



Graffiti

Is it art or vandalism? If your fence or whatever has been tagged, you'll feel it's vandalism. Which is why our committee queried why Port Phillip Council paid some anonymous graffiti artists to paint graffiti behind St Kilda library and other places. Councillor Janet Bolitho replied that she has "been very concerned for some time about what appears to be quite a dramatic increase in graffiti around Port Melbourne." She then went on to explain that:

1. Council will remove graffiti on your property for free. All you have to do is fill out the graffiti removal consent to enter your property form, which you can either download from the Council website or phone Assist to send out.
2. Any graffiti on public property should be reported to Assist and it will be removed within 48 hours. She commented that commissioned artwork is "usually initiated in public places which have ongoing issues with tagging and to create some legitimate avenues for what some regard as street art."

This is a policy which other Councils have followed. However, has any research been done on whether or not doing so has resulted in a decrease of graffiti in illegitimate places? Have graffiti artists kept their side of this unspoken bargain?

What's happening to the North Port football ground?

The North Port Re-Development Project provides an opportunity to open up and diversify the facilities and use of the oval so that it serves a much broader and changed Port Melbourne community.

The proposal put forward seeks to refurbish or rebuild clubrooms, office and management areas, a health and fitness gym, multi-purpose meeting and program rooms, a café and catering/function area fit for 200 people, a toilet block, a specialist support services area for medical and physiotherapy use and a user storage area.

Mayor Frank O'Connor made it very clear the redevelopment should ensure the Port Melbourne Football/Cricket Clubs thrive, the heritage of the site is protected and maintained and that some connection be made with the wider Port Phillip community.

Port People Inc. was represented at all three reference group meetings and had the opportunity to raise the following concerns/questions on behalf of Garden City residents.

- Traffic safety especially crossings.
- Parking provision and management
- Bike racks and lanes
- Safe and quality paths, especially for older, disabled
- Disability access
- Minimising flow-on impacts on nearby residential and parkland areas
- Signage

The working group (City of Port Phillip, External Consultants and Architects) will continue communication with the reference group and reconvene if necessary. The project will be presented to later in the year. It is proposed to tender for construction in April 2010 with construction to begin July 2010.

Fairy Garden in Garden City Reserve

Local children have nicknamed the circular garden planted and designed by Angela Drew the “fairy garden” because, of course, fairies dance in circles and leave magical plants behind them. Angela, a local resident whose garden has featured in the Victorian Open Gardens Scheme, has designed this garden using contrasting plants with gold and silver foliage which will produce splashes of red, pink and dark blue flowers throughout much of the year. Rosemary will also produce an incense-like smell when it rains.

This bed indicates to local gardeners what is possible in our current conditions. In the centre is an Italian cypress, and in rings round the outside are the following succulents: the silvery grey Blue Chalk Sticks (*Genecio mandreliscae*); the red-edged *Cotyledon macrantha*; Silver Waves (*Cotyledon orbiculata*), and some sedums, which will spread.

The following shrubs have been planted in the inner circles: the *Callistemon Little John*; the white-flowered *Correa alba*, part of which will be pinned in order to give a wave-like appearance, a *Penstemon (Hidcote Pink)*; *Rosmarinus officianalis (Tuscan Blue)* and *Lonicera nitida (Baggins Gold)*.

As appropriate for our multi-cultural community and park, these plants come from Australia, the Mediterranean and South Africa.

Plants which work in our conditions:

Angela advises that, in addition to the plants she selected for the 'fairy garden', the following also do well in Garden City's conditions:

- *Doryanthus* (beautiful leaves with spectacular red flowers on large upright spikes)
- Kangaroo Paw (cut back hard after flowering and it will shoot again); grevilleas (which range from ground covers to shrubs)
- *Luna Apiculata* (an evergreen native with white flowers; it can be clipped into ornamental shapes and take the place of English Box)
- *Cordyline Australis* (a wonderful palm-like accent tree with strap like leaves).



Current Issues

Issues Port People are currently focusing on are:

1. Webb dock future development
2. Pushing for a rail link to service Webb Dock
3. Traffic congestion, particularly along Williamstown Road
4. The potential multi story development on the site of the Beacon Cove gymnasium
5. Access to the Coles toilets

Road reserve in park rezoned as parkland

More of the park is now safe. The road reserve in Garden City Reserve which was once part of Howe Parade is now officially rezoned as a Public Park and Recreation Zone.

Port People have a website!

Look us up our new website:

www.portpeople.org.au

Learn our history, achievements and current concerns, of which there are many.

New Children's Playground - Love it or?

