



THE CARLTON RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION INC. NEWSFLASH

Spring 2009

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Carlton Police Station Open Day

A 'grand-finale' Open Day at the Carlton Police Station was held on 11 October. The last Open Day at the historic Carlton location was a memorable afternoon of music, food, station tours and community information stalls (including a CRA stall). It was an ideal occasion for CRA members to interact with the Carlton community, assist on food stalls, publicise our activities and recruit new members. Earlier in the week, CRA members also assisted with a petition to ensure adequate police resources are available in Carlton when the station is relocated to North Melbourne next year. A recurrent question was 'What will happen to the Police Station in Carlton?' Our earlier lobbying to retain it for community purposes eg. a Community House, was rejected by the State Government. We hope it will not fall prey to developers for yet more 'studio' apartments.



Carlton Police Station on Open Day



CRA information stall

Eastern Precinct Terrace House Sales

Many CRA members will recall that in 2003, Melbourne University and the Planning Minister argued strongly at VCAT that the University-owned terrace houses around the Eastern Precinct (Faraday and Cardigan Streets) were derelict, worthless and ripe for demolition, in order to make way for a new vision: 'College Square on Swanston' student housing complex. VCAT agreed with CRA, Heritage Victoria and the City of Melbourne that these heritage-listed Victorian era houses should be retained. These terrace houses have now been restored by private owners and developers; several have been sold or leased in recent times. On 24 October, one of the smaller and formerly most derelict houses (256 Faraday St), one of the six-unit 'Regent Terraces', sold at auction for \$1.02 million. Not bad for a building labelled 'worthless' in 2003!



Restoration work being done on Royal Terrace in Faraday Street

The University seems to have at last got the message. The sole building it retained, 'Royal Terrace' (near Swanston St.), a magnificent two-storey group of four terrace houses, is now being restored. This vacant, decaying building hit the headlines in 2008 following a high profile 'squat' by the Student Housing Action Collective, to provide affordable accommodation for homeless University students (Newsflash Spring 2008). The students were ultimately ejected by police; however, the University has responded with responsible action for the building's restoration and use. A restored Royal Terrace would likely fetch upwards of \$6 million at auction.

History has confirmed that CRA was right to so vigorously oppose demolition of these historic terrace houses. Now restored, they significantly add to housing options in Carlton and provide a welcome contrast to the concrete monolith of 'College Square on Swanston'.

Transport Facilitation Bill

Major Transport Projects Facilitation legislation was recently approved by Parliament to fast-track new road, port and rail projects. Premier Brumby will decide which transport projects fall under the new provisions while Planning Minister Justin Madden has sole approval power under the legislation. Environmental Effects Statements are no longer required; Council processes are sidelined; there will be no public consultation.

There is widespread concern at the implications of this legislation and its likely flow-on effects to other planning legislation. Concerns include lack of public and local council participation, environmental protection issues and good governance. Major projects such as the \$10 billion Eddington East-West Road Tunnel (Newsflash Winter 2008), successfully opposed by community action in 2008, could now be approved without debate. The 'big end of town' is cheering the new legislation along!

We are now facing challenges to our traditional democratic processes even greater than those experienced during the controversial Kennett years. The ballot box may well be the sole recourse for community input on critical planning issues.

Sustainable garden for Royal Exhibition Building

Museum Victoria is undertaking a major project to transform an unsightly car park at the Royal Exhibition Building, Australia's first World Heritage listed building, into heritage gardens based on the original nineteenth-century design.

The project will restore the western forecourt of the Royal Exhibition Building, which was covered in asphalt in the 1950s. Funded by a \$5.3 million grant from the Victorian Government, the project will begin in late October 2009 with completion in February 2011.

An important component of the project is the installation of an extensive water harvesting and storage system, including a 900,000 litre underground water tank, which will ensure a sustainable future for this much-loved Melbourne landmark.

Museum Victoria CEO, Dr Patrick Greene said that the project will complete the 'palace gardens' setting for the building by transforming a bleak area of tarmac into a grand forecourt that is in keeping with one of Australia's most significant historic structures.

'In most great cities there is a building that epitomises its spirit and history. In Melbourne, it is undoubtedly the Royal Exhibition Building,' said Greene. 'This important

project will ensure a sustainable future for this magnificent landmark, and for the Carlton Gardens, preserving them for future generations.'

