



REID RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION INC

NEWSLETTER MARCH 2014

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SHANE RATTENBURY MLA TO ADDRESS AGM

Mr Rattenbury will be the guest speaker at the Reid Residents Association Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 26 March 2014.

Reid is one of Canberra's oldest suburbs and listed as a Heritage Precinct on the ACT Heritage Register. The suburb is increasingly coming under pressure from surrounding developments. We have raised our concerns with the various authorities and members of the Assembly. Mr Rattenbury has readily accepted to discuss various issues including the redevelopment of the ABC flats, Northbourne Oval etc and to answer questions.

Come along, join us and meet your neighbours.

Annual General Meeting

7.30pm Wednesday 26 March 2014

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**Grosvenor Room
MERCURE CANBERRA**
(formerly Ainslie Hotel)

**Cnr Ainslie & Limestone Avenues
Braddon**

DRAFT AGENDA

1. Welcome, apologies and adoption of the Agenda,
2. Confirmation of minutes & matters arising,
3. Reports and financial statements,
4. Appointment of Auditor,
5. Election - President, Hon Treasurer, Secretary and up to 5 committee members,
6. Other business
7. Address by Mr Shane Rattenbury MLA

NOMINATIONS

Nominations forms for all positions and the Committee of the Association are available from John Tucker. They should be returned to Graham Carter, Secretary, or John Tucker.

President John Little	Secretary Graham Carter OAM	Treasurer & Public Officer Derk Swieringa
Committee Members Marianne Albury-Colless, Sue Byrne, Sue Lynskey, Joanne Nicholls, Amanda Reynolds, John Tucker		

CONGRATULATIONS NATIONAL TRUST COUNCIL PRESIDENT

Scott McAlister of Reid has been elected as both President and Treasurer of the National Trust (ACT). He is a long time Reid resident and was the previous Secretary of the RRA. Scott has a genuine passion for heritage issues and activities. Last year Scott chaired the organizing committee of the Centenary of Canberra Rally, a two event that included over 300 cars and motor bikes on a tour from Jervis Bay to Canberra. With a strong financial planning and investment background he now working hard to reinvigorate the Trust's activities.

John Tucker, another Reid resident with a wealth of knowledge and experience with both the RRA and the National Trust is also congratulated on his re-election to the Council, while Graham Carter has been elected for the first time.

RRA 70TH ANNIVERSARY – THURSDAY 14 AUGUST 2014

Formed on 14 August 1944 the Reid Residents Association will have its 70th Anniversary this year. To celebrate this important milestone the RRA will be holding celebratory activities and a dinner for the enjoyment of current and previous residents and other interested people.

Volunteers are needed to help make it all happen. If you can help or have ideas please contact any of the following: John Little tel [REDACTED] or Joanne Nicholls tel [REDACTED], John Tucker tel [REDACTED]

REID UNITING CHURCH AND BUS SHELTER BOTH REPAIRED

The RRA has been very concerned about on-going deterioration to two heritage-listed buildings in Reid – both located at the intersection of Coranderrk and Doonkuna Streets. The Reid Korean Uniting Church, formerly the Reid Uniting Church (and before that Methodist Church) is currently undergoing repairs and conservation work. The large central leadlight window partly collapsed about six years ago, permitting the entry of water into the church. There were other water-proofing and maintenance problems. The Uniting Church has initiated a program of works to repair and restore the church. RRA raised the issue with the church authorities and is pleased that the work is being undertaken. The 1920s timber Bus Shelter has also been repaired and repainted. RRA wrote to the relevant ACT Ministers urging urgent work to stop further deterioration of the historic bus shelter.

NATIONAL TRUST (ACT) – BECOME A MEMBER

The National Trust (ACT) is a volunteer organisation that fosters public knowledge and conservation of places and objects that are significant to our heritage. There are many benefits of joining the National Trust including free entry hundreds of Trust properties in Australia and in over 18 countries around the world. The Trust has range of social and educational activities as well as an extensive program of tours catering for a wide spectrum of interests - ranging from local heritage tours; through weekend trips to places of historic interest; to longer tours interstate and overseas.

