



## TRRA INC NEWSLETTER, 29 November 2019

### TRRA CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION and next TRRA GENERAL MEETING

Our final General Meeting for 2019 will be held on **Monday 9 December commencing at 6 30 pm in the Nelson Bay Room at Nelson Bay Bowling Club**. The agenda will be short as we will adjourn for dinner and drinks in the restaurant to celebrate another year's achievements.

#### 1. TRRA Annual General Meeting 14 October 2019

The minutes of this meeting are [HERE](#)

The President's Annual Report for 2018-2019 is [HERE](#)

The Management Committee for 2019-2020 together with their email addresses follows:

**President:** Ben van der Wijngaart (Nelson Bay) [president@trra.com.au](mailto:president@trra.com.au)

**Vice President:** John James (Nelson Bay) [vicepresident@trra.com.au](mailto:vicepresident@trra.com.au)

**Treasurer:** Denis Pittorino (Nelson Bay) – Financial & Membership Management [treasurer@trra.com.au](mailto:treasurer@trra.com.au)

**Secretary:** Bill Salter (Nelson Bay) [secretary@trra.com.au](mailto:secretary@trra.com.au)

**Assistant Secretary:** Chris Peters (Nelson Bay) [committee1@trra.com.au](mailto:committee1@trra.com.au)

**Membership Secretary:** Robyn Williams (Salamander Bay) [membership@trra.com.au](mailto:membership@trra.com.au)

**Media Officer:** Geoff Washington (Nelson Bay) [media@trra.com.au](mailto:media@trra.com.au)

**Strategy:** Geoffrey Basser (Salamander Bay) [strategy@trra.com.au](mailto:strategy@trra.com.au)

**Planning Assessment:** Nigel Waters (Nelson Bay) Planning Sub-Committee [planning@trra.com.au](mailto:planning@trra.com.au)

**Committee Member** Cath Norman (Nelson Bay) [cath@trra.com.au](mailto:cath@trra.com.au)

**Committee Member** Hazel Driver (Nelson Bay) [committee4@trra.com.au](mailto:committee4@trra.com.au)

**Research Officer:** Vacant

**Finance:** Vacant

Alistair Waddell (Corlette) also provides us with website support.

The contact number for our President Ben van der Wijngaart is 0490 797 088

## **2. Message from TRRA President, Ben van der Wijngaart**

As I stated at the AGM, I have large boots to fill with Geoff Washington's departure as President of TRRA after 10 years of wise leadership. Thankfully, Geoff has remained on the committee as media officer and has already been of great assistance in that role.

Fresh leadership is nevertheless important for any organisation from time to time and I welcome the opportunity this offers, with a large dollop of humility. I hope to bring to the role my past experience of leadership within the RAAF, as a deputy mayor and from small business as a principal consultant in project and change management company.

From all these I have learned that to effect change requires persistence, consistent and strong leadership. It also requires harbouring respect for the opinions of others, even when those opinions are opposed to your own.

We already face many challenges to our community as we would like to see it develop and those challenges will keep coming. The TRRA Committee and I sincerely hope to continue to represent the views of as many ratepayers and residents in the Tomaree Peninsula as possible. But to make our voice better respected we need to increase our representation significantly. In that regard I will be asking you to help swell our numbers in a renewed membership drive by using your networking to encourage people to sign up to TRRA and attend our meetings.

## **3. Matters Arising from 21 November Management Committee Meeting**

The Committee concluded that a concerted effort was needed to increase TRRA membership. A sub-committee has been established to devise a strategy to promote TRRA within the community and to more actively recruit members. Suggestions on this would be welcomed by the convenor of this sub-committee Robyn Williams at [membership@tra.com.au](mailto:membership@tra.com.au).

The President reported on the proceedings of the last quarterly meeting between senior TRRA representatives and the Mayor. The tone was cordial and enabled discussion on key issues of concern to TRRA.

We undertook to foster a closer and more cooperative working relationship by providing as much early advice on issues of concern before making public statements, although this is often made difficult by the short notice provided for comment on development applications and Council initiatives. Council has undertaken, in the same spirit, to keep TRRA informed as earlier as possible on planned initiatives.

## 4. Matters of General Interest

### Fingal Link Road – feedback to TRRA

In October 2019, TRRA published a document ‘Fingal Link Road – Options’ [HERE](#) to generate discussion in the community about the pros and cons of the various route options (see map below) that have been proposed for a new route to Shoal Bay and Fingal Bay.



Source TRRA Website Article

We were encouraged by an unprecedented level of feedback – some of it very detailed and thoughtful. Overall, there was minimal support for the option (Route 1) currently favoured and under investigation by the State Government (RMS) and Port Stephens Council. Only one respondent clearly favoured this route (with its \$188 million price tag) over all of the other options.