The project will be in three phases. Beginning in late October, the first phase will involve an archaeological exploration of the site to search for traces of historic garden beds and other original features, conducted in partnership with Godden Mackay Logan (GML) and La Trobe University. Soil, seeds and pollen will be analysed to identify the plants that might have been part of the nineteenth-century garden design.

Phase two will include the installation of two water tanks. One tank will store water captured from the extensive roof of the Royal Exhibition Building, and the second will capture surface water run-off from hardstand areas. This will provide a constant water source for the fountains, lakes and irrigation of the Carlton Gardens as well as irrigation for the site's historic trees, flower beds and newly created palace garden.

In the third phase, archaeological and historical research will be used to restore the 1880 garden landscape and plantings to their original splendour.

Built in 1879 to host the Melbourne International Exhibition in 1880, the Royal Exhibition Building was the first Australian building to be added to the World Heritage List and remains the only World Heritage structure in Victoria. As the nation's most prestigious building, the Royal Exhibition Building was selected to host the opening of the first Australian Federal Parliament on 9 May, 1901 and was the place where the Australian flag was flown for the first time. The building was added to the Australian Government's National Heritage List in 2004.

Funding for this project was provided from the Victorian Property Fund on the approval of the Minister for Consumer Affairs.

The next meeting to be informed of upcoming events and developments around Melbourne Museum and the Royal Exhibition Building (REB) will be held from 5pm – 6pm on Monday 23 November Activity Room C, ground floor Melbourne Museum. Everyone is invited.

Private housing on the Public Housing Estate

Viva Carlton is the name coined for 550 private housing units now under construction on the Carlton Public Housing Estates. A Sales Office has been established on the corner of Princes and Rathdowne Streets for Stage 1 'off the plan' sales of 90 units, ranging in price from \$300,000 (studio apartments) to \$500,000 (2 BR apartments).

A visit to the Sales Office revealed that multi-storey private housing will be built on the north-east area of the Estate in the form of two 'gated' communities, featuring exclusive open green space, all secured behind four-metre-high fencing. The public housing component will be built to the west, along Drummond Street.



Viva sales office, Rathdowne St

The sell-off of 3.5 hectares of Carlton public housing land was justified by the Government as essential for the social integration of public housing tenants with the broader community, through a 'salt and pepper' mix of public and private housing. However, the outcome is as CRA predicted three years ago, following our participation at the Panel Hearing on the Estates redevelopment. There will be a massive over-development of the site, no 'salt and pepper' integration of private and public housing, a significant loss of green space for public tenants and there will not be a single unit of 'affordable' housing in the entire redevelopment. Public housing tenants will be more isolated and disadvantaged than ever.

This regrettable outcome highlights the need for community infrastructure in central Carlton, such as the CRA Community Centre proposal for the Kathleen Syme Centre, to service the entire community, including public housing tenants.

The much heralded Public Housing Estates redevelopment is mostly about private housing for sale into the buoyant Carlton real estate market for private profit, and very little about desperately needed public and affordable housing. Despite the 40,000 people waiting for public housing, there will be no net increase in public tenant numbers on the Carlton Estates following the \$200 million redevelopment.

CRA Membership

If you are interested in becoming a member (or a 'friend') of the Carlton Residents Association, contact the Membership Secretary at secretarycra@gmail.com for an application form, or download one from the CRA website: www.carltonresidents.org.au.

Planning Reference Group News

In the past three months, the Sub-Committee has looked at 32 applications and decided on four objections. Of these, one application has subsequently had a Notice of Decision to grant a Permit with acceptable conditions, one application for illuminated signage on a heritage building was granted a permit just four weeks after the application was received, so CRA was not able to object in time, and two are under assessment.

Most of the applications for the remainder of the objections

for the year are still under assessment by the City of Melbourne Planning Department, except for one which was withdrawn by the applicant and another, for temporary signage with lighting, was granted a permit.

An application for a change of use from student accommodation to dwellings originally lodged in 2006 has been reactivated and is a cause of serious concern for the committee. An objection has been lodged. For further details refer to the following article 'Student Accommodation – Abuse of the Planning System'.