Membership is open to anyone. If you are interested in becoming a member you should ring [REDACTED]. More information is available on the Trust's website: <http://www.nationaltrustact.org.au/>.

HELP NEEDED – WEBMASTER AND IT SKILLS

The RRA is very keen for assistance with its IT needs. RRA established a web site some years ago but it needs updating. Webmaster skills are particularly needed. The task is occasional and can be adjusted to suit the time a volunteer is able to contribute. Please consider becoming a volunteer if you can help. Contact is Graham Carter [REDACTED].

ABC FLATS AND RE-DEVELOPMENT IN REID AND BRADDON

The Committee of RRA has been active in advocating changes to the presently proposed re-development proposal for the Allawah, Bega and Currong Flats in Reid and Braddon which, in their presently approved form, are likely to have very adverse impacts on the residential homes and heritage precincts adjacent or near to the sites. The following articles provide an update.

COMMUNITY INFORMATION SESSION: RE-DEVELOPMENT OF ABC FLATS 6.30 to 7.30pm, Wednesday 19 March 2014 at Griffin Centre, Genge Street, Braddon

The ACT Government's Community Services Directorate (CSD), which includes the ACT Housing Branch, has issued an invitation to interested members of the community to an information session on the re-development of land in Reid and Braddon – specifically the site of the ABC Flats and land owned by the Catholic Church. The purpose of the information session is to "update the community about the recent Territory Plan Variation and proposals for moving forward". For further details contact 6207 8170 or email peter.johns@act.gov.au

The RRA Committee urges all residents of Reid to attend this session to learn how you may be impacted by 12 storey high rise buildings with a quadrupling of the present resident population at the sites and the entry of Civic Centre retailing, offices and other non-residential uses into this part of Reid and Braddon under a new Precinct Code which overrides all other planning controls.

RRA'S MEETING WITH MINISTER SHANE RATTENBURY ON WEDNESDAY 29 JANUARY 2014

The RRA's President, Secretary and a Committee member and two representatives of Argyle Square met with Minister Shane Rattenbury on Wednesday 29 January 2014 to discuss the perceived shortcomings of the proposal for redevelopment of the ABC Flats sites in Reid and Braddon. RRA provided the Minister with a one page note setting out ten specific concerns with the then proposed redevelopment proposal which included two 15 storey towers (the recent Territory Plan Variation 308 reduces the height of these two towers to 12 storeys!). The meeting with the Minister lasted for over an hour and RRA and representatives of Argyle Square were given an attentive hearing. Unfortunately, the ABC re-development proposal pre-dates Shane Rattenbury's appointment as Minister but he undertook to consider all of the concerns we raised. Since meeting, Territory Plan Variation 308 has been announced on 20 February 2014.

LETTER TO THE CANBERRA TIMES FROM CHRIS EMERY OF ARGYLE SQUARE

Below is reprinted a letter to the Canberra Times by Chris Emery, an Argyle Square resident, which sets out the flawed thinking behind the proposal to re-develop the ABC Flats.

Subject: The Only Way is Up **Date: 28 February 2014 3:39:36 pm AEDT**

To: Canberra Times <letters.editor@canberratimes.com.au>

Dear Editor,

I agree with Pierre Huetter (CT 22/2/14) that very high-rise residential buildings should be built in the Canberra CBD and in town-centre areas. But only one has been built to 15 storeys in Civic (outside New Acton) and that is the "Manhattan Apartments". One reason is because corporate land-banking leaves areas of ground-level car parks rather than buildings in the CBD. Much of the CBD is still zero to 4 storeys. It is too early to sprawl the CBD into residential areas such as Braddon and Reid when there is so much potential to redevelop and revitalise the existing CBD. Why not redevelop Garema Place's surroundings to 15 storeys? Should we be extending commercial zoning into residential Reid when a convenience store built in Argyle Square Apartments has been vacant for over 10 years? People shopping and working in Civic won't make their way past the vast Canberra Centre car-parks and across a very busy 6-lane arterial road (Coorong St) to find commercial activities in Reid? (and it's more like 160 metres not 30, Peter.)

