



Inner South Canberra Community Council

CHAIR'S REPORT

Annual General Meeting 10 November 2020

1. Introduction

This year the Inner South Canberra Community Council (ISCCC) celebrates its tenth anniversary since it was established in July 2010 to represent and promote the interests of the residents of Inner South Canberra. Unlike most other Community Councils in Canberra, our Council is a 'peak' body for Inner South suburban residents groups. Our focus has always been to complement, rather than duplicate, the role of these associations, and to focus our energies on matters of common interest to Inner South Canberra as a whole.

2. Highlights of the past year

2.1 Community engagement and communication

Expanding our communication with, and gaining a better understanding of the views of, inner south residents, were major highlights of 2019-20. The ISCCC's biggest project was our online survey in late 2019-early 2020 which sought the views of inner south residents on what they value about their local area, suburb or the inner south generally, what they would like to change, or to be protected, to make it a better place to live. This survey was conducted in the context of the Planning Review to enable the ISCCC to have an evidence-based approach to advocacy to the ACT Government in relation to the Planning Review.

The ISCCC letterboxed a hardcopy newsletter to all inner south households in November 2019 (covering about 28,000 people) to inform them of the survey, and a total of 555 people responded (about 2 percent). The final survey report is on the ISCCC website at:

<https://www.isccc.org.au/final-report-on-isccc-online-community-survey-2019-20>

However, the purpose of the newsletter was not only to let residents know about the ISCCC's online survey, but also to inform inner south residents of the activities of the ISCCC, of their local residents groups, about these groups' forthcoming AGMs, and how to contact them. We are just completing now the letterboxing of our latest 2020 ISCCC newsletter to inner south households.

In the past year, the ISCCC has expanded its social media presence, with Facebook followers nearly doubling, from 330 a year ago to 624 now, and Twitter followers increasing to over 1,100.

While the COVID pandemic put a temporary end to our face-to-face public forums, we transitioned quickly to Zoom committee meetings and then held the ISCCC's first Zoom public forum on 26 May 2020. We went one step further on 20 September 2020 by holding a combined face-to-face and Facebook live-streamed 2020 ACT election candidates forum in partnership with Region Media's Riot-ACT. While COVID restrictions allowed us to register only about 80 participants for the face-to-face forum, the live-streaming through Riot-ACT's Facebook page turbocharged our reach, with the forum viewed over 13,000 times on Facebook at the time of writing.

We were also pleased to support the Oaks Estate community as they established a new Oaks Estate Residents Association, which is now a member group of the ISCCC.

In cooperation with member residents groups, we held joint forums and promoted events through e-newsletters, social media and noticeboards. Several residents groups letterbox hardcopy newsletters to all households in their suburbs regularly, for example Yarralumla Residents Association, Griffith Narrabundah Community Association and Old Narrabundah Community Council. Others use social media actively as a communication medium, for example, the Kingston and Barton Residents Group has more than 1200 Instagram followers and nearly 500 Facebook followers. All of the groups use emails as needed to communicate with their members. The ISCCC also sends a regular e-newsletter to all those on our email list.

2.2 Planning and development

Planning and development issues continued to occupy much time at ISCCC public forums and in submissions and other activities during the year. The ISCCC is disappointed that after all the community engagement on the Housing Choices process, Draft Variation 369 to the Territory Plan, which is intended to protect/increase living infrastructure in residential zones, has been put on hold pending the Government's current Planning Review. Indeed, the broader Planning Review itself slowed right down after the stakeholder workshops in May 2019 to co-design the community engagement process, and this was even before the advent of the COVID pandemic.

2.3 Fyshwick waste facilities

A continuing major issue for the ISCCC is proposals for huge waste facilities in Fyshwick, including within a few hundred metres of inner south residents' homes. The ISCCC contends that locating such major waste facilities in Fyshwick is inappropriate in the context of plans for high-density residential development in the neighbouring Eastlake precinct and mixed residential/commercial development in the Dairy Road precinct. Given the amount of waste proposed to be processed there, far in excess of what is produced in the ACT, it will also make the ACT a major destination for other jurisdictions' metropolitan waste, undermining the "proximity principle" of processing waste near where it is produced.

2.4 Community Panels

The ISCCC and member groups continued to participate in the Canberra Brickworks and the Kingston Arts Precinct Community Panels. The latter community panel has struck major issues in terms of what is regarded by inner south residents groups as inconsistency between what is proposed by the developer and what was proposed in the 2014 masterplan and in conservation management plans.

