



BLACKBURN VILLAGE RESIDENTS GROUP INC.

Protecting the distinctive features of Blackburn since 1987

BULLETIN

Bulletin 91

October 2016

2016 AGM.

BVRG invites members to attend the 2016 AGM to be held at the Blackburn Lake Visitors Centre, Central Road, Blackburn, Thursday 27th October at 7:30 PM.

Nominations for Office bearers can be made on the attached form.

End of year Function.

Diary Note: Sunday 13th November, 5:00 - 7:30pm - BVRG end of year members and friends BBQ at The Blackburn Lake visitors Centre. See enclosed flyer.

We welcome new members of BVRG. The AGM and end of year function are important dates in our calendar. The AGM provides an opportunity for members to get involved with committee activities and there are plenty of planning matters affecting Blackburn at the moment.

The end of year function is a social occasion for members to meet others from the local community and enjoy a BBQ at Blackburn Lake.

We remind supporters that BVRG's local advocacy is underpinned by the number of financial members. Numbers matter when advocating, so we encourage payment of the 2016/17 membership fee.

Level Crossing Removal

Since our last Bulletin work on the level crossing has continued relentlessly. Tree loss at the station and along the rail corridor has been a matter of regret for many in the community and there remains concern over the yet to be finalised Shared Use Path slated for Elmore Walk and Laburnum Street, which is a VicRoads project, not part of the level crossing removal.

BVRG has advocated strongly for the retention of as many public and private trees as possible. BVRG is also a member of the Stakeholder Liaison Group (SLG), meeting bi-monthly to work through issues that arise during the construction works. The SLG is made up of stakeholders from the community, council, traders, VicRoads and the Level Crossing Authority. David Morrison has represented BVRG at these meetings.

Some Advances.

The community representatives of the SLG can claim to have been successful in advocating for lifts at the Blackburn Station and for a reconsideration of the plant species to be planted in the station area and along the rail corridor to be more representative of what has been lost, particularly indigenous species. There is also a good chance that where trees have been removed the required replacement offset planting (3 for 1) will be carried out within the City of Whitehorse at the Junction Road reserve instead of at a site in East Gippsland as proposed. This will mean that the Junction Road Reserve will become a more useable open space parkland.

To date there has not been a change to the Shared Use Path route to a community preferred northern alignment, nor has there been any compromise on the 3m wide concrete surface.

Whitehorse Council's insistence on the 3m Concrete surface for all Shared Use Paths, without compromise, means that many trees are unnecessarily removed. Alternatives in width or paving material (such as permeable pavement, ramps etc.) in close proximity to trees would reduce the need for their removal however are never considered. Shared Use Paths built to the Council specification have a design capacity of more than 700 cyclists per hour to speeds exceeding 25km/hour, well beyond foreseeable demand.

The narrow tunnel to the station platforms will also remain unchanged. The paradox is that the opportunity to widen the tunnel to accommodate growing commuter numbers for the next 30 years was rejected while a Shared Use Path is built to accommodate expected numbers in 30 years.

Submissions

Discussion papers relating to planning matters at a state and local level have sought community feedback over recent months. BVRG has responded to the following.

- a. **VCAT Fee Structure Reform** - BVRG in its submission on the proposed VCAT Fee Structure Reform advocated for lower fees. The proposed introduction of a \$51 fee where no fee applied for individual submissions to a VCAT hearing was considered to disenfranchise residents.

VCAT after reviewing submissions revised its original plan to be more reasonable. The impact is that individual objectors who lodge an objection and appear at VCAT to make a submission at a hearing will be charged \$19.50. Organisations such as BVRG will pay more. Written submissions will attract no fee.

- b. **Better Apartments Design Standards**-BVRG made a submission and attended a stakeholder workshop. On 16th August 2016 the draft standards were open for public submissions.

BVRG in its submission stated that the omission of minimum apartment size from the Draft Standards represent a very serious shortcoming. Suggestions

for improvements in accessibility to enable aging in place, setback standards, storage provision, natural ventilation, minimum balcony dimensions and provision for canopy trees in landscaping were also made. The draft standards can be found: <http://delwp.vic.gov.au/planning/policy-and-strategy/better-apartments?remap=delwp.vic.gov.au/better-apartments>

c. **City of Whitehorse Tree Study** – The consultants, Planisphere reviewed the current mechanisms used to protect trees in Whitehorse, quantified current tree coverage and loss, and undertook consultation about tree protection and removal across the municipality. Members of the BVRG attended feedback and information sessions. BVRG's submission supported the preferred option in the draft options paper.

