

President's Report
Port People Inc
Annual General Meeting
17 April 2013
Sandridge Community Centre
Garden City

2012 was a dynamic year. There were lots of stirrings in the sidelines of change and it feels now like we are on the cusp of critical developments that will shape the way we live, play and work in our community.

Port People Inc is a grass roots community advocacy group. Formed by residents who cared about preserving and nurturing our public open spaces and this remains a primary motivation for our work.

We take the approach that if you have a point of view that there is no advantage in just whingeing about it. To effect any change or influence an outcome you have to have a seat at the table and make your feelings known.

When I'm asked "but what do you actually do" or "what do you mean you've been busy", I have to say I get a little flummoxed and am never sure quite where to start. Sometimes I think that perhaps we are not very good at singing our own praises or congratulating ourselves for the work we put in.

So, by way of explanation these are some of the things we, the committee and members of Port People have participated in over the past 12 months:

1-7 Waterfront Place redevelopment: submissions to council, forums, discussions and Council meetings with the most recent being the representation to last night's council meeting where the Council voted to refuse both the lifting of the covenants and the consent for planning

- UDF of the Port Melbourne foreshore: submissions, consultations, forums, council officer meetings which have resulted in the review of the initial consultation process and subsequent scrapping of the resultant draft document and a restart of the assessment process. We have now seen the separation of the foreshore guidelines from the privately owned property elements. This will improve the opportunity to focus on both the foreshore and the built form components individually which should give better outcomes for the community

- Port Capacity Development, Port Liaison Group
The PLG is a stakeholder group which has been asked by the Port of Melbourne to advise on the development of Webb Dock to accommodate a high volume of containerised freight. Port People is one of the community groups who sit on this group. This presents a once in a lifetime opportunity to get the best outcomes for the community from any effects of expansion of Webb Dock. Some of the things that we can influence are the implementation of best practise standards, amelioration of effects of light, noise and traffic, effective and thoughtful development of the landscape buffers. If handled well this element could greatly enhance our neighbourhood by creating a linear green belt which incorporates outstanding pedestrian and bicycle access, reclaiming the Perce White reserve for the broader community and protecting our homes from port based industrial nuisance.

- We are committed to keeping you as informed as possible about the proposals and developments that affect your neighbourhood.

To that end Port People facilitated and hosted the only public meet the candidates event in the whole of the City of Port Phillip for the recent local government elections

We also produce and deliver a regular newsletter which we hope helps keep you up to date.

- Our committee participated in governance and Community Sector capability Framework training as part of our professional development program.

- Engaged in the State government run Metropolitan Planning Strategy Forum

- The proposed and much lauded Fisherman's Bend Development is a perfect example of why community groups are needed. This enormous development represents a Pandora's box of unknown quantities and outcomes. It seems to us that at the moment there is nothing open or transparent in its design, intentions or management. It's a complete smoke and mirrors job. I have no confidence in Places Victoria's willingness to consult, listen or manage. Persistence from us is required.

We had three meetings with three different sets of people, all of whom were the current staff doing the same job at that time, in the very early stages of the development. With the department going rather pear shaped in the meantime there has been no information. no agreement to consult. no clear understanding from them since.

We cannot allow ourselves to be deterred from meaningful involvement in this discussion. Any and all development in the Fisherman's Bend zone will have direct flow on effects on our neighbourhood.

We must insist on a strategic design for this area that is sustainable, balanced and self supporting.

- Garden City Reserve continues to be high on our agenda. It is still a constant battle to ensure that our pride and joy is maintained to an adequate standard. This year we have gained some clarity around the maintenance program, which is a good place to begin but we're not there yet.

The Hobsons Bay Dog Obedience Class has been welcomed to the reserve

The trial use by Port Melbourne Primary School students as a lunch time play space for senior students has highlighted the need for good management

It has been a time of renewal for established plantings with the sad loss of its two enormous Monterey Pines.

Lois Daley, a passionate custodian of the reserve, will give us some more background about the reserve a little later this evening.

- Our Celebration in the Park, 2 December 2012 was a fabulous event. The aim of the event is to celebrate our wonderful open space, it's refurbishment and the great things that community groups can achieve when they work together. And. work together they do. A variety of community groups took up the opportunity to showcase their activities and seek new members.

We received invaluable support from sponsors

- City of Port Phillip \$10,000

- Port of Melbourne \$2,500.

Some of the traders who supported the event are:

Biggin Scott, You Can Dance Studio, Command Dog Training,¹

Jim's Dog Wash, Lagoon Sweets and Page Avenue Design.

The mark of any good event is bums on seats. We had plenty! There were crowds of happy families, individuals and dogs. All those who participated in our exit interview asked us to hold another one this year.

The burden of our success is that it takes a lot of work to put on an event of this nature. It requires months and months of time consuming, fastidious attention to detail and planning. The 2012 event fell on the shoulders of 2 dedicated volunteers. Particularly as this was their second year of running the show they have both cried "Uncle" and can't face the thought of putting together another event. Our heartfelt thanks and gratitude goes to Patsy Poppenbeek and Megan Jones.

I would ask that the new committee makes an assessment on how to proceed from here fairly promptly during its new term.

How can we grow the benefits gained from the Celebration? Does the community really want us to hold another similar event, a completely different event, yearly or every other year?

Whatever it decides, any event will only work with your input and involvement. You are our community. Every tiny bit of effort that you can give has a huge impact on the overall work required by the co-ordinators.

If you have a point of view on the Celebration or if you can offer some time or services please let me know.

- Port People is proud to directly support other community groups.
We work collaboratively with:
Beacon Cove Neighbourhood Association
Port To Port
Friends of the Westgate Park.

We are also developing relationships with groups such the Social Health and Inclusion Port Project (more commonly known as the SHIP project) and South Port Day Links.

To give you a little background on the SHIP project, because I know I didn't know very much about it and you may not either, SHIP is a collaborative project with health agency and resident members.

It is a 4 year project to improve the health and well-being of the Port Melbourne community, particularly in regards to social health.

Two of our committee members (Ian Gould and Marie Walters) have been involved in the community survey stage.

Sally Rossiter of the Inner South Community Health Service is here tonight. I am sure Sally would be happy to answer any questions you may have about this exciting project.

Not a bad effort for a bunch of volunteers.

As you would have gathered these are not small or incidental projects in themselves. When taken as a collective it is a vast body of work. Most are still works in progress. All will directly affect the liveability of your neighbourhood and your quality of life.

Some of the new topics which I anticipate we will add to our agenda are:

- Public Toilet Plan
- Bay Street Structure Plan

We would welcome your input, in fact we need your input. Port People Inc can only work as an advocate for your needs if we know what you want; what you think and feel.

Please do not be shy. We actually do have some fun along the way. You never know your input might just be key to getting some fabulous outcomes that you and future generations will benefit from.

Port People meets the third Wednesday of the month
7.30, here.
Our meetings are open to all.

Thank you.