

Northbridge Progress Association Inc

Minutes of the General Meeting held at St Marks Hall, Malacoota Rd, Northbridge on Wednesday May 13 2009 at 8.10pm

Present: 34 members and visitors.

Apologies: Peter McNair, John Lightfoot, John Becroft, Martin McCurrich, Michael Conder

Welcome

The chairman, Vice-president Ron Hicks, welcomed visitors, including:

- Councillors John Hooper, Gail Giles-Gidney, Adrian Cox
- Guest speaker Steven Head, Council's Infrastructure Director

Previous minutes

The chairman noted that the minutes from the general meeting held on February 25 2009 had been posted on the Internet for several weeks. **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the general meeting held on February 25 2009 are confirmed and can be signed by the chair.

Approval of membership applications

The chairman explained that, under Rule 10 of the Association, any application for membership must be approved by the Committee after which the names of applicants must then be declared at a general meeting of members, when those applicants then become members of the Association. He noted that the Register of members and new applicants for membership was approved at the Association's last Committee meeting and the Public Officer had a copy available. **RESOLVED** that this meeting hereby declares for membership of the Association the names appearing in the Register produced to this meeting with effect from the date of the first entry of the name into the Register.

Northbridge Neighbourhood Watch

The Chairman closed the general meeting at 8.10pm for the Annual General Meeting of Northbridge Neighbourhood Watch and reopened it at 8.25pm.

Northbridge Park Masterplan

- Guest speaker Steven Head said that Northbridge Park was the largest open space in Willoughby, and had many competing uses. The Masterplan would provide a framework for future planning and management of the park. The Masterplan was mainly concerned with the upper part of the park including the buildings in the north-west corner; the oval and its sporting facilities; the upper part of the golf course, the clubhouse and car park; the War Memorial reserve; and the tennis courts, BMX track and Mens' Shed.
- To date, the Masterplan process had included a survey of the main user groups and subsequent consultation with them. An issues paper was currently being prepared from which a report and recommendations would be written.

- Mr Head noted that the park has strong support from the community but that some areas are struggling to meet needs. There were long term opportunities to improve the park. These might include rationalisation of buildings in the north-west corner, more resilient surfaces on the oval, walking links through the areas, improvement of the “no man’s land” near the first fairway, improvements to the Golf Club car park, landscaping around the War Memorial area, picnic and barbecue facilities near the Mens’ Shed and designated pathways through the park. He said that usage of the tennis courts had reduced and there may be a better recreational use for the space. None of the opportunities had yet been agreed.
- In response to questions, Mr Head said that community views were divided about the BMX track but that it did provide an activity for young people. He agreed that parking for the Mens’ Shed was a big problem. He agreed that Roche Park was now isolated and that access could be improved. In regard to \$150,000 in Council’s 2009/10 budget for two training football fields on the first fairway of the golf course, he said that there was no authority from Council for them and the amount will probably disappear from the budget. He agreed that signage around the park could be improved.
- Mr Head expected that a report would be presented to Council’s Cultural & Environment Committee, possibly in June. It would then be exhibited for at least one month for comment by residents. A final Masterplan would be adopted by Council towards the end of 2009 and priority items would be included in the 2011/12 budget. Issues such as rationalisation of the buildings in the north-west corner could take several years to resolve.
- In regard to the problem of golf balls being hit into the Public School and oval, Cr Hooper said that he understood that the Golf Club Board would be considering a proposal for higher fences costing about \$40,000.
- In response to a question about Council finances, Mr Head and Cr Hooper said that Council had some exposure to the Global Financial Crisis but the impact is only about half the average of NSW Councils. Nevertheless, income will be reduced and Council was facing a very difficult time.

Reports from Ward Councillors

- Cr Gail Giles-Gidney thanked Northbridge residents for their support in the recent by-election. She had attended her first Council meeting and held a meeting with Council Directors. She mentioned that the right hand turn at Edinburgh Rd would be a priority for her. The new Complying Development Codes would be a challenge for residents as they took DA approval responsibility away from Council and effectively prevented objections by neighbours.
- Cr Adrian Cox re-iterated that Council’s financial position was relatively good. He noted that the Complying Development Codes were more lenient than Council’s LEP and DCP controls.
- Cr John Hooper said that he would be moving a motion in Council providing no parking for longer than 24 hours for boat trailers within 150 metres of boat ramps. He asked for community feedback.

Other Northbridge issues

- The chairman noted that two car parking spaces had been removed from Harden Ave because of RTA regulations but that the new No Parking sign had since been removed.
- Cr Hooper said that the developer of the proposed Cliff Ave seniors' living units had appealed to the Land & Environment Court but had submitted plans for 14 units, rather than the eight units considered and rejected by Council. The Court had accepted the changed plans but awarded Council about \$11,000 in costs. The new plans would be re-notified by Council for community comment.
- In response to a question, the secretary noted that the company that owned Northbridge Hotel was said to be in receivership.
- Grant Sheldon noted that No Stopping signs had been erected along the north side of Sailors Bay Rd outside the Plaza.
- In reply to a question about abandoned shopping trolleys, Steven Head explained that Council was impounding trolleys and later auctioning them but that Wardens had difficulty keeping up with the problem.

Next general meeting

The next general meeting of NPA will be at 8pm on Wednesday July 22 2009 at St Marks Hall. The speaker would be announced in *The 202* newsletter.

The chairman closed the meeting at 9.50pm. Refreshments were provided.

Chairman

Date