



**Tomaree Ratepayers and Residents Association  
Newsletter November 2015**

**Notice of General Meeting**

The next General Meeting will be held on **Monday 9 November commencing at 7.00 PM** in the Crow's Nest Room, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, Nelson Bay Bowling Club.



**November Newsletter**

**TRRA Meeting Dates for 2016**

At recent meetings TRRA members have indicated that Monday night may not be preferred by many members due to its clash with several significant public affairs programmes on TV.

Taking account of other community and Council meeting Dates, the Committee recommends we change to the third Tuesday of every second month for General Meetings commencing at 7.00 pm as usual.

2016 dates would be:

16 February

19 April

21 June

16 August (as Council elections will be conducted in September 2016 this date may need to be moved to run a Meet the Candidates Forum)

18 October (AGM)

6 December (Christmas Gathering)

***This will be on the Agenda for discussion on 9 November***



**Planning Sub Committee Report:** (See TRRA website [TRRA DA Watch](#) for more detailed coverage of specific matters.

### ***Soldiers Point Marina***

The controversial **Marina expansion** is back. Following rejection of the previous plan by the Joint Regional Planning Panel (JRPP) in June 2014: [HERE](#), the applicant has now submitted a substantially similar application, but with a slightly revised layout and parking arrangements. TRRA is preparing a submission querying environmental impacts and the adequacy and practicality of the parking provisions.

The latest stop press is that the Soldiers Point Community Group Inc. assisted by the Environmental Defenders Office has written to Council challenging the process followed in advertising of the latest amendment to the DA. A strong case is made that the whole process needs to be started again from scratch.

(Queries/comments to Nigel Waters: [planning@trra.com.au](mailto:planning@trra.com.au))

### ***Nelson Bay Diggers Club Apartment Blocks***

We have become aware of a proposed development by Wests Leagues Club on the site of the western car park at the **Nelson Bay Diggers Club** on Shoal Bay Road. It is for **111 'Seniors Living' units in two apartment blocks of 8 and 10 storeys**. They have not yet lodged a development application (DA) but are first seeking a 'Certificate of compatibility' to overcome current zoning restrictions. TRRA has written to the relevant State authorities challenging the lack of consultation with community interests in this process.

The Local Environment Plan (LEP) limits building heights on the various parts of site to 4 and 5 storeys. Long-time residents will recall major opposition to high buildings on the then RSL land when a major redevelopment of the Club was proposed back in 2008. The 7 storeys proposed back in 2008 were considered unacceptable by many in the community – not least because they would be visible from the Bay, breaking above the natural tree line. TRRA Submission to the Minister for Planning [HERE](#)

The Minister's response is [HERE](#) In short it confirms our understanding of the proposal and indicates that Council has already raised similar concerns.

### ***Foreshore Erosion at Corlette***

A consultant's report to Council proposes options for **management of foreshore erosion at Corlette** between the Anchorage marina and western end of Bagnall's Beach, including Conroy Park and Corlette Point. The [Report](#) (8MB Download) aims to balance various objectives including public access, protection

of private properties and prevention of further loss of public land. The options are costed at between \$4.2 million and \$7.6 million, although it is expected that a final approach may be a hybrid with elements from each option. It is not clear if ongoing maintenance costs have been estimated, and in any case there is currently no funding set aside. A public meeting on 23 September made it clear that there are strong competing views.

TRRA's submission on this is [HERE](#)

### ***Apex Park Master Plan***

TRRA and other local interest groups have contributed ideas for a **Master Plan** being prepared by PSC for the future development of Apex Park (between the Marina and the Town Centre) in Nelson Bay. The Council approved [Apex Park Draft Master Plan](#) (PDF) (5.1 MB) is now on exhibition for 42 days on the Council Website.

Many of the community's suggestions have been included, however our initial feeling is that more detail on the provision for landscaping, control of bicycle speeds and provision for crossing Teramby Road at the end of the cycle/disabled ramp need further consideration.

TRRA is preparing a submission which calls for recognition of Apex Park as the primary public open space for Nelson Bay CBD and significantly upgraded landscaping, not just grass and trees.

TRRA's submission on this plan is nearing completion and will be posted on the Website later this week.

Please advise Geoff Washington: [president@trra.com.au](mailto:president@trra.com.au) of any opinions.

### ***Donald Street Car Parks Nelson Bay***

PSC has received responses to its advertisement for proposals to redevelop the Council owned sites at **Donald Street** East and Donald Street near Rivers shop.