ADDRESS	DETAILS OF WORK / CRA INTEREST
<p>117-121 Bouverie St, CARLTON VIC 3053</p>	<p>Change of use from student accommodation and cafe to 39 dwellings with a reduction in the standard car parking requirement.</p> <p>CRA objection: on amenity grounds</p> <p>1. The units do not meet reasonable standards of individual amenity.</p> <p>The Building has been constructed according to Council's 'relaxed' standards of internal amenity deemed appropriate for Student Accommodation. These standards are not suitable for application to general residential properties.</p> <p>In particular there is :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A total absence of Private Open Space of any kind available for the individual units. • A total lack of appropriate individual amenity (such as individual laundry facilities) for the units. • A total lack of car parking provision of any kind; even the provision of parking for guests, tradesmen, etc. is neglected. • Whilst the provision of 12 bicycle storage spaces may satisfy the provision of Clause 52.34, in a building which offers no car parking for any of its residents this is surely inadequate. • Many of the units have extremely poor aspect, their only source of light being from a single, south-facing window onto a narrow laneway. <p>Whilst such low standards of residential amenity have been deemed to be acceptable by Council for the accommodation of students, they are in no way sufficient for general residential purposes. This building will be no better than a slum tenement.</p> <p>2. The Approval of such an application will set an extremely undesirable precedent.</p> <p>In recent time hundreds of such Students Apartments have been constructed in Carlton. These developments are no different in any way from the current application, and consequently, if this application were to be approved, there would be no realistic way to refuse the similar applications that would inevitably arise from all of these buildings as the absentee landlords sought to increase the rental returns and capital values of their properties.</p> <p>3.The change of use sought should be the subject of a new application (not an amendment to the existing 9 year old approval) to allow reappraisal against the appropriate criterion.</p> <p>4.The amendment sought is an inappropriate mechanism for the removal of Section 173 Agreements.</p>
<p>15-31 Pelham Street CARLTON VIC 3053</p>	<p>To install business identification signage.</p> <p>CRA objection: CRA planned objection on heritage grounds, but permit already issued. Illuminated sign on heritage building</p>
<p>263 Rathdowne Street CARLTON VIC 3053</p>	<p>To construct alterations and an addition to the existing single dwelling</p> <p>CRA objection: Serious loss of amenity to the neighbouring dwelling to the south (No. 261 Rathdowne Street), including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Increased overshadowing of private open space and north-facing habitable room windows in that building. 2 Severe visual bulk in the private open space and from the habitable rooms of that building..

Student accommodation – abuse of the planning system

Our long held concern regarding the control and enforcement of conditions imposed by town planning approvals for student accommodation, which supposedly restrict the use of such developments to accommodating students, has been vindicated yet again by an application currently being considered by CoM.

The application by the Owners Corporation seeks to change the use of the building in Bouverie Street Carlton from student accommodation to 39 residential dwellings.

Planning approval was issued in 2000, complete with the requirement for a Section 173 Agreement dictating that the ongoing use of the building be restricted to student accommodation.

The current application seeks to retrospectively amend this 9 year old permit, to effectively formalise a non-compliant use of the building.

If this were a new proposal, rather than a change-of-use application, it would never gain planning approval, as it clearly does not conform to the regulations governing permanent dwellings.

The reduced-amenity building standards allowed under Section 173 have been justified by the industry and the market as a way of providing affordable, term-time, student accommodation and have been defended by Council on the grounds that they are strictly confined to student housing. If this application is approved, it will set a very dangerous precedent for the plethora of sub-standard student housing developments scattered around Carlton.

CRA Dinner at Brunetti's

In August, the CRA, with the Carlton Parkville Probus Club, dined in style at Brunetti's. There was no lack of conversation and we were well filled with good wine and great food. Fabio Angeli spoke of the history of this iconic Carlton establishment and gave some insights into the daily running of this extensive business.



CRA Dinner at Brunetti's



Carlton Residents Association

Invites you to our

Christmas party

at

La Mama Theatre

Faraday Street Carlton

Guest Speaker:
Sir James Gobbo

Monday 7 December 2009
from 6.00 pm to 8.30 pm
Formalities commence at 7 pm

Come and enjoy a drink
and nibbles, find out what
we have been

doing this year, and catch up
with your local community.

Please RSVP
by 30 November: Greta Bird
E: carltonresidents@gmail.com

P: 9347 1411

PO Box 1140 Carlton
Vic 3053

Community News

• **Fatur celebration**

Several CRA members shared a Fatur celebration dinner at the Multicultural Centre at the Carlton Primary School with African women from Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia, Eritrea. The dinner was held in September as part of the Muslim Ramadan celebrations. It was a privilege to share a meal and conversation with them and to hear about the significance of Ramadan for them.

