the last Council Meeting of 2017, the Councillors agreed that Ministerial approval should be obtained to exhibit a new Planning Scheme Amendment over the Corkman site, to address the time limited nature of the “spot” Design and Development Overlay introduced by the Minister [in response to the illegal demolition of this much loved cultural institution.] In our submission to the Council, we argued that “...it is essential for the Individual Heritage Overlay [HO85] over the former Corkman site to be reviewed, since this site is now a “bomb site” with a very dubious heritage status. We would strongly urge the Council to include this Overlay and those individual Overlays to the east [HO84] and south [HO62] in a new Precinct Overlay.”

In the Association’s view, this was an essential measure to ensure that the local community could not be sidelined in future deliberations over the future of the site.

#### **The Royal Exhibition Building – Protection and Promotion Works**

The Association’s key conclusion in relation to the Promotion Works provides a succinct statement of our key concerns. “Since the major purpose of the promotion works is to reinstate the Promenade Experience, it is not at all clear how the construction of a Pavilion and associated “Utility Room” on the lower deck will facilitate that experience. When these facilities are used for income generating functions, it is highly likely that access to the upper deck [and the promenade experience] will be restricted. Also, given that the new Pavilion will take up about 40% of the lower deck, this structure cannot avoid detracting from the appreciation of the original pavilions [stair “shafts”] and other roof elements of the REB when viewed from the upper deck.”

#### **The Carlton Connect Initiative [Site of former Royal Women’s Hospital]**

Unfortunately, from the Association’s perspective, key concerns raised in our April 2015 Submission to the Planning Panel remain unresolved in the revamped proposal that was exhibited in October-November 2017. In this first submission we expressed concern over the major intensification of the former RWH site, and the imprecise nature of the proposed planning scheme provisions, especially as they related to sustainable design measures. Our latest submission included the following comments:

- We see nothing in the Melbourne Planning Scheme to suggest that a development built to the helicopter flight path envelope is essential to achieving the important and laudable objectives of the CCI and the Parkville National Employment and Innovation Cluster [NEIC].
- We acknowledge that the development will showcase some innovative ESD initiatives; the inclusion of a cross laminated timber building is noteworthy. But ... we do not believe that other key aspects of the development reflect best practice in ESD outcomes. For example, there is nothing exemplary about the adoption of a five star Green Star target for the Student Housing building; the City of Melbourne expects ALL student housing complexes to satisfy this minimum target. ...
- We are disappointed that the height of the development on the Grattan Street frontage has not been moderated to achieve better solar access to this key pedestrian spine. We do not believe that an exemplary “architectural statement” should ever require a building of a particular scale.

At the time of preparing this review, the matter was still being considered by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning.

Ewan Ogilvy, 21 Jan 2018