

Minutes of the Fairy Bower Precinct Community Forum Meeting held at St Patricks (ICMS) on the 7th September 2016 at 7:00pm.

Attendance: There were 9 Fairy Bower residents present and 2 visitors (for part of meeting) as per the written attendance list circulated to all present.

Apologies were received from Jake Rowe and Franka Simkin.

Notes: The meeting was facilitated by Hugh Burns following the amalgamation of Manly Council into the new Northern Beaches Council and consequential resignation of the previous precinct executive.

Welcome

The meeting opened at 7:05pm and the facilitator welcomed everybody present.

As a preliminary it was also advised the meeting would be recorded for production of the meeting minutes.

Our guest speaker sculptor Helen Leete was introduced. As part of this it was noted the aim was to raise funds in the local community to repair the damaged Oceanides sculpture. The sculpture is currently ceramic and steel construction. Helen came up with the idea of casting it in a more durable material of bronze – for both strength and corrosion resistance.

Helen then gave a very interesting talk and slide presentation about Oceanides, and her sculpture output over many years. We found there was a lot of her work privately held in the Fairy Bower area. We were also reminded where the previously controversial Arched-back Bather sculpture ended up in Manly.

Helen outlined she was looking to crowd fund a facsimile replacement of the existing storm damaged work on the side of the Fairy Bower Pool. We are hoping members of the Precinct with an interest in this work will be able to assist by making pledges towards raising about \$45,000 (half the estimated cost) to replace the work, permanently in bronze. Those who donate will have their names recorded inside the sculpture.

To learn more about her work see <http://www.helenleete.com/>.

In conclusion it was noted we have started with a \$500 pledge – the facilitator thanked Helen for her talk and asked all residents to consider making an offer towards the fund-raising target to permanently restore this iconic work. Helen was looking at having it cast locally at North Head by Clive Calder (Australian Bronze). Currently Helen is awaiting the return from overseas of a friend of hers who will assist her to set up a crowd funding site. Coverage of the fundraising campaign in the Manly Daily and our Precinct newsletter was outlined.

August Meeting Minutes

These were presented but the consideration of them was postponed to allow reading time.

Fairy Bower Pool Meeting report

As a matter arising from the minutes, a report was given on the meeting attended by Robyn Hall, Hugh Burns and three other residents on the Fairy Bower Pool. Other than the scope of works to

be carried out, the main issue was the start timeframe. Robyn gave a report on the earlier meeting to those present.

The repair work start options were either almost immediately on October the 10th or delay it until nearly next winter. It was reported that it was considered best to go sooner while the funding is available and it was noted the staff wanted to commence soon. The drawback was the works could take up to 8 weeks to complete, which would mean the pool would be unavailable until around the start of the school holidays in mid-December. It was anticipated the pool would be open for Christmas and the rest of the summer season. It appeared a contractor was already lined up to undertake the works.

It was noted the pool is currently empty but the pump is already repaired. To avoid any risk of the agreed funding being reallocated to other needy projects by the new regional Council, it was recommended the pool works be preceded with and not delayed.

In summary the proposed works was restricted to replacing the floor of the pool with a new 100mm concrete slab with marine grade stainless steel reinforcing. (To avoid a repeat of the Fairy Bower ocean wall corroded reinforcing failure mode we reported on last time.) The finished height would be the same as the top of the existing floor. The only issue was whether to replace the upper bottom (shallow end) which appears structurally sound but has some surface flaking leaving rough edges. If these spots can be durably repaired, this section of the bottom can be left. There would be no change to the existing pool depth or height of the water and we are not fiddling with the weirs in these works. The aim was to do it once, properly so it would last another 30-50 years.

The need for repairs to the missing storm water pipe segments was raised and it was noted this had been included in the meeting by Robyn raising this. The replacement of the lower rail of the pool fence on the other side (to that currently installed) near the steps was also noted to staff so the public could use it to sit on.

The safety of the platform outside the corner of the pool used to operate the pool drain valve was raised. The grill is being used as a climbing aide by children who use it as means to get out of the water, without adult supervision and concerns were raised about the safety of this use and the appropriateness of the platform design (reportedly rusty steelwork with chains).