Most residents in and around the ABC Flats were happy with the original master plans for the area to be redeveloped to "RZ5 High Density Multi-Unit Residential Code". The first proposal was a maximum of 10 storeys stepping down to 3 storeys and public consultation recommended this be reduced to 8 storeys (still 2 storeys higher than RZ5 allows). ACTPLA responded to this consultation by not lowering but raising the maximum height to 15 storeys stepping down to 6 storeys, through the use of a terrible planning mechanism called a Precinct Code which over-rides all other proper Planning Codes. Incidentally, Precinct Codes have recently been extended by a bureaucratic Technical Amendment to cover all of Canberra, so other residential areas need to be aware.

During the recent DV308 ABC Flats hearings of the Legislative Assembly Planning and Environment Committee, ACTPLA admitted that a redevelopment to RZ5 would still double the population density of the existing ABC site, already one of the highest in the ACT. However, the committee could not agree on DV308, with the Liberals wanting a RZ4/RZ5 planning code applied.

Part of the ABC Redevelopment now positions 6-storey apartment blocks beside existing 3-storey residences, across a 12m narrow lane (Kogarah Lane). This lane does not even meet the government's minimum street width requirement. Kogarah Lane will also contain the entry and exit to a proposed 350 space underground car park. The government refuses to widen this lane-way.

Another concern with the ABC Flats redevelopment will be the taxpayer cost of re-housing the evicted 320 apartments of social housing people. Peter should see their unhappy faces. It is estimated that selling the site to a developer could fall \$50M short of the cost of re-housing. The Minister should say that taxpayers will not be required to subsidise this redevelopment by setting a reserve price at least covering the cost of the re-housing.

The redevelopment replaces a lot of "aggregated disadvantage" social housing but the remaining 10% of social housing will still be aggregated into a single block of apartments, rather than follow the government's stated policy of "pepper and salting" social housing. As Alistair Coe said on ABC they will replace one problem with the same problem.

The ABC redevelopment eliminates three public playgrounds, five public mini-parks, a number of BBQ facilities and 190 mature trees and replaces these with limited access "roof-top gardens". Would you put your child in an elevator to play on a rooftop garden? Does the public know that all the beautiful trees on the eastern side of Coorong Street are to be removed for hundreds of metres? Does Peter H know the Glebe Park playground will be in a morning solar shadow from this redevelopment?

Peter is wrong in thinking that high-rise means cheaper affordable housing. Construction costs per square metre rise once you get above about 6 storeys due to the added cost of sprinklers, fire exit stairwells, extra elevators, structural strengthening etc. Europe learnt this lesson many years ago. Obviously the ANU learnt too with the student accommodation it built in the western CBD being limited to 6 storeys. Buildings need to be "human scale" for comfortable living. Is Paris so bad?

I see recent redevelopments in Canberra being built or planned to limits of 6 to 8 storeys along Northbourne Avenue, Constitution Avenue, the old Downer Primary site, the old CSIRO site, the old RSL HQ site, Construction House, the old Braddon Rugby Club site, the old Braddon commercial area revitalisation etc. All of these redevelopments are being built in sympathy with their existing neighbours. The surroundings of the ABC Flats are Glebe Park, The Canberra Centre (4 storeys), Argyle Square Apartments (3 storeys), Gorman House (2 storeys), Braddon detached houses (1 storey) and St Patrick's church (1 storey).

We only want similar consideration. Surely RZ5 High Density Residential is 'enough'.
Chris Emery, Argyle Square Apartments.