TRRA has written to Council drawing attention to the Current LEP limit of 5 storeys in these locations and to the provisions of the Nelson Bay Town Centre and Foreshore Strategy.

TRRA planning subcommittee members met with council officers on 2 November to discuss this issue. We were informed that:

1. Council sought "unfettered" proposals without references to constraints such as the latest LEP/ DCP and the Nelson Bay Town and Foreshore Strategy to elicit creative proposals.

2. The objective was to secure **developments which would deliver the same number of car parks as were available on the sites at no cost to council**. Council was also aware of the need to add to the viability of the town centre especially through permanent residents which would help to bolster off season trade.
3. All proposals included developments which required a scale and heights (some 10-14 storeys) which could not be accommodated within the controls in the planning instruments and guidelines.
4. Among the concepts were proposals based around an aged residential facility (including independent, hostel and full care components) and another being a tertiary education facility incorporating on site student housing.
5. Council's planning Consultant stated that they were considering concepts which would be based on meeting precinct objectives not only site specific outcomes.
6. Given the difficulty posed by Item 4. (above) Council is considering next steps which could include a review of the existing Planning Instruments and the 2012 Nelson Bay Town Centre and Foreshore Strategy.

Council officers advised that there will be further consultations and public exhibition of preferred proposals in accordance with the requirements of the various planning instruments.

### ***Boomerang Park Raymond Terrace***

Port Stephens Council is proceeding with its plan for Boomerang Park, located centrally in Raymond Terrace. The broad concept is to allocate a significant portion of the parkland to housing development and the construction of a very large men's shed. Council has indicated a preference for senior's living on the residential precinct. Funds generated by the sale would be directed at a major upgrade of the remaining portion of the park.

Many in the local community oppose the alienation of this long standing public space and query the scale of the proposed men's shed. The Boomerang Park Action Group organized a 'Walk in the Park' on Sunday 11 October.

Several TRRA Committee members attended and concluded that the existing Master Plan for the Park was being disregarded in favor of developments (and possibly in the interests of developers) which were not supported by Raymond Terrace community Interests.

Subsequently the Boomerang Park Action Group has challenged the Council's Men's Shed compliance with the existing master plan. Council has responded by revising its DA which will be resubmitted.

The Action Group has organised Fundraiser Movie night to support their defence of Boomerang Park, see [HERE](#).

TRRA Webmaster is currently putting together a comprehensive story for the website on this issue, watch out for it soon.

### ***“The sand mining Mayor who loves a deal” ABC Radio Background Briefing Program 4 October 2015***

An award winning ABC reporter interviewed Mayor Mackenzie on Radio National resulting in some serious public revelations of his leadership style and disregard for proper processes and codes of conduct. A recording of the program has been posted on the TRRA website and is available [HERE](#)

The TRRA Management Committee considered that the content of this program confirmed many of its concerns about the way in which Council does business or “deals” as noted in the headline. It also brings into question the influence of the Mayor in key decisions such as the tender for the Cabbage Tree Road Sand Mine.

The Committee decided to refer this Program to the Minister for Local Government with a call for his urgent intervention in the interests of protection of the reputation of local government in NSW. [HERE](#) The Minister is yet to respond.

### ***New Council Public Consultation Tactics***

Over the last six months Council officers have adopted an approach to favour either ‘drop in’ sessions where individuals can discuss proposals with relevant Council officers, or ‘two-on-two’ meetings, by invitation, where Council officers meet with a limited number of representatives of a single community group. Officers have resisted suggestions that meetings be held with representatives of more than one community group known to have common interests (e.g. TRRA Inc. and Nelson Bay Business Association)

While we welcome both ‘drop-in’ and ‘two on two’ sessions as additional channels of public engagement, they should not be seen as alternatives to more traditional, and valuable, channels.

Both general community meetings and meetings involving more than one interest group serve a valuable purpose in letting individuals, and groups, know about the concerns of other people and groups, so that they are better informed and better

able to decide whether to make submissions and what issues need to be covered.

TRRA is drafting a letter to Council expressing concern in relation to this divide and conquer strategy.

*The TRRA webmaster is constantly updating our website [HERE](#). Why not consider subscribing to the website by inserting your email address in the box at the bottom or the right hand sidebar. You will then be notified of major posts by email and not miss the big stories as they happen.*

**Cath Norman**

**Secretary TRRA Inc.**

