



Newsflash

June 2006

'Save Our Suburbs' is an ongoing catchcry. You will recall the CRA objection to an application to partially demolish "Shakahari" in Faraday St and develop a 3 storey building for use as 4 apartments, a restaurant, an office, and the usual waiving of car parking requirements. The owner recently withdrew his application to a Directions Hearing at VCAT one day prior to the hearing, having "decided not to undertake development of the site at this time."

262-276 Drummond Street

22 objections were lodged against a proposal for partial demolition and construction of two new levels to the existing commercial building, construction of 60 residential apartments and partial waiver of car parking requirements. MCC planners recommended extensive modifications to bulk, amenity and the removal of the proposed top (fourth) storey. But City Councillors, overruling their own planners, passed the application with minor amendments. CRA's planning sub-committee lodged an appeal at VCAT. Our main issues are:

- the proposal is an overdevelopment of the site,
- it exceeds heritage overlay and mandatory height limit for the area (DDO48)
- there is no commensurate improvement of the amenity or urban character of the area.
- insufficient parking is provided for the proposed occupancy
- cause severe loss of amenity to neighbouring properties through overshadowing and loss of privacy.

'Evolve Developers' (Lloyd Williams & Ron Walker) have counter applied for reinstatement of the minimal amendments required by Councillors. Progress of the above, or any application before Council, can be followed by accessing the City of Melbourne web site www.melbourne.vic.gov.au, selecting "Building, Planning & Your Property", and following the links to 'Permits online – iCompas'.

Melbourne 2030 – Planning backlash

Developers are taking advantage of the Bracks Government's highly controversial planning blueprint, Melbourne 2030, which usurps public land and community amenity. Additionally, Planning Minister Hulls is taking planning authority away from Councils. Angry representatives from more than 60 residents' groups from Victoria's suburbs and regional centres met recently to formulate an action plan to protect residents. Of particular concern is the Bracks Government and VCAT decisions which continue to hand over scarce public land to developers. The groups voted to band together, so the Government will hear their message "loud and clear". A working group **Planning Backlash** was formed to further develop an action plan.

Issues highlighted at a public rally on the steps of Parliament House on 3rd May, as the first in a series of actions, are:

- necessity for a major review of the Melbourne 2030
- amendments to the planning scheme
- local councils to have greater planning controls
- scrap the Priority Development Panel (an advisory panel to Minister Hulls)

This is particularly relevant to Carlton where the Bracks Government plans to hand over four hectares of immensely valuable Public Housing Estate land to a \$200m private development of 550 units, in the name of Melbourne 2030 policy. The policy also justifies the 262 Drummond St overdevelopment above.

Public Housing Redevelopment

You will recall Newsflash Feb 2006 where plans for the redevelopment were outlined. At a recent CLAN meeting Garry Byass (Manager, Redevelopment Projects – Office of Housing) was asked to comment on the loss of public land. He stated categorically that this land belongs to the government, not the people!!

A CLAN proposal that the Housing Estate become a “community development” site (as successfully instituted in Richmond and Collingwood) which provides employment and establishes community, received a negative response. “Carlton is not a community development area!” said Mr. Byass. Infrastructure concerns, e.g. *Safeway* in Lygon Court which serves an ever-increasing population (currently 10,000) will not be addressed. A Community Consultative group is to be established to provide community input. Cynicism, based on past experience, suggests the Government will ignore such input but claim to have consulted.

Centrally located Community Centre/Branch Library/Resource Centre

CRA continues to lobby Melbourne City Council for this much needed facility in central Carlton, as foreshadowed in *Carlton 2010* deliberations. This proposal is supported by the Carlton business community. Committee representatives met with individual Councillors and argued that the Centre be financed in the 2006-2009 budget period. We were very pleased to gain active support of Crs Brian Shanahan, Fraser Brindley, David Wilson and Fiona Snedden. Lord Mayor So, Crs Gary Singer and Katherine Ng expressed being in favour, however budget concerns, greater needs of other suburbs etc. have priority. **Our counter – basic essential community needs should enjoy priority over questionable projects** such as the \$45m donation towards the Convention Centre redevelopment and \$750,000 annually for the largely unused “free” tourist shuttle bus.

CRA and business groups are strongly opposed to a proposal by Council staff that a Community Centre/Library for Carlton be based within the Public Housing Redevelopment, on the rationale of expediency. Such a location would in no way satisfy the community need for public, accessible, properly resourced space which we have identified and raised so often with the MCC over many years. Any Carlton Community Centre must be centrally located, readily accessible to all Carlton residents and businesses, and not embedded in the public housing precinct, merely because this presents opportunistic cost saving.

The World Heritage listed Carlton Gardens / Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show

Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show (MIFGS) has again inflicted massive and unacceptable damage on the century-old Carlton Gardens. With some exhibits weighing up to 60 tonnes (“Time Stands Still” by John Middleton) the destruction of lawns and compaction of soil will ensure the southern Gardens remain in a state of disrepair for the remainder of the year and beyond. There is an orchestrated campaign under way by MIFGS to flood our City Councillors with letters and emails from self-interested commercial participants in the Show, to proclaim Carlton Gardens as its natural and only venue. Claims that the Show will fold if not held in the Gardens is a tactic aimed at Lord Mayor So, who is very sympathetic to commercial events on our parklands.

CRA has demanded that Council say an unequivocal *no* to further MIFGS in Carlton Gardens. The Melbourne Showground is the purpose built venue for such events.

Greta Bird

President

Coming Events

CRA General Meeting “Greening Carlton” Monday, 29th May, 2006 Kathleen Syme Building
Cnr Faraday & Cardigan Streets Carlton Time: Business 7.30pm Speakers 8.00pm

PCCC Street Party Sunday June 4th 2006 1pm-4pm Drummond St Carlton (btwn Elgin & Faraday Sts)
Free BBQ, African food, jumping castle for kids, music, drinks, tour of Carlton Police Station, henna painting, entertainment, and much more Please support this community event.



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