• **Street parties**

With Christmas fast approaching, community members may find useful a Kit developed by the City of Melbourne on how to organise and run a street party. This Kit outlines a variety of points to consider: safety plans, parking, street closures, insurance, food requirements, costs. For further information about the Kit, contact Brian Pound, Tel. 9658 8863 or email him at bripou@melbourne.vic.gov.au.

• **Melbourne University 2010 Neighbourhood Day**

The Neighbourhood Day, which aims to create and foster a supportive and integrative relationship between the University and its local communities, will be held on 10 March 2010 from 11am to 4pm.

In 2008, it was found that the local Somali neighbourhood felt isolated and ignored by the University of Melbourne, an important element of their community. In response, the 'Carlton Community Day' was held. The purpose of the day is to break down the real, and perceived, barriers between the local refugee community and the University, and to make the campus more accessible to the residents of Carlton, Parkville, North Melbourne and Flemington. As well, the University wants to raise the aspirations of the children of these communities to become future tertiary students.

The group organising the day would like to hear suggestions from the community about possible activities, types of music, food, stalls, speakers. Contact the project manager Georgina McKay with your ideas on 0401 412 782 or neighbourhoodday.unimelbsalp@gmail.com

• **'LiveHouse' activities**

LiveHouse is part of the Carlton Flats Arts Project and supports people in developing their creative interests. A variety of activities are held there.

The Open Percussion Group meets every Wednesday from 5.00 pm to 6.30pm at LiveHouse on the Carlton Housing Estate, where a disparate group of people use a variety of percussion instruments to create rhythms. It's free. No

prior experience is needed and all ages are welcome. Bring your own percussion instrument or use ours to join in on a rhythm. There will be a public performance on Saturday 12 December.

And on Thursdays from 6 – 8 pm there are performances reflecting the kaleidoscope of people living in Carlton. It's free, open air and open to all. Bring a picnic dinner! Performances will be held every Thursday until 17 December. See www.livehouse.net.au for weekly special guest performers. See micro-economics and micro-enterprise at work at the Open Micro-Market on Fridays from 4 – 7 pm. This market is open to Carlton residents to swap, sell, bargain, buy or busk, to offer your services or just have a rest at LiveHouse!



LiveHouse

• **Princes Hill Community Centre**

End-of-year pARTicipate extravaganza – art exhibition and fete – Friday 04 to Sunday 06 December.

• **CERES EcoHouse Workshops**

Want to reduce your household energy use, costs and greenhouse emissions? Looking to renovate responsibly... stay sustainably cool? CERES EcoHouse is running a series of workshops on Wednesdays nights and/or Saturday mornings from November 2009 to February 2010. To book, or to obtain more information, go to www.ceres.org.au.

• **PANDORA at the State Library**

PANDORA is an online archive in which selected Australian websites and other online publications are preserved and made available for research and reference. Part of its purpose is to present a developing picture of Australian online culture and resources. Publications so far include government reports, local histories, maps, poetry, community newsletters, online galleries, issues-based blogs. Access is free for everyone. For more information visit slv.vic.gov.au/about/partners/collab/Pandora.

What is the purpose of the CRA?

In response to current discussion about the purpose of the CRA, CRA member Ian Bird prepared a paper outlining CRA's achievements and activities. The full text is available on the CRA's website as well as the Newsflash archive which provides further information on these and many other CRA activities.

The CRA was founded in 1996, following an earlier decision by the Kennett Liberal-National Party State Government to redraw municipal boundaries. This policy placed largely residential North Carlton within the City of Yarra, leaving South Carlton, a largely business-dominated area, within the City of Melbourne. Residents believed this action was taken to break the power of resident activism in Carlton.

Predecessor to CRA, The Carlton Association, formed in 1969, had been very effective in confronting successive State Governments over the demolition of thousands of Victorian Era terrace houses in the name of 'slum clearance', for the construction of highrise public housing estates in Carlton. Other issues included traffic and transport matters eg. the construction of the Eastern Freeway through residential areas of Carlton in the 1970s, and protection of parkland and historic buildings from the predations of development.

CRA inherited all these issues from the disbanded Carlton Association while facing escalating pressures from inappropriate development proposals and traffic. This included the voracious off-campus expansion of Melbourne University into Carlton's heritage residential areas.

Some examples of CRA's activities and achievements since 1996 are outlined below.

- **Saving Barry Square:**

CRA action moderated the more outrageous aspects of a proposal for a new enterprise in 1998, Melbourne University Private (MUP). The plan was to demolish around 30 heritage-listed terrace houses for construction of 15-storey buildings around the Square, and to convert the Victoria Bowling Club into a multi-storey underground car park. Facades of most terrace houses were retained and building heights scaled down.

