

Garden City Reserve Update

Interim Heritage Controls have been approved for the Reserve!

These controls have the effect of permanent controls, but will lapse withing 12 months. During this time there is a full exhibition process enabling submissions from interested parties, recommendations from a panel and the suport of Council and the Minister, strategic planner Katrina Terjung does not anticipate 'any issues'.

As hopefully everyone has noticed, work began on the Reserve in the final weeks of 2008. Rebecca Ramage (Council Parks Planner) sent the following update:

1. The paths are almost complete. Council is waiting for Citipower to move the light posts before they continue with the path connections. The posts are being moved to the opposite side of the path where the new poles will be placed when installed.
2. Trees (150) have been ordered and are being grown over summer to achieve more advanced specimens. Low native plants (4,000) in tube stock are being grown by Bushland Flora. These are all tough-as-old-boots plants, and beautiful as well.
3. Planting of trees and low natives is to be done in May/ June 2009. this will include a community planting day or days, when a free sausage sizzle will be provided for all participants.
4. The lighting design is complete. It includes 30 pole-mounted pathlights and a series of up lights under trees and at the beacon on Beacon Vista. Solar panels will be mounted on the wall of the Trugo Club and the electricity generated will feed back into the mains grid, 'paying for' the lights. these will give a fantastic glow to the park at night and improve safety.
5. The connecting crossovers on Poolman Street are scheduled and will be done shortly.
6. There is a new path along Tucker Avenue leading to Poolman Street which now provides a safer crossing point for children getting to school.
7. Zoe Metherall from Mary Jevons Landscape Architects has prepared a concept plan for the childrens play space. This is now available to look at, and was discussed at the second community session on Saturday 7th February in. Rebecca is hoping to have the playground constructed by May.
9. Rebecca met with Port People representatives Ange Drew and Ari Pappas in January regarding the crossings at Beacon Road and Crichton Avenue, where the current configuration of footpaths is a little confused and dangerous for oncoming traffic. They discussed some simple short-term solutions for which quotations are now being sought. This work will have to be done next financial year as the budget for the current financial year is almost spent.

Works for 2009-2010 Financial Year

A business case has been prepared for Council. Works include:

1. Installation of picnic furniture
2. Planting of trees and low plants (including 12 months maintenance)
3. Community planting day/s
4. Turf improvement across the park
5. Improvements to the Trugo Club landscape and provision of shade.
6. Installation of new lighting system. Cabling for the lighting will be underground and solar panels on the Trugo Club roof will feed electricity back to the mains grid.

Traffic Management Issues

Port People have had discussions with the CoPP, Martin Foley's office, VicRoads and other stake-holders on traffic management matters. The local community is very concerned about the increased number of vehicles using Williamstown Road. The Plummer Street By-Pass has been in operation for a number of months and we have not seen any evidence of improvement of the situation. Residents along Williamstown and Beacon Roads and Howe Parade have also reported an increase of speeding vehicles. We are particularly concerned about the stretch of road between Beacon Road and the roundabout at the corner of Beacon Road and Howe Parade, and Howe Parade itself, because a number of children and elderly people use these crossings. We are urging local authorities and police to pay attention to this problem.

Closure of Public Toilets in Coles Building

Apparently Coles maintains this closure was because of vandalism and is 'an issue of the Body Corporate' rather than that of Coles. We, however, feel that:

1. Vandalism is an ongoing problem for all shopping centres. Somehow other places cope with it without closing the toilets. Why has Port Melbourne been singled out?
2. Coles is the chief 'body' of the 'Body Corporate' and clearly has the greatest power.
3. Coles should have notified Council before doing this and there should have been appropriate negotiations.
4. *If* this shopping complex has no obligation to the public in this matter, *why not?*

We protested about this to Janet Bolitho, who followed it up with Council. A Building Order has been issued to the body corporate council requesting that the toilets remain open and accessible to the public. Ms Bolitho also emailed us that she had spoken with a Coles representative, 'who tells me that Coles have also requested the Body Corporate to re-open the toilets to the public.'

Annual General Meeting Sunday 29 March

This will be at 11 am in the Trugo Club. a light lunch will be provided, and we are inviting the new mayor and our MP, Martin Foley, to attend and speak briefly on their visions for the future.