

## Northbridge Progress Association Inc

Minutes of General Meeting held at St Marks Hall, Northbridge  
on Wednesday, July 21 2010 commencing at 8.05pm

**Attendance:** 35 members and guests

**Quorum:** The President noted that a quorum was present.

**Apologies:** Pam Clifford, Susan Peake, David Synnott, Shirley and Peter Wilson, Freda Banner, Peter McLachlan, Susan McNair.

**Welcome:** The President welcomed Gladys Berejiklian MP, Ward Councillors John Hooper and Gail Giles-Gidney, guest speakers Paul Storm and Steven Head, and other members and visitors.

### Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the General Meeting held on May 12 2010 were tabled by the President who noted that they had also been available on the Association's website for more than two months. **RESOLVED** that the minutes are confirmed.

### Reports from Ward Councillors

- Cr Gail Giles-Gidney reported that Council had received 1000 letters from Willoughby residents in regard to the draft WLEP. She would oppose increased density on Northbridge peninsula. She noted that NSW Government had imposed a requirement for 6800 new dwellings in Willoughby Local Government Area (LGA) by 2031 and that Council needed to best allocate them. She reported that Council's new outdoor smoking policy had been adopted by Council. It will be introduced in stages but ultimately smoking will be prohibited in Council sites such as Clive Park and Northbridge Plaza car park. Footpath cafes in Northbridge have also cooperated in banning smoking. Council's new policy on tree vandalism will be exhibited shortly.  
Cr Giles-Gidney reported that a meeting of Northern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (NSROC) has identified a need to manage sporting facilities across all sports within the LGA's covered by NSROC. The NSROC report showed that the top three sports by participation are soccer, tennis and golf. There is also a need for areas to exercise the region's 100,000 pet dogs.
- Cr John Hooper reported that during the first four months of operation of the new Northbridge Library, 81 new members had joined the Library. On an average day 72 people visited the library and borrowed 164 items. He reported on his two onsite meetings with residents to review the new pedestrian/cyclist refuge in Strathallen Ave at Baringa Rd. Council Officers are now preparing a report to consider improvements to the refuge.  
Cr Hooper stated that he will strongly oppose any rezoning of Northbridge peninsula east of the Town Centre along Sailors Bay Rd. He said that Mayor Pat Reilly had given his support to the protection of the peninsulas. Cr Hooper said

that, if higher density rezoning is to be forced on Northbridge, it should be limited to medium density rezoning along main roads; close to amenities such as transport and shops and where existing low density dwellings are already under stress. In response to questions about the draft WLEP, Cr Hooper said that parts of Eastern Valley Way would be more appropriate for medium density. He said he believed Sailors Bay Rd between Strathallen Ave and Alpha Rd met his criteria for medium rezoning. However, he reassured members that Council has not made any decision about rezoning. A report will come to Council later in 2010 and a new WLEP is unlikely to be finalised until end-2011, after the March 2011 State election.

### **Remarks by local State member**

Gladys Berejiklian MP said that a Coalition government, if elected in March 2011, would completely review the present government's planning legislation. She feels very strongly that LEPs should be a matter between local Councils and their communities. She said that population increase was inevitable and that governments must plan better. In the case of Northbridge, she noted that once the character of the suburb changes, it would "be the thin end of the wedge" and the suburb would continue to change. She commented that all Willoughby suburbs were impacted by the State government's planning laws and she undertook to do what she can to alleviate the situation if the Coalition gains office.

### **Aspects of history in and around Willoughby**

Paul Storm, President of the Willoughby District Historical Society, gave an intriguing and entertaining talk about the history of Willoughby and nearby areas. Using numerous artifacts and items from the late 1880s and early 1900s, he pointed out examples of early workmanship and Australiana.

### **Traffic and parking in Northbridge**

Council's Infrastructure Services Director, Steven Head, gave a talk on traffic and parking in Northbridge. Using a Powerpoint presentation with charts, Steven said that daily traffic levels on major roads through Northbridge have remained fairly static from 1996 to 2006 but there may have been a lengthening of peak traffic periods. He showed a chart showing Sailors Bay Rd with volumes up to 835 vehicles per hour when volumes of 500 vehicles per hour are the maximum considered acceptable. He said that Eastern Valley Way carries 2000 vehicles per hour. He noted that the increase in density proposed by the draft WLEP would add about 106 vehicles per hour to Northbridge roads which would "be considered inconsequential from the RTA's viewpoint".

Steven said that Council is currently carrying out a Parking Strategy for the LGA, focusing initially on Naremburn/St Leonards; approaches adopted there will be adapted for other areas of the LGA. He said that the number of private vehicles in Sydney is growing at twice the rate of population growth. Northbridge has a higher car ownership rate than any other suburb in the Willoughby LGA. In 2006, 50% of journeys to work by Northbridge residents were by car and more are driving alone than in 1991. Journeys by public transport have also increased but not as much as by car.

In response to questions, Steven said that there would be a need for a traffic plan for Northbridge if the draft WLEP rezoning proposals went ahead. He noted that traffic studies are very costly and that it was not practical to carry out studies before developing the draft WLEP. He agreed with one member's comment that Council's most recent statistics were for 2006 and that traffic had increased substantially in the past two years. He also agreed with a member who said that the increase in cars in Northbridge was caused not by more dwellings but by more families with children moving into the suburb. A resident commented that cars were not the only problem; the proliferation of buses also caused serious congestion. Gladys Berejikian said that there was an urgent need for more rail services in Sydney. Investment by Government in rail had been inadequate and buses had been used to fill the gap.

**Next general meeting**

The President advised that the next general meeting would be held on Wednesday September 29 at 8.00pm. Guest speakers would be advised.

The President closed the meeting at 9.55pm and members joined in refreshments. Paul Storm entertained members by talking about other historical artifacts on display.

Chairman: ..... Date: .....