2.5 Auspicing Forrest Residents Group Heritage Grant

The ISCCC is pleased to support the Forrest Residents Group, an unincorporated residents group, by auspicing an ACT Government heritage grant on its behalf. The purpose of the grant is to restore ten 1920s street signs in the heritage listed Forrest Housing Precinct Blandfordia 4 and Blandfordia 5.

3. Council Meetings/Forums

The Council's meetings have been open to the public (except the Zoom committee meetings) and the public forums have been advertised variously by broadcast emails, on Twitter, on Facebook, on radio, in newspaper articles, on the ISCCC website and in the ISCCC newsletter. The number listed below of guests attending our public forums is likely to understate actual numbers as many attendees, before we transitioned to operating in a COVID-safe manner, chose not to sign the attendance registers.

Issues that our meetings focussed on in 2019-2020 included:

- Phasing out of single use plastics
- Redevelopment of Gowrie Court, Narrabundah
- Development of the Kingston Arts Precinct, and Dairy Road Precinct
- Climate change, living infrastructure, green space/trees on residential blocks
- The ACT Government review of planning
- The new Action Bus network and update on light rail
- Narrabundah College modernisation process

- ISCCC Online Survey results
- Future priorities
- Proposed Fyshwick Waste Facilities
- Candidates forum prior to ACT 2020 elections

Highlights of the public forums hosted by the ISCCC can be found at <https://www.isccc.org.au/category/minutes>.

Date/Time	Location	Number attending	Key Agenda Item, guest speaker etc.
9 July 2019 7pm	Griffith Neighbourhood Centre	43	Joint ISCCC/Griffith Narrabundah Community Association Public Forum: Phasing out of single use plastics (ACT Government TCCS speakers) and redevelopment of Gowrie Court site Narrabundah (Amalgamated Property Group speakers)
13 Aug 2019, 7pm	Eastlake Football Club	20	Committee meeting General Business
10 Sep 2019, 7pm	East Hotel	14	Committee meeting General Business
22 Sep 2019, 7pm	Eastlake Football Club	84	Joint ISCCC/Kingston and Barton Residents Group (KBRG) Public Forum on Kingston Arts Precinct (speakers: Geocon, Canberra District Historical Society, Glassworks, Old Bus Depot Markets, KBRG). Update on Dairy Road Precinct (Speakers: Molonglo Group)
8 October 2019, 7pm	Eastlake Football Club	47	Public Forum on Climate Change and Living Infrastructure (Speakers: ACT Climate Change and Sustainability Minister), National Capital Authority's Tree Management Policy Issues Paper (speakers from NCA including CEO), and independent perspective on these issues (ANU Forestry Professor).
12 Nov 2019, 7pm	Eastlake Football Club	37	Public Meeting and AGM Briefing on ISCCC Online Survey. Update on current ACT Government Review of Planning. TCCS update on new bus network. Narrabundah College Modernisation Process (College reps) Business of AGM
10 Dec 2019, 7pm	Eastlake Football Club	16	Committee Meeting General Business
11 Feb 2020, 7pm	Eastlake Football Club	43	New rules for green space and trees for residential blocks and update on light rail (ACT Govt speakers: Climate Change and Sustainability Minister, officials from EPSDD and Major Projects Canberra, and President, Griffith Narrabundah Community Association)
10 March 2020, 7pm	Eastlake Football Club	16	Committee Meeting General Business
14 April 2020, 7pm	Zoom Online	15	Committee Meeting General Business
12 May 2020, 7pm	Zoom Online	14	Committee Meeting General Business
26 May 2020, 7pm	Zoom Online	35	Public Forum on ISCCC Online survey results and proposed Fyshwick Waste Facilities (Speakers: Chair ISCCC and other ISCCC committee members from Griffith Narrabundah Community Association and Kingston and Barton Residents Group)
9 June 2020, 7pm	Zoom Online	16	Committee Meeting General Business
14 July 2020, 7pm	Zoom Online	21	Meeting with Fyshwick Business Association
11 August 2020, 7pm	Zoom Online	16	Committee Meeting General Business

Date/Time	Location	Number attending	Key Agenda Item, guest speaker etc.
8 Sept 2020, 7pm	Zoom Online	13	Committee Meeting General Business
20 Sept 2020, 4pm	Live streamed from Harmonie-German Club	80 in person. >13,000 views on Facebook	"Politics in the Pub" 2020 ACT Election Candidates Forum
13 Oct 2020, 7pm	Zoom Online	14	Committee Meeting General Business

In addition, member Residents Groups have held suburban meetings as and when required. The ISCCC provides some funding, sourced from its government grant, to assist them with communication activities.

