



BLACKBURN VILLAGE RESIDENTS GROUP INC.

Protecting the distinctive features of Blackburn since 1987

BULLETIN

Bulleting No. 71

October 2010

Do you have or would like to develop experience in Planning?

BVRG committee will have several important vacancies coming up over the next year and urgently seek members with some experience of planning scheme processes and corporate administration or the capacity to develop those skills to consider offering their services.

If you are considering a role with BVRG please contact President David Morrison or Secretary Elaine Atkinson.

Members are reminded that the AGM that is scheduled for Thursday 11th November 2010 and the end of year dinner will be held locally on the Saturday 4th December 2010 (details for both are below).

In this Bulletin we report on a couple of planning matters that have gone to VCAT as well as some issues that have recently come to light. The one major item that has been in progress over the past year is the Urban Design Framework (UDF) study for Megamile West and the Blackburn Activity Centre. This is yet to be publicly exhibited for comment. We provide an update on progress below.

Blackburn Village Residents' Group Annual General Meeting

Members, friends and neighbours
are all welcome

Thursday 11 November at 7.30pm

Blackburn Lake Visitors Centre
Blackburn Lake Sanctuary
Centre Road, Blackburn

A nomination form for Committee Members
and Office Bearers is enclosed.

Items for consideration at the meeting
should be submitted to the Secretary
Email bvrg@optusnet.com.au
or 1 Laurel Grove North, Blackburn 3130
no later than 29 October 2009.

Annual Dinner at Blackburn Ristorante



A three course meal, house wine and coffee is
being negotiated in the range of \$35 - \$40
and we will have a private room at this
newly opened restaurant.

**Saturday 4 December 2010
6.30 for 7.00pm**

20 Blackburn Rd, Blackburn
<http://maps.google.com.au/>

Numbers will be limited
RSVP by Thursday 26th November
to Allison 0413 188 049 or Elaine 9878 1328
or email bvrg@optusnet.com.au

Still Waiting

Almost a year has passed since land set aside for public open space alongside the Lake Park Nursing Home should have become available to the Council. Despite several BVRG requests, Council has made no attempt to confer with the community on the design or layout or management of the area and there appears to be no provision in the current council budget for works or studies of the site. The community has had a long interest in the re-vegetation of the site and remains willing to be actively involved in plans for its future management.

The Chinese Connection

Following a recent visit to our 'twin city' Shaoxing, the Mayor has been quoted as saying that "China has a lot to offer the world in terms of urban planning". After viewing TV documentaries and reading newspaper reports about compulsory re-settlements in Chinese cities we hope that it is only the better aspects of their system which he contemplates (and not where affected residents have severely limited rights and where many of these involve more than a suggestion of bribery and corruption associated with the redevelopment).

Blackburn Activity Centre and the Urban Design Framework Study (UDF)

As we mentioned in the last Bulletin Council considered and adopted a report on the UDF at a meeting on Monday 26 July 2010.

Council is still waiting on authorisation from the Minister for Planning to prepare and exhibit an Amendment to the Whitehorse Planning Scheme. After ministerial approval residents can make further comment on the document. Depending on the weight of submissions council will decide if a panel hearing is warranted, and, if any changes are made, the final document is then endorsed by council and passed to the Minister for Planning for approval.

Documents relating to the UDF study can be found on Council's special website at megamile_blackburn@whitehorse.vic.gov.au.

Once released for public comments we again urge all members to record their reaction to the Plan. This is the one time when the general public has an opportunity to participate in the framing of Planning Scheme changes that will affect you and your local neighbourhoods for years to come.