Council adopted the preferred option for tree protection in the City of Whitehorse on the 18th of July 2016. A planning scheme amendment is to follow in the 2016/17 financial year. The main outcome of the planning amendment, should it be adopted, would be extending the SLO controls to the remaining residential areas including VPO areas. Greater enforcement and public education resources would be required. See <http://www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au/treestudy.html>

d. **VICTORIA'S DRAFT 30-YEAR INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY** – released for discussion in early October 2016, this strategy follows a string of documents over recent years that have grappled with a rapidly growing Melbourne. Population projections have proved to be a moving feast.

Melbourne 2030 – October 2002

projected – 4.4 million by 2031

Plan Melbourne – May 2014

projected – 6.0 million by 2031, 7.6 million in 2046

Infrastructure Strategy - October 2016

projected - 6.2 million by 2031, 7.8 million in 2046

To make a submission see: <http://www.infrastructurevictoria.com.au/>

Local Planning Issues.

124 - 126 Blackburn Road

A large treed block, this 3300 sqm site on Blackburn Road is ripe for development. An application to subdivide the block and remove 48 of the 50 trees generated significant concern for local residents. Council refused the application and residents are watching closely for the next move.

20 Vine Street Blackburn.

A planning application for a 4 Storey, 17 apartment development at 20 Vine Street Blackburn was approved by Council in March. Local residents have lodged an appeal with VCAT.

74 Main Street.

A planning forum was held on 11th May that enabled objectors and the applicant to discuss issues. The proposal for two 2 storey dwellings failed to conform to preferred neighbourhood character, setbacks from side boundaries, removal of a protected tree and exceeded allowable site coverage. The application was approved by Council with conditions that slightly modified the scale, footprint and increased the requirement for planting canopy trees.

1 Wright Street Blackburn

A planning application for the construction of two double storey dwellings was objected to by nearby residents and went to mediation with Council. Residents were concerned that site coverage and permeability calculations in amended plans may not be checked by Council Planning Officers. Council approved the development on 15th August with conditions including use of permeable paving, planting of canopy trees and reduction of overlooking through opaque glazing.

49 Main Street Blackburn

32 objections were submitted against the proposal for a large double storey development that exceeded, height, hard surface and footprint standards impacting neighbourhood character and capacity for landscape planting. Plans were amended twice resulting in building footprint, hard surface and setback reductions. Council approved the plans on 15th August.

25 Holland Road Blackburn South

73 Local residents have objected to a commercial Child Care Centre development on a residential allotment in Holland Road. The development would result in loss of residential amenity. Setbacks, vegetation loss, parking and signage issues would result. The matter will be heard by VCAT commencing 12 December 2016.

Do you have a planning issue in your area?

Encourage neighbours to join BVRG to ensure that the community retains its voice.

Committee Members

President	Mike Taafe	Ph 0409 800 422	16 Eustace Street, Blackburn
Vice President	David Morrison	Ph 9894 2531	49 Glen Ebor Ave, Blackburn
Secretary	David Morrison	Ph 9894 2531	49 Glen Ebor Ave, Blackburn
Treasurer	Peng Lee	Ph 9878 4350	5 Patterson Street, Blackburn
Committee	Anne Payne	Ph 9878 1152	81 Central Road, Blackburn
	Brad Hogan	Ph 0419 131 224	129 Central Road, Blackburn
	Lyn Smith	Ph 8812 2282	2 Parkside Street, Blackburn



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Email: bvrg@ymail.com

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Phone: 9894 2531

Committee Nomination Form.

For Annual General Meeting to be held on Thursday 27th October 2016.

Nominator and nominee must be BVRG members.

I.....
(Print full name)

Of.....
(Print address and postcode)

Nominate.....
(Print full name)

For the position of:

President	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vice President	<input type="checkbox"/>
Treasurer	<input type="checkbox"/>
Secretary	<input type="checkbox"/>
Committee Member	<input type="checkbox"/>

Signature of Nominator..... Date/...../.....

I.....
(Print full name)

Of.....
(Print address and postcode)

Accept the nomination.

Signature of Nominee..... Date/...../.....

Please pass to BVRG Secretary ahead of the meeting.