

CRA Planning Group

Outline of deliberations on 4th March 2019 and matters for CRA Committee Decision

Present: Warren Green [Past Convener] Clive Miller and Ewan Ogilvy

Apologies: Dennis Toth and Peter Sanders

Background

Warren Green had previously advised the full Committee of his intention to resign as Convener of the CRA Planning Group. Warren had also circulated to Committee Members a Summary of his key activities [as Convener] and a circular letter to Committee Members which urged the Committee to determine CRA's ambitions in the planning arena. The Minutes of the CRA Planning Group's February Meeting were also circulated.

At the February Meeting, Dennis Toth expressed the view that the CRA Committee should/could take a lead on planning issues. Dennis also advised Group Members that he would be heading overseas shortly, and planned to be away for three months. In a recent email, Peter Sanders expressed the following hopes:

It is important that the PG continue for the future of Carlton.

All of the current activities should be continued. The important strategic planning work that Ewan is doing is most important and I hope to contribute to it in the future.

I plan to become a regular member of the group but I will be away from 8/5 to 15/8 this year. After then I hope to become more involved. Also over the next 2 months.

Key Priorities of the Planning Working Group

The key priorities of this Group are most clearly articulated in the Statement of Purposes in the Association's Model Rules. They include the following

The purpose of the Carlton Residents Association, as a democratic, non-party political body, is to act as an advocate of the residents of Carlton (being the residents of the area defined by postcode 3053), and to represent their views at community, local government, state government and federal government levels, including, but not restricted to activities in the following areas:-

- 1. Town planning**
- 2. Preservation, development, maintenance and use of parks, gardens, public buildings and other facilities in Carlton**
- 3. Preservation of heritage values and amenity of Carlton by the preservation and maintenance of existing buildings and streetscapes and the sympathetic development of buildings consistent with the heritage nature and amenity of the area**

In practical terms, this has involved Association members in

- Reviewing new Planning Applications in the Carlton area and lodging submissions [Objections] with the City of Melbourne where there are clear and undesirable impacts on neighbouring properties and the wider community
- Presenting submissions to VCAT Compulsory Conferences and Hearings [eg King and Godfree redevelopment, and the new multi storey development on the Downtowner Motel site]
- Presenting submissions to the City of Melbourne and State Government appointed Planning Panels and Committees in relation to key planning control initiatives [eg the Residential Zones Standing Advisory Committee and the City of Melbourne Heritage Review]
- Researching, networking and advocacy in relation to other key developments in the Carlton area [eg the Carlton Connect development on the former RWH site, and the illegal demolition of the Carlton Inn/Corkman Irish Pub]

Key Conclusions from 4th March Meeting of the Planning Working Group

While Group Members have attempted to fulfil the advocacy role, as articulated in the Association's Statement of Purpose, we are of one mind that this role is no longer a realistic option at the current time.

This is not just a question of replacing a Convener, but an acknowledgement that the city planning arena has become increasingly complex in recent years and VERY adversarial. Even Planning Scheme Amendment Panel Hearings have become dominated by senior barristers [+ their juniors + advising solicitors + expert witnesses]. This is NOT an environment for the faint hearted; it also requires **enormous** staying power. We are not talking about hearings that drag on for months, but a process that can continue for YEARS [as is the case with the City Wide Heritage Review].

It is also important to recognise that some members of the Planning Group have been volunteering their time for decades, and need a break. In these circumstances, the full Committee of the Association must recognise that the more urgent task is to find people who can take a LEAD in relation to those city planning issues which the Association has determined should receive priority attention.

At the current time, we are strongly of the view that the Association must adopt a REFERRAL and SELF-HELP model in relation to Planning Permits and any subsequent Reviews before VCAT. More specifically we believe that rather than DOING THE WORK involved in preparing submissions [Objections] etc, Association members with an interest in City Planning Issues should focus upon providing the online and other resources to affected parties, so that the AFFECTED PARTIES are equipped to take appropriate action.

These online resources can be made available to our members via several channels including:

- Letters to Association Members and Carlton citizens [see sample letter attached]
- Regular HOW TO columns in the Association's digital and hard copy communications, and through the
- Inclusion of relevant information on the Association's website.

Finally, while we strongly recommend the adoption of the SELF-HELP model, this does not mean that the full CRA Committee will never engage in advocacy concerning issues identified as being critically important to the Carlton Community. However, in these situations, we believe that the FULL Committee must not only take responsibility for any action, but find the resources to facilitate a meaningful response.

Warren Green, Clive Miller and Ewan Ogilvy

5 March 2019



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Subject: Carlton Planning Enquiry

Thank you for your recent communication concerning

Just now, because of the Association's limited resources, we are not able to provide a detailed response to your enquiry. However, in our experience, there are a many online resources that could help you to understand the issue more clearly. Depending upon the nature of your enquiry, we would encourage you to check out some of the following sites.

The Maps Melbourne website: <http://maps.melbourne.vic.gov.au/index.html>

This website is often a good starting point, it provides very useful maps of that area of Carlton you are most interested in, plus details of any recent [and new] Planning Permits for particular sites. This website also notes the key planning controls that apply to particular sites; and it often also includes recent photographs of any building(s) on the site of interest to you.

City of Melbourne Planning Permits Register: <https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/building-and-development/property-information/planning-building-registers/Pages/town-planning-permits-register.aspx>

If the Maps Melbourne website reveals that there is a current development proposal for the site of interest to you, this Register will enable you to track the progress of the Planning Application. If and when an Application is advertised, this is the site that will provide the plans and other details of the development. These details are available for a limited time as PDF files [for download]. The Register also provides the name of the Council Officer handling the Application.

The Land Channel Website: <http://services.land.vic.gov.au/maps/interactive.jsp>

This State Government website also provides useful maps, and more importantly, brief Planning Reports which summarise the major Planning Controls affecting any site of interest to you.

The Melbourne Planning Scheme: <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/schemes/melbourne>

If you require even more detail about particular Planning Controls and Policies, this is the site that provides this information. At this site you may download relevant Planning Control Maps and the various Ordinance Clauses that are of interest to you.

The Participate Melbourne website: <https://participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/>

If you've heard that there is a new Planning initiative for your area [eg a new Policy Initiative or Planning Scheme Amendment] this site will provide you with details of any opportunities for you to comment.

The Council Meetings website: <https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/about-council/committees-meetings/Pages/committees-meetings.aspx>

This site provides the details of any matters [planning included] that have been, or will be discussed in Committee and full Council Meetings. For past meetings, you may download the Minutes of Meetings, and for future Meetings, you may download Agendas and detailed reports for the items listed for discussion.

We do hope that you find one or more of these websites useful. If you're having difficulty finding the information you need, do ring any officer contacts provided on the website, in the first instance. If officer contacts are unavailable or cannot help, do get back to us again, and we'll try to assist.

Best wishes, Peter Justice [for the Association]