VCAT Hearings

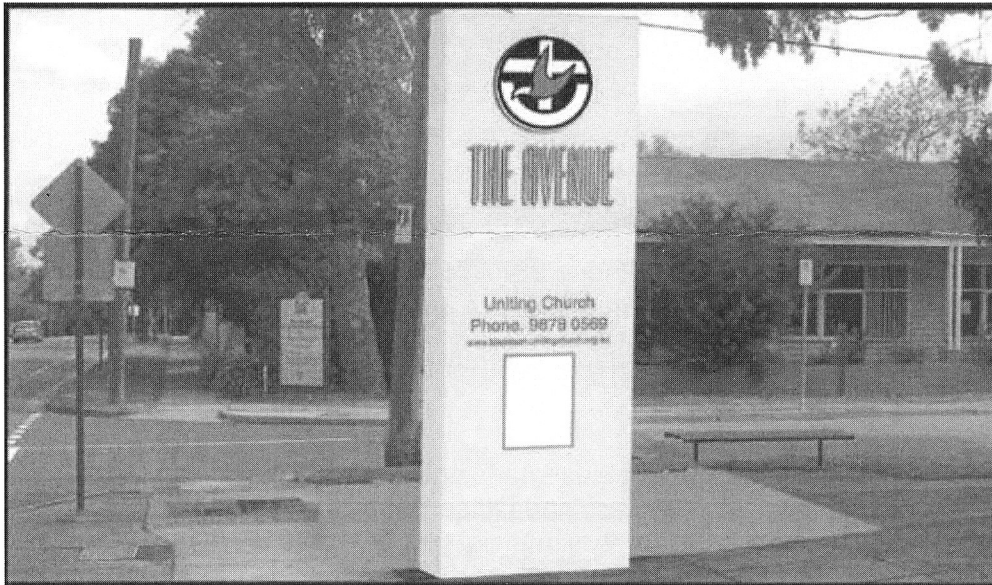
2 – 2A Laburnum Street

The development proposal at the corner of Whitehorse Road and Laburnum Street is for a 3-storey unit development containing 18 dwellings. A last minute work commitment prevented our representative from appearing in person at the Hearing on Tuesday 7 September and a written submission was lodged instead. It reiterated our concerns at this blatant proposal for overdevelopment with associated traffic and amenity problems. In addition we were dismayed at the casual indifference with which the applicants revised plans were prepared – errors in the first version were retained and 'the overshadowing indicators' were out by 90 degrees. The tribunal has sought a further report from Council in regard to the location of the subject site in relation to designated Substantial or Natural Change area in the planning scheme. We will be watching for the outcome with interest.

Uniting Church Signage

The Uniting Church has applied to erect a large illuminated sign that requires permit approval. There were a number of residents as well as BVRG who lodged objections. Council refused the permit and the applicant took the case to VCAT who then allocated the case to a mediation hearing on 22nd September 2010. Unfortunately the matter could not be resolved at mediation and will go to a hearing at VCAT on 10th December 2010.

The Uniting Church is located in a Residential One Zone with a Neighbourhood Character Overlay (NCO1) that seeks to maintain amenity, a Significant Landscape Overlay (SLO4) that seeks to maintain an urban bush character environment where built form is not dominant and heritage overlays on nearby properties that help define the Neighbourhood Character Overlay.



Proposed illuminated sign looking south down Blackburn Road.

South Parade Restaurant

A new restaurant is proposed for South Parade and BVRG welcomes such new facilities in Blackburn Village that will provide additional services. Our only concern is with the application for parking dispensation – especially during the '9 to 5' period on weekdays when any reduction in the number of available parking spaces is likely to have an adverse effect on potential users of other businesses and services. We look for some reasonable endeavours to address this situation.

It would not make sense justifying parking dispensation during the current downturn while a number of major business premises are still vacant. Presuming that as the economic climate improves these will again be active businesses, they will have a legitimate expectation that sufficient parking will be available for their clients.

One rule for some but not for others

Council has been known to come down like the proverbial ton of bricks on individuals who ignore the planning process. It seems that when institutions are involved the treatment is sometimes less harsh. Redevelopment of the burned section of the former Neighbourhood House on the corner of Blackburn Road and The Avenue proceeded without any application being lodged for demolition and rebuilding and apparently little attempt to restore external features of what was originally an Elmore house.

We have drawn this to the attention of Council and highlighted their failure to treat all equally in planning terms.

Follow-up Subscriptions

We thank all those who promptly lodged their current year's subscriptions. If you haven't yet done so a reminder notice is enclosed and we appeal for your response, not least to reduce administrative time.

Committee Members

President	David Morrison	Phone 9894 2531	49 Glen Ebor Avenue, Blackburn
Vice President	Ian Swann	Phone 9877 7084	15 Linum Street, Blackburn
Secretary	Elaine Atkinson	Phone 9878 1328	1 Laurel Grove, Blackburn
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	Aaron Baker	Phone 9877 1773	16 Ronley Street, Blackburn
	Bernadette Cahill	Phone 9877 7556	39 Blackburn Road, Blackburn
Editor	Allison Summers	Phone 0413 188 049	13 Orion Street, Vermont

Telephone 9878 1328 or email bvrg@optusnet.com.au

Enclosed

- New Membership Application Form – please pass onto your neighbours
- Nomination form for Committee Members and Office Bearers
- BVRG Membership Renewal Form for the financial year 2010/2011. (If we haven't received your renewal