4. Other

ISCCC committee members have participated in other recent initiatives and meetings, including: meetings of the Combined Community Councils, participation in the ACT Environment and Planning Forum (although the EPF was abolished for six months from August 2019-February 2020), and Community Panels for the Canberra Brickworks and the Kingston Arts Precinct.

The ISCCC lodged submissions/major correspondence on these and other issues during 2019-20:

- Submission in response to EPBC Referral 2019/8491 re-Commonwealth Park to Woden Light Rail Project (July 2019)
- Submission on Building and Construction Legislation Amendment Bill 2019 (Nov 2019)
- Letter to Ministers Gentleman, Rattenbury, Ramsay, Steel and Stephen-Smith, copied to opposition MLAs, highlighting key issues with respect to the Kingston Arts Precinct (Nov 2019)
- Submission on Review of Tree Protection Act (Dec 2019)
- Submission on Works approval application: Phase 2 Boardwalk and Land Reclamation, Block 23 Section 33 Acton (May 2020)
- Submission on Draft Variation 369 – Living Infrastructure in residential zones (May 2020)
- Submission on Draft Amendment to the National Capital Plan on North Curtin diplomatic and residential estates (early July 2020)
- Letter to Chief Planner EPSDD re-proposed metal fragmentising facility in Fyshwick (August 2020)
- Objection to the Environmental Impact Statement for the massive proposed Hi-Quality waste processing facility in Tennant Street, Fyshwick (September 2020)
- Submission on Draft Variation 377 concerning a proposed change in zoning of land at 1 Dairy Road, Fyshwick (September 2020)

5. Future Directions

The results of the ISCCC's online survey will help to steer our future direction.

It is clear already that inner south residents value highly the treescapes and open green spaces in their suburbs. That suggests future ISCCC advocacy on our urban forest and public realm and collaboration with the Government and other stakeholders with respect to implementation of the Government's Living Infrastructure Plan.

It is also clear that inner south residents want to be consulted on new development or redevelopment that occurs on neighbouring or nearby properties. This and other findings from our survey will guide the ISCCC's advocacy in response to the current Planning Review.

The ISCCC will also continue to engage with the ACT Government in relation to the proposed Fyshwick waste facilities, which have generated major community concern, and in relation to Light Rail Stage 2, bus network and other transport issues.

We will continue to seek good outcomes in urban renewal in cooperation with member groups in particular precincts, for example through participation in the Canberra Brickworks and Kingston Arts Precinct community panels.

It is also important that the ISCCC and member residents groups continue to build capacity to reach out and engage with inner south residents and the broader community, including the more disadvantaged and vulnerable members of our community.

6. Thanks

I would like to thank my fellow ISCCC committee members for their support and valuable contributions to our work over the past year, and over many years. Many of our committee members also have responsibilities as officeholders in residents groups and I thank those residents' groups also for their continuing support. Their active and ongoing participation is critical to the success of the ISCCC.

We are very sorry that our Public Relations Officer, Sonia Owens, is not renominating for that role on the Committee. She has done a fantastic job, especially on a couple of our biggest events in the past 18 months – the 'Politics in the Pub' candidates forums before both the federal election in 2019, and the ACT election in October 2020. We wish her all the best.

I would like to thank also other volunteers who have assisted the ISCCC in the past year, including Barbara Moore and Carol Russell and other volunteers who have done an enormous amount of work on Fyshwick waste issues; Richard Johnstone who assisted the ISCCC on several planning issues; Sue Ross who reviewed the ISCCC's annual financial statements; and volunteers who helped the ISCCC letterbox our annual newsletter across the inner south. We can only operate effectively as a Community Council through the good will of all those who give up their time to contribute to their local community.

Thanks go also to Kingston resident John Mitchell, publisher of free newspaper The Eastlaker for two years until April 2020, for bringing important local issues to the attention of inner south residents. Each issue of The Eastlaker incorporated updates from the ISCCC and suburban residents groups.

Finally, thanks to the Eastlake Football Club and Harmonie-German Club for providing the ISCCC with free access to functions rooms for our committee meetings and public forums, and also to Region Media Group and Genevieve Jacobs for hosting and live-streaming the ISCCC's recent election candidates forum on their Facebook page. We have really appreciated that support.

Having served for over three years as Chair, and in view of current illness of an aged parent, I am not nominating for the Committee Chair role in the ISCCC Committee elections. It has been an incredible pleasure for me to serve the inner south community and I hope to continue serving in another capacity on the committee.

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Chair
Inner South Canberra Community Council