Many respondents feared the ecological impact of any new road passing through the National Park (Routes 1, 2 and 4 have such impacts but to very different extents).

Several respondents questioned the need for a new route at all, highlighting the limited peak/seasonal occurrence of congestion. Suggestions were made for other approaches to addressing any problems, including better traffic management, signage and creative use of public transport including shuttle buses.

Others had a clear preference for consideration of the much cheaper and lower impact options – (Routes 2 & 3)

Several respondents picked up on the point made in our paper that some of the options would not actually deliver the major benefit that has been widely promoted. Neither Route 1 nor Route 2 would provide a safe evacuation route for Fingal Bay residents in the event of a major bush fire threatening those communities.

TRRA's position, confirmed by the feedback, is that the case for major expenditure on a road following Route 1 has yet to be established. The RMS and Council should consider and consult on alternative 'traffic management' solutions that may avoid the need for major new construction that would inevitably cause environmental damage. If the studies currently under way, and further consultation, can demonstrate a clear need for a new road at all, then serious reconsideration should be given to Route 2 (Austral St extension) which would minimize both the cost and the environmental impact. In any event, it is essential that there be extensive community consultation before any decision is taken on routes or major expenditure commitments.

A further concern relates to the impact of a more direct route to the Salamander Shopping Centre from Shoal and Fingal Bays which could have a negative impact on the business vitality of Nelson Bay CBD.

## **Community Engagement Strategy and Participation Plan**

Council is proposing a new Strategy and Participation Plan for planning matters. TRRA thinks these new documents are less helpful than previous Council policies. Council's engagement processes seem designed more to communicate Council's intentions (PR 'spin') than to genuinely seek community input. Regrettably, staff largely dismissed the concerns we raised in their report to the 26 November Council Meeting, which adopted the new Strategy and Plan almost unchanged.

## **Port Stephens Local Housing Strategy- Community Briefing**

Port Stephens Council is currently preparing a Local Housing Strategy (LHS) which will be placed on public exhibition in the first half of 2020. The LHS will set out Council's vision for housing over the next 20 years. The LHS aims to ensure suitable land supply, improve housing affordability, increase diversity of housing choice and facilitate liveable communities.

Some research on housing demand and consultation on community housing preferences in Port Stephens has been undertaken.

For more details of this review go to the Council website [HERE](#)

TRRA will have two representatives at the briefing.

## **5. Planning update for November**

Since the AGM in October, TRRA has made detailed submissions on a number of major development projects and other Council initiatives. Full details are on our website, but here is a brief summary:

**Shark & Ray Centre, Anna Bay** – the operators of this tourist attraction, currently located in Marsh Road at Bobs Farm, have bought the former Anna Bay oval at Jessie Rd (off Nelson Bay Road at the Pt Stephens Drive roundabout) and submitted a DA for a major new tourist facility also caring for and researching marine wildlife. TRRA have been supportive of this as an appropriate use for the site, but has urged the owners to work with Council to maintain the transport interchange function of the current car park. The project now seems likely to start with a small first stage leaving the car park available for community use at least in the medium term.



**Optus phone masts, Nelson Bay** – a proposal to put masts in a 5 metre high box on top of 9 Church St (the 5 storey apartment building just north of the ‘crane’ site). Unfortunately, while Optus have to accept and report on submissions, they can erect this facility without external approval. TRRA has called on them to look again at other sites which we think would be less intrusive.



**Sand Resort, Anna Bay** – a proposal for a luxury resort, with 247 units, on Gan Gan Road adjacent to the existing ‘failed’ resort development that has been an eyesore for many years. TRRA strongly opposed the new DA on multiple grounds, as did a large number of Anna Bay residents and other community groups. This project will be assessed by Council but decided by a State Planning Panel, which will hopefully refuse it. There should be a public hearing at which objectors can voice their concerns.



**Sand Mine, Anna Bay** – a proposal to increase the extraction of sand from 4226 Nelson Bay Road (behind the Baylife Church just west of the Pt Stephens Drive roundabout). Some sand needs to be removed to keep the power line easement clear, but TRRA has opposed what appears to be a significant commercial operation that goes well beyond the asset protection requirement. The major concern is the addition of yet more heavy sand truck movements to already overloaded roads west of the site.

**Seniors Living ‘Lifestyle Villages’** – The Sunrise and Latitude One (example below) developments, at Bobs Farm and Anna Bay respectively, are now well under way and Council has just endorsed a planning proposal that may add a further 170 units to the Latitude One Estate. While the villages seem popular, the prices and ongoing fees mean they can hardly be considered ‘affordable’ housing, and they are now being built on site as permanent structures rather than the relocatable units, manufactured off site that was the basis of their approvals. TRRA thinks there are some serious questions to be answered about how this style of housing development has been allowed to take place on land zoned rural.

Geoff Washington, TRRA Inc. Media Officer