



TRRA Inc GENERAL MEETING

By Zoom

Minutes Monday 26 October, 2020 - 7 pm

Attendance: 26

Apologies: Jean Armstrong, Margaret Wilkinson, Gill Whitton

Minutes of the previous meeting (Posted on TRRA Website)

1. Accepted: Robyn Williams, Geoff Basser

Matters Arising (addressed in the agenda items)

2. None

Correspondence

3. None.

Treasurer's Annual Report

4. The Treasurer presented the latest Financial Statement of Income and Expenditure. He noted that internet costs would soon become due. Moved Geoff Washington, seconded Cath Norman that the report be accepted. Agreed by consensus.

Reports

5. *Building heights.* Some members considered that the Council's final decision on building heights represented a defeat of the effort to promote the community's opposition to high-rise development, while others pointed out that at least limits were imposed and that these were lower than what had been proposed. Moreover, experience was showing that developers lacked appetite to build high-rise. It was generally agreed that the challenge now was to ensure that the limits approved by Council were actually enforced. Several members pointed out that the Mayor had championed the increased height limits but at the last moment declared a "significant

non-pecuniary” conflict of interest (which seemed pecuniary to them) and had not participated in the final vote. However, it seemed that this would not invalidate the decision.

6. *Climate Change Policy.* Nigel Waters reported that Council’s recent adoption of an improved Climate Change Policy was part of a broader set of significant steps, including its decision to join the Cities Power Partnership and forthcoming proposals on a Sustainability Action Plan and Roadmap and on a Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan. While these were welcome, Council had twice rejected motions to declare a climate emergency. TRRA, with other groups, was pushing for Council to take a leadership role on climate change in the wider community.
7. *Gateway to the Tomaree Peninsula.* Ben van der Wijngaart reported on the initiative by TRRA to work with Council on improving the visitor experience of coming into the Tomaree Peninsula. After receiving information from a number of other Councils that had undertaken successful improvements and submitting a detailed project brief to Council in April 2020, it was not until 18 September that Council staff were willing to meet on it, and at that meeting they had no substantive responses. TRRA was still asking when we will be involved and how will the community be involved, but so far Council, in offering no responses, was losing an opportunity to use the community to make improvements. Following a report by one member of success in getting a business to take down its roadside sign it was suggested that TRRA approach businesses to seek support for the initiative.
8. *Nelson Bay Parking.* Geoff Washington reported on the Council initiative to introduce “smart parking” to Nelson Bay town centre, which was still open for public comment. Issues included: limited consultation, an inadequate business plan and the risk to businesses of visitors and residents being diverted to Salamander Bay. There were no examples of successful schemes in comparable coastal towns. TRRA and the Business Chamber had jointly raised a number of issues, which the Mayor had now agreed to review. During discussion, it was noted that private car parks (eg Woolworths and the Cinema) were not part of the new scheme; the situation with Terambie Road was unclear.
9. *Future of Tomaree Headland.* Geoff Washington reported on discussions concerning future use of the Tomaree Lodge site once all residents had left in early 2021. There was discussion on the value of trying to maintain the old buildings.
10. *Coastal Walk Masterplan.* Ben van der Wijngaart said that TRRA had made a detailed submission, with particular emphasis on opposing the eastern (coastal) route. Issues were being compiled from several organisations to help individuals in making submissions before the deadline of 3 November. Members were also encouraged to post to the local Facebook group.
11. *Tree Moratorium and Tree Vandalism Policy.* While the policy on tree vandalism was quite strong, Council had made removal of trees too easy. Mention was also made of the removal of street trees in Nelson Bay town centre: following joint representations by TRRA and the Business Chamber, Council had promised further consultation.

Planning

12. Current issues included: Greenside seniors housing, possible redevelopment of the Gan Gan army camp, Soldiers Point Marina and 8 Bagnall Avenue. TRRA was keeping watch on all of these. Also mentioned were a proposed solar farm on Cabbage Tree Road and proposed change of use of the Aura Apartments, Shoal Bay Road, from tourist accommodation to residential, both of which were welcomed.

General Business

13. One member mentioned that Council was closing a public right of way which had been a condition of approval of the DA for a house. He noted that this would create a danger for cyclists and queried Council's right to do this without public consultation. Other members echoed his concern. He agree to follow up in writing seeking TRRA's support.

The meeting concluded at 9.05 pm.

Next meeting: 14 December 2020.

Bill Salter