



Inner South Canberra Community Council

Draft Record Public Forum

Tuesday, 13 June 2023 at 7pm

Online (Zoom)

1. Welcome: Marea Fatseas, ISCCC Chair

The Chair welcomed attendees. She acknowledged the traditional custodians of the land on which the meeting was held and their elders past, present and emerging.

There were 36 attendees. Apologies were received from Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA, Emma Davidson MLA, Rebecca Vassarotti MLA, Jo Clay MLA, Tara Cheyne MLA, Dr John Bell (Deakin Residents Association).

In light of the topic, the Chair had approached the United Ngunnawal Elders Council about attending but may have not given sufficient notice and had not heard back. It was noted that at some point it would be good to have a representative of Ngunnawal or other traditional custodians to attend one of our meetings and give us an insight into some of their interests and concerns including land management.

The first segment of the meeting will focus on the ACT Government's draft Urban Open Space Land Management Plan including:

- a presentation on the Plan from Daniel Iglesias, Executive Branch Manager, City Presentations, Transport and City Services Directorate.
- Hearing perspectives of residents' groups on open space issues
- Q&A and discussion

The second segment will be an update on the Planning Bill and next steps in the Planning Review.

2. The ACT Government's draft Urban Open Space Land Management Plan

- Daniel Iglesias spoke to his presentation (see attached)
- Old Narrabundah Community Council Inc. (ONCC) briefed the meeting on the extensive work undertaken by volunteers in relation to Narrabundah Sports Ground adjacent to Narrabundah Early Childhood School. After years of negotiations with the school and bureaucrats, the proposal did not get through the ministers. The oval now stands as a low use oval. There is a caution that proposals regarding land management including ovals are challenging and need political approval as well as approval at the bureaucrat level in addition to consultation with numerous stakeholders.
- Old Narrabundah Community Council Inc raised the connection between Narrabundah Wetlands and the Jerrabomberra Wetlands. There is a poor crossing with Canberra Avenue to get from one wetland to the other wetlands. ONCC is encouraging a link between the two.
 - Daniel advised that he would like to hear more about the proposal with an emphasis on joining from the Narrabundah side.
- Kingston and Barton Residents Group (KBRG) mentioned the previous funding allocated to the upgrade of Telopea Park.
 - Daniel advised us to wait for the upcoming Budget.
- KBRG also advocated for a natural water course to replace the stormwater drain through the park.

- Daniel advised that there was a limit to money available and reminded the group that he was not the decision maker.
- KBRG raised the issue of illegal parking particularly the damage in heritage areas.
 - Daniel advised that he would be interested in photographic evidence, particularly in relation to Kingston Oval, Griffith.
- Deputy Chair, on behalf of residents in Narrabundah (heights), raised the long running issue of flooding in Sprent Street Park and surrounds due to increasing storm water runoff events. Apparently the latest plan is to remove 27 mature trees, relocate the playground to higher ground and construct a “retarding basin” in the park. However, the neighbours of the park believe the proposed solution will have serious detrimental consequences.
 - Daniel stated that he was not aware of the issue and committed to investigate.

Other points in Q and A and discussion

- There were complaints about the survey on the Draft Urban Open Space Management Plan not asking enough specific questions before going to an open question asking respondents if they supported the Plan as a whole.
 - Daniel undertook to take it up with the Communications Team.
- The Heritage Council is considered a key stakeholder, but they are not specifically required under legislation to be consulted, but in practice they always are.
- Nature reserves are excluded from the plan. Callum Brae is part of a Nature Reserve and does not come under the plan.
- The importance of community gardens and the availability of grants was raised.
 - Daniel agreed to check on the availability of Community Grants in response to an inquiry from the Narrabundah Community Garden.
- The importance of the West Basin as recreation area was highlighted. High rise will degrade green space and with the Urban Heat Island effect will make this area too hot to be enjoyed by visitors during the summer months once the El Nino weather pattern returns.
 - In the city near Acton, near the ANU, Daniel advised that there is planning to develop a new park, a new riverside park at Acton. But there are also plans to develop a future residential precinct behind that park.
- The new Planning Act retains those bits of the old act that require a land manager to develop a land management plan. The Act details how that happens quite prescriptively.
- The importance of DV369 in residential areas was raised.
 - Daniel acknowledged that there was a need to replace dying exotic trees in the non-park areas. The draft Urban Open Space Management Plan covers that to some extent, covers laneways, covers nature strips. It covers little corners on streets (Streetscapes). It doesn't cover people's private leases, nor does it have a view as to what percentage of the lease should be given over for green space. There is only so much contribution that can be made by the Urban Open Space Management Plan.
- Severely degraded verges, Illegal Parking around Manuka Oval and along Canberra Avenue was raised. The need for resources to police the problem was highlighted. Complaints with measurable evidence were required.
- Details about dry land ovals will be put up on the TCCS website
- ACT Roads needs to work closely in relation to Urban Open Space, e.g., the cycle network goes through Urban Open Space
- The importance of maintaining habitat for native wildlife
- The importance of the EPBC Act
- Weed control has been difficult to keep on top of by the ACT Government due to resourcing. African Love Grass is difficult to eradicate. It is best sprayed.
- Regarding mowing policy, over the next 3 months areas are being explored to leave some segments of larger open urban areas to go to seed and allow bees, ground feeding birds (“rewilding”). Groups are invited to let Daniel know of any segments.

3. Update on the Planning Bill and next steps in the Planning Review-Marea Fatseas

Marea provided a brief perspective on some key amendments made to the Planning Bill, and what she was advised by Rachel Stephen-Smith and Jo Clay about timeframes for next steps in the Planning Review. See the attached paper.

Discussion points included:

- Territory priority projects (TPPs) include social housing, and that can be determined by the Chief Minister and the Minister for Planning, but now they are a disallowable instrument. When they announce a Territory Priority project, there's an opportunity to comment on that. Territory priority projects are likely to become a big area of focus.
- The issue of the treatment of mixed use developments was queried - whether the whole development would be a Territory priority.
- The issue of leasehold land was raised and whether it could be moved to a freehold system. It was advised that it most probably could not be changed because of the Commonwealth interest in the Land as Canberra was established as the National Capital.
- The precedence of the Heritage Act over the Planning Act was discussed. It was suggested that this came down to how the legislation was drafted. The Planning Act is so vague. If the Heritage Act is tightly targeted it may take precedence.

4. Other Business

- Red Hill Residents Group and Deakin Residents Group have expressed interest in attending the public consultations about the proposed retirement village at Federal Golf Course. They are now planning to have the entrance from Kitchener Street in Hughes. There will be a Public Consultation on 28 June from 05:30 p.m. at the golf club. There are also online sessions available.
- On Friday 9 June, Marea had a Zoom meeting with someone from the ACT Government Office of Seniors and Veterans and they were keen to engage the ISCCC re the implementation of the Age Friendly City plan. Information was included in the recent ISCCC e-Newsletter.

Meeting closed 9.00pm