It was noted a set of stainless steel stairs were also back in the pool. These appeared to be similar to those previously installed and have been known to cause cuts and minor injuries to swimmers.

Motion This precinct supports Council proceeding with the works on the Fairy Bower pool as soon as practicable and the works are to include replacing part of the bottom of the pool to a height no higher than the existing level and the whole bottom if they can not durably repair the surface of the shallower end. Proposed Robyn Hall, seconded Bill dAnthon and carried unanimously.

Whistler Street Carpark

As background it was noted to be raised to understand public opinion on whether replacement of Whistler Street car park should be a Council priority. It was noted doing nothing was a valid option. In discussing it with one resident in the street they raised the point “why do anything to the car park?”, but other residents say the car park is difficult to park in and we need something more modern at that location. It was noted to be one of the most popular car parks in Manly.

The matter was put to the room and from those present it was evident there was a fairly evenly divided opinion in three groups – viz do nothing, have no opinion (or don't use it) and replace it. So there was no strong clear consensus for action to replace this structure. Apparently no more levels can be added structurally. Vertical gardens to beautify the structure was raised, others noted a lift in its appearance was needed, others considered that there should be something better at this location.

It was noted the intention of raising this matter with the Precinct was to see if there was any strong community desire to see a replacement of Whistler Street, and thus whether this project should be included in Council's strategic planning process - which was due to commence soon.

Council Staffing Issues

It was firstly noted that the report in the Manly Daily that Beth Lawson had left council was untrue.

Next the matter of reports from a recent staff farewell was outlined to residents present. The matter of staff employment guarantee for 3 years was raised and some residents even felt this might limit early benefits from the council amalgamation being realised.

After the matter was discussed by those present, and after all points of view were considered, it was decided that it would be appropriate for the Precinct to always work to maintain a good relationship with senior Council staff, and the Precinct would not get involved in matters that could be perceived as political. It was noted the precinct is 1800 people in 250,000.

General Business

The current status of the Fairy Bower Precinct was raised by Johann Jacobs. The facilitator noted is that as long as the precinct wishes to be here we can be here and we will be recognised by Council.

The structure of the Administration was outlined, with the role of the top level SRG advisory committee and the LRC committees explained. The role of the former Councillors on the LRC was noted to be to see what is happening and ask any questions that are of interest on behalf of the community.

As regards precincts, the plan is to convert the Manly Precincts over to the Pittwater Community Groups style as was previously noted. This means the Manly Precincts would be on the Council's Community Group register. Thus for regional (strategic planning) and local matters (e.g. like the pool) our community group would be consulted by Council as a stakeholder group of residents. There is also the issue of grants being offered and that new roles for such groups may be possible (eg precinct getting grant for doing bush restoration in our precinct).

The origin of the precincts was noted to be about 1990 from the progressive side of politics in Manly. It was designed so the council could obtain feedback from a structure of residential groups. The role of the Precincts in initiating action on significant matters via the combined precinct inter-forum was also noted.

The matter of the Wishing Well Shelter being saved on South Steyne by this process of activating public opinion across all precincts and obtaining apolitical community consensus on key issues was outlined as an example. Community views first aired in individual precincts were united across the community to lobby Council to meet residents' needs. However the car park issue lead

to political polarisation on the role of the precincts. The precincts have an educating role but are also seen by some as interfering in a political right to govern.

The issue of Precinct incorporation including standing with council, insurance, costs and annual returns was outlined.

It was agreed we need to get from Council what they need for our Precinct to continue to have a role in community engagement with the new Council. The Community engagement strategy is still to be released by the Northern Beaches Council.

The issue of sewers and stormwater was raised, noting that storm water was a Council matter and sewerage is Sydney Water. There is currently appears to be a slower Council works approval process but there is a backlog of works in some Council service areas such as pools.

The issue of getting quotes and tenders above a certain project cost was noted. It was believed the works on the pool were going to be performed by a contractor.

The meeting closed at 8:28 pm. The facilitator thanked those present for their attendance.

The next meeting would be held on Wednesday the 5th October 2016.

HB 1/10/2016