- **World Heritage listing of the Royal Exhibition Building & Carlton Gardens:**

CRA was an active supporter and participant in this historic proposal which was successful in 2004. We continue to support preservation, restoration and management of the area through The Carlton Gardens Group.

- **Public Housing Estates Redevelopment:**

CRA led successful public activism in opposition to reopening Drummond Street through the Lygon Street Estate and continues to actively monitor developments within the Public Housing Estates.

- **Planning Issues:**

Monitoring planning applications for Carlton is one of CRA's major ongoing activities.

- **Carlton Parkland:**

CRA continues to lobby for improved green space through street tree planting, median greening and preservation of historic garden squares. We successfully campaigned against the removal of all 200 street trees from the Lygon Street Precinct, and have moderated ongoing proposals for developments on parkland.

- **Transport, Traffic and Parking:**

CRA has actively participated in many State Government and City Council reviews and studies of transport, traffic and car parking eg. Eddington Inquiry, Melbourne Transport Strategy, Carlton Parking & Access. At the local level, we successfully lobbied for a 40 kph speed zone through the Lygon Street Precinct and for improved bike parking and path facilities.

- **Community Activism:**

CRA collaborates with like-minded residents and community groups within the City of Melbourne and beyond. We are members of The Coalition of Residents and Business Associations, which takes on 'big picture' issues within our city, such as undemocratic Council election processes and commercial use of public parkland for private profit. CRA is also active in the State-wide group, Planning Backlash, which is concerned about population policy and the unsustainable growth of Melbourne, including intense development pressures arising from Government policy Melbourne@5million. We have participated in meetings with the Planning Minister and many public rallies on planning issues.

- **Community Resources:**

Unlike many comparable inner urban areas, Carlton has no library or community space for events, meetings, community resources etc. The Council has acknowledged this long standing community need, however the State Government remains uncooperative. CRA has identified the Kathleen Syme Centre, a component of the now vacated Royal Women's Hospital site, as an ideal building for a Community Centre to service the entire Carlton community.

Carlton Gardens Primary School expanding



Carlton Gardens Primary School

Students, parents and staff of Carlton Gardens Primary School on Rathdowne St rejoice at a recent \$2 million federal funding grant. A creative design will expand and upgrade the school, with construction of a two-storey building over the car park. One level will comprise a staff room, tuition areas and meeting rooms, the other a dance studio. The funding grant will also restore the grand, heritage-listed 125-year-old building.

The school, situated opposite the Carlton Gardens, was built contemporaneously with the nearby Exhibition Building. It has continuously served the education needs of Melbourne families since 1884.

The grant, and a letter from local member, the Hon Bronwyn Pike, put to rest rumours that the school would be closed. There was a possibility of apartment development as has occurred with the former heritage listed Cancer Institute building on the corner of Queensberry and Rathdowne Streets. The centrally located Carlton Gardens school is invaluable to our community. It is vibrant, widely respected, multicultural, and attracts 175 students from across the city.

La Mama supports Carlton Employment Opportunities (CEO) Project

The Carlton Church of All Nations CEO project (started in January 2009) seeks to increase employment opportunities for African men and women on the Carlton estate, through seeking out consultative arrangements with local employers and traders committed to social justice in the community.

Carlton's historic La Mama Theatre, situated on Faraday Street has just signed on to support the project by employing CEO project participant and local resident Sarah Nega as a cleaner.

Sarah Nega arrived in Australia from Ethiopia in 2002, having fled the civil war in her country. Sarah has lived on the Carlton housing estate with her husband and two children for six years. She and other former refugees have found it difficult to get a job, despite undergoing significant training courses, registering with a Job Network provider and actively seeking work.

As Sarah Howe, project co-ordinator, said of this opportunity: 'The CEO project recognises that members of the African community face significant barriers to employment and hence a key aim of the program is to source jobs by approaching Carlton traders directly. We congratulate La Mama for giving Sarah this employment opportunity and allowing Carlton housing estate residents social inclusion into the vibrant Carlton community.'

The arrangement has been a win-win, with Mary Helen Sassman, of La Mama saying: 'Sarah has been doing a great job and is a delight to have around.'

For more information about the Carlton Church of All Nations, CEO project, please call Sarah Howe on 0401 352 551.



Sarah Nega, new employee at La Mama theatre