



## TRRA Inc GENERAL MEETING

Zoom

Monday 6 June 2022 – 7.00 pm

Minutes

**Attendance:** 17, including 8 Committee members

**Apologies:** Geoff and Nanette Basser, André Dussart, Hazel Driver, Judy Washington

**Minutes of the previous meeting** (Posted on TRRA Website)

1. Moved Bill Salter, seconded Robyn Williams, that the Minutes be accepted. Agreed by consensus.

### Matters Arising

2. None.

### Correspondence

3. Bill Salter mentioned correspondence between Nigel Waters and an architect responsible for the Church Street development which would be discussed under the agenda item on application of height limits.

### Treasurer's Report

4. The Treasurer presented the monthly report, noting that a reminder to members to pay their annual subscription needed to be sent. He also sought and was given confirmation that the previous year's expenses for donations and membership fees to other organisations should be repeated this year. The President observed that suggestions for a cheaper internet solution had not worked out. Moved Denis Pittorino, seconded Robyn Williams, that the report be accepted. Agreed by consensus.

### Reports

5. *Application of height limits.* Nigel Waters reported on the discussion at the Council meeting on 24 May, at which Councillors had agreed with TRRA to approve one proposal and reject another exceeding the height limits, on reasoned grounds. A

person representing owners of the Mantra apartments had spoken well during Public Access. He cautioned that there was still work to do to ensure that Council made a strong case if there was an appeal. He also mentioned that the architect responsible for the Church Street development (which would soon come before Council) had engaged in a lengthy debate with him on the TRRA Facebook site concerning the development at 15-17 Yacaaba Street. In response to a question he confirmed that the Land and Environment Court meets onsite and that objectors can participate in the site visit. Turning to the development at 1 Yacaaba Street he pointed out that they were being marketed as 2 bedroom apartments but were actually 2 bedrooms plus a study: this enabled the developer to avoid the carpark requirements for 3 bedroom apartments. The President added that the proposal lacked the required commercial premises at street level.

6. *Tree Lopping.* Nigel Waters stated that there were mixed results in relation to Council consultation on tree removal. On the one hand there had been good consultation in cases at Soldiers Point and Raymond Terrace, but a tree had been removed on Magnus Street without proper consultation. Civic Pride members had subsequently been assured that the other trees in the town centre would be retained, protected by rubber matting.
7. *Place Plans.* Members reported mixed experiences of the Place Plan consultations. On the one hand the process had tended to energise local community associations: Leah Anderson reported in that regard that she had had to push hard to get Council staff to reach out to the Shoal Bay Community Association, while Sue Olsen said that she had been excluded from the consultations because participants had been hand picked by Council Staff. Leah also mentioned that she had been asked by Council staff not to attend on the grounds – which she rejected – that some people would supposedly feel unable to speak up if Councillors were present. Geoff Washington thought that insufficient efforts were being made to ensure that the interests of local businesses were being recognised, but John James thought that this would be more important at the next stage of consultation, once there was a draft.
8. *Lifestyle Villages.* Nigel Waters reported that the proliferation of “lifestyle villages” was costing Council a lot of revenue, since rates were assessed on the development as a single business at an average \$140 per residence, compared to an average of \$731 for separate titles. Moreover, the homes were not required to meet BASIX efficiency standards. Despite this they did not meet the need for affordable housing, with units costing as much as a million dollars or more. The President pointed out that these developments paid too little in infrastructure contributions but put a serious burden on the community’s capacity, for example with regard to the demand for medical services. Leah Anderson said that Community Hospital nurses had raised this concern with her and she had discussed it with Ingenia representatives. They had a room for a visiting doctor but had not been able to find a doctor for it. She had raised all these issues a number of times within Council but there seemed to be few options available to Councils, so she sought ideas for tackling the issue. One member urged TRRA to take up the issue of “lifestyle villages” as a major project, looking at all its aspects, and offered to be involved in the effort. Another member noted that discussions with the

developers could bring about some positive changes, as was the case with Ingenia's approach on protection of native animals and birds.

9. It was agreed that TRRA should work on the issues of lifestyle villages as a priority, noting that the concerns expressed were not directed against the residents of these villages, but primarily against the rules imposed by the State Government.
10. *Arrangements for future General Meetings.* The meeting discussed whether future General should be conducted by Zoom or face to face., noting that there were benefits and disadvantages to each. After some discussion it was agreed that the August General Meeting would be held by Zoom and the October meeting, which was also the AGM, would be face to face. Leah Anderson asked that specific invitations be sent to all members, not just announced in the Newsletter.
11. *Gateway to the Bay.* Robyn Williams reported that she had spoken with Steven Peart, who had expressed sympathy and had suggested that Leah put a motion to Council. The President noted that in an earlier meeting Mr Peart had said that it would require support from Councillors for him to be able to allocate resources to the issue. Leah indicated that she would bring the issue before Council and requested that TRRA seek public access and make a presentation before the discussion. She noted that Destination Port Stephens had not shown interest in the past.

## **Planning Issues**

12. The meeting expressed its appreciation for the work by Nigel Waters on building height limits. John James reported that a new submission was being prepared on the proposal for 58 Sandy Point Road, which represented over-development. One member added her concerns about intrusion into public land. Nigel Waters mentioned that some objectors had engaged Perception Planning, which was more usually assisting development proposals, to prepare an objection.
13. John James referred to flooding and PFAS concerns regarding the Williamtown SAP but noted that this was in the hands of the State Government. One member said that the road siting should be moved to avoid cutting through the space reserved for the environment. Another member described the SAP as a planning disaster with no consideration for traffic issues, no "gateway" to the airport and failure to deliver an integrated and comprehensive master plan. As for the proposal for 2a Lavis Lane, to change the food outlet to a petrol station and reduce the number of motel units from 50 to 10, TRRA would object to this effort to circumvent development restrictions on rural land.

## **General Business**

14. One member referred to a rumour that Council was buying up the dilapidated properties behind the Donald Street East carpark. In response to a question from another member the President confirmed that the crane on Church Street was tested regularly as required.

The meeting concluded at 9.00 pm.  
Next meeting: 8 August 2022.

Bill Salter, Secretary  
19 July 2022