It's probably unnerving for the neighbours living opposite the dragon (now officially named Portosaurus), but the new playground in GCR is proving very popular. Kids love the flying fox in particular. Even adults have been eying it with a certain longing. Port People Inc does have some concerns regarding safety, which we've taken up with Council. These include:

- The present signage which indicates it's a dogs off leash area, when of course it isn't.
- Lack of dog stations where dogs can be tied up so their owners can enjoy the playground without compromising the policy that dogs should not be within 5 metres of a playground
- Lack of shade
- Loose gravel
- Old broken glass under the bark

Some other problems were:

- Skateboarders skating on the wooden furniture
- People lifting their dogs to drink from the water fountain
- Not enough equipment for toddlers

With regard to the lack of shade, Rebecca Ramage from the City of Port Phillip, replied that 'it's against council policy' to have sails. She is working on providing more shade by planting more trees. She is also working on having the area made cooler. She is having the off-leash dog sign removed and the sign about the 5 metre rule installed by the fountain so that, hopefully, people can see it better. She is also having the contractor sweep the paths.

Caterpillar and other things missing from the playground

Approximately 15 things in the plan for the playground have not appeared, and Port People have been discussing with Council when (or, indeed, if) they are going to be installed.

They include:

- a toddler play deck and slide,
 - seating under the trees,
 - a sandpit and associated structures,
 - a sculptured hollowed out stump with little bowls and details for sand play,
 - a caterpillar with steering wheel antenna.
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What's Happening About Williamstown Road?

In a meeting on 9th December with VicRoads and representatives from CoPP, Port People representatives Ari Papas and Costa Tragas expressed their concerns about:

- B-doubles using Williamstown Road.
- additional noise experienced by residents
- an increase of vehicles using Williamstown Road plus an increase of speed (the meeting's minutes 'noted a high percentage travelling at 63 kph').
- heavy vehicles parked on Williamstown Road to access the local tuckshop on Centre Avenue and the toilets on Murphy Reserve
- very large vehicles parked and double parked on Prohasky Street waiting to enter the new container yard
- the dysfunctional nature of the Plummer Street truck bypass, particularly for vehicles travelling east and coming off the Westgate Freeway.

During the meeting, the Port People representatives were concerned by three things:

1. Inaccurate data on traffic flow was tabled at the meeting by the CoPP. This was acknowledged and Council's representatives promised to review this and resubmit it.
2. As reported by CoPP, the Port of Melbourne

Corporation has quality data but refuses to provide it to the public. Why?

3. The VicRoads representative commented that, contrary to the information provided by Martin Foley's office, Williamstown Road is a B-Double designated road. We have written to Martin Foley requesting clarification on this.

VicRoads will consider doing noise measurements and in cooperation with the CoPP will discuss with the relevant transport unions the issue of truck driver behaviour in order to encourage trucks to use the bypass instead of Williamstown Road. Comments were also made about possible future resurfacing of Williamstown Road with a sound deadener that may reduce noise.

A further meeting will be held in February to review all data available and receive additional feedback from VicRoads and CoPP. After that we intend to call a public meeting of Williamstown Road residents and invite all stakeholders.

Is Port Melbourne Discriminated Against?

Local resident Richard Webb points out that Beaconsfield Road is the same class road as Williamstown Road, yet there is a curfew for trucks there is not for Williamstown Road. He asks, "Are water front residents more valued than those on Williamstown Road? The trucks using Williamstown Rd could for the most part use the motorway as the entry to the ports, especially if the entry to the ports was moved to the roundabout closest to the Westgate Bridge and away from Williamstown Road.

The container dump entry point could also be moved. If 1.39 billion was spent on the M1 why was this not done under the same project?". Every suburb on the M1 has noise barriers except those closest to the city. Port Melbourne has funny yellow perforated barriers that don't stop noise. How can we spend 1.39 billion on a

motorway and not get noise barriers? Who is representing Port Melbourne's interests in all of this?

A vision for Williamstown Road

Another resident, Richard Webb, suggests:

- Williamstown and Normanby Roads should have trees down the centre of the road as Williamstown Road between the Port and Graham Street already has. Mid road plantings reduce traffic speed.
- Copenhagen-style bike lanes on Williamstown Road, with the bike lane next to the footpath and then car park spaces, and then traffic. This has already been done in Swanston St near Melbourne University. Bike riders are protected from motorists by the parked cars, and vice-versa.
- And of course, something to be done about the mutilated plane trees on one side of Williamstown Road — anything.

Port People Inc. Contact Us

Ari Pappas
Chair

Port People Inc

Mobile: 0419 755930

Email: contact_us@portpeople.org.au

www.portpeople.org.au

PO Box 396

Port Melbourne, 3207

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