

21st CENTRUY NEIGHBOURHOODS

INNOVATIVE HOUSING FOR OLDER ADULTS IN YARRA.

Forum Richmond town Hall 18 February 2009

Key presentation. Prof. Dimitry Reed. Paper attached

Questions – Dimity Reed

- Q Older Persons City of Monash - mix of group of housing on top of shopping mall - how does this work for children? Where would they have the space to run around in multigenerational housing?
- A – many people grow up in terrace houses – the way we design must offer play areas – and we should encourage people to play in the street. Issues of traffic speed etc should be addressed. We should re-claim the street for more than traffic, socialising, meeting, playing. Terraces are not bad.
- Q - Demos Krousos - issue for planners – traffic etc every house has 2 cars etc. What advice for local gov re contested space. How do we take over from cars?
- A - A useful book - Dimity will forward info – a traffic engineer – talks of reclaiming the streets, more signs, more lights, etc takes initiative from drivers. Drivers will respond to human action on a street.
- Q -Sue Lee from Matrix Guild - how does multi-generational housing acknowledge that many women are now single and live on their own?
- A – this doesn't suit everyone – there has to be different models for different groups. Dimity working with Women's Housing Assoc to look at models for single women. There is a lot of interest in this area and it is part of the discussion. Cluster by friends or groups of people. MG doesn't suit everyone but it is interesting in terms of
- Q - Peter Dunn from Common Equity Housing
Gov planning controls – do they need to be changed or is it that they need to be educated.
- A – education – there are many controls already we may be over regulated but there needs to be thinking and understanding and education for planners in that there needs to be broad acceptance of different ideas.
- Q - Jenny Backholer – OCA retirement village constructions are all for over 55. How do you get a better mix of ages? At the moment it seems to one or the other, nothing midway.
- A - Why do we put old people together – do they want to be separated? – some would prefer to get away from young but others do not. There should be many different options. Societies are just made up of millions of individuals and most people can work their way around a network. Difficult to think of only having one response for older people

- Q - Robyn Edgar Melbourne City Council Older Persons Network. What materials should be used? Heat issues etc. example of units in Kensington – 60 degrees inside new unit. No ventilation, one window, one balcony door.
- A - Planners don't address orientation – therefore the best is not made of this, sun, heat etc. Should be covered by planning regulations. Builders re not interested, they will just build it. Orientation is extremely important.
- Q - Jackie – older houses in Yarra – not ideal for ideal.
- A – Density becomes an issue if everyone lives in one storey close to the city, but it can't be sustained. Can't be achieved by maintaining that model.
- Q – Jackie – no. of single bed houses being built means many people will live alone and there will be issue of loneliness. Developers are doing this. How do we impact upon the developers?
- A – People will buy these. Assume they are making an informed decision. Would older people choose this option?
- Q - Fran – best way to engage the corporate sector as well as Dept of Housing.
- A - Why is Dept of Housing not here? Get the Minister engaged. Start with Yarra developers – bring them together – the architects and the developers and tell them we are interested in older person's housing and ask them what they think. Invite them in. Let them know council would like to work with them. Start with ones who had developed in Yarra whose work has been good. Invite both the big and the small.
- Q - David Brandt Vic Uni Housing Alliance – no success with building industry over a decade. No interest at all.
- A - Don't hector – invite. Builders are more difficult as they do them minimum required by regulations.
- Q Helen Kingham – BSL. Are there any financial models for MG housing which include people on lower incomes?
- A – Should be part of the discussion about what you do and who funds it. Get orgs like Bendigo Bank and Melbourne Affordable Housing and BSL together. Get some government support. MG housing is for ordinary people who can't get into the housing market and want a communal response.
- Q – Rich Community – 1000 families in 5 tall buildings. Multicultural – Chinese and Viet – almost all non English. Can't read papers or understand TV therefore left with 1 room for 1000 families to share for language appropriate activities. Lots of older residents.
- A – Yarra will raise issues with Housing Officer.

Panel Presentation.

Jeff Fiedler, Housing for the Aged Action Group
Beris Campbell, Wesley Mission Melbourne

**Peter Dunn Common Equity Housing
Dr Irene Bouzo. Ethnic Communities Council of Vic.**

Questions – Panel

- Q – Older Person’s Ref Group – to Irene Bouza – how common is reversion to old language
- A – lots of research – there is decline but it is not always due to illness or dementia not everyone had English lessons so didn’t get fluency. Imp issue
- Q – question to Peter Dunn re multi-ageing. Co-housing model is being developed. Looking to embrace new models of housing.
- Q - Local resident – community residents should be trained to respond to needs of older in neighbourhood. Eg. Shop keepers etc.
- A - Irene answered – in UK they have these programs so that people can age in place. People move a lot in Australia so it doesn’t always work. Need to create communities and their needs to be lots of advocacy.
- Q - Woman Older Person’s Ref Group City of Monash – what happens when student finishes course with Homeshare
- A - Beris – some students stay on – commonly they move on – recruitment for a new one. Relationships are often maintained even if student goes home. Older people do move on to death or resi-care so it is often the student who suffers the loss.
- Q - Woman Older Person’s Ref Group City of Monash – Q to Peter Dunn how do the units operate, how do people pay
- A - Peter – was originally set up for people on low income. Now setting up scheme for next group up - NERAS – feds provide funding for 10 year cycle. Hoping to enable people to take up home ownership. Take a rental and then possibly purchase.
- Q – Alan Gruner – BSL Q to Jeff – is there any future between private sector and not for profits or government.
- A – Jeff – needs gov involvement – \$6b going into public housing – but there needs to be 10 times this much. Reg perspective – private sector runs rampant – gov needs to control.

Workshops: Themes from Panel presentations.

Co-operative Housing.

Question 1. Who would this work for?

Affordability Issues

- Multi-generational

- Widen criteria/eligibility/flexibility
- Co-op model – many types should be available
- -more socially inclusive, sense of community
- Importance of sustainability/sharing
- Broader range of residents/mix of people.

Question 2. What would make it work well?

- Ask people what they want – website!
- Proximity to each other, services and facilities
- Determine degree of cooperation
- Clear principles/body corporate rules
- Committed people – a lot of work is involved in set up/maintaining
- People need to be prepared to make it work.

Options for older residents living in Yarra

- AMCOR - opportunity for coop housing, affordable housing
advocate govt
perhaps Federal Gov. money.
- Compulsory purchase of land by Government.
- Leasing of property for use for coops.
- Stamp duty costs
- Development of existing housing – bringing people together
 - Program supported, get rid of red tape.
- Map land and building suitable for coop housing developments in Yarra
- Retail/encourage residential care facilities to locate in Yarra.

Recommendation

- City of Yarra would be recognised as a world leader if they were successful in persuading the corporate sector to develop the AMCOR site into a cooperative housing venture.
- If this was persuaded through an enabling process encourage people to join together to design and build sustainable cooperative housing complexes of their choice based on universal design principles with government contribution and support.

Housing in the High Rise

Question 1. Who would this work for?

- Accessibility
 - Wheel chairs
 - Emergency access versus additional/higher needs
- Multigenerational
- Single/lone person households
- Homeshare
 - Multigenerational
 - Students/retirees
- Low rise accommodation.

Question 2. What would make it work well?

- Advocacy for Class 11 flats to remain
- Sustainability improvements
 - Quality versus design concepts
 - Productivity – install individual laundry in each flat.
- Mixed use
 - Retail versus residential
 - Define use
- Retain open – green space
- Develop ‘tradeoffs’ in local planning scheme
- Plan for increase in demand
- Plan for current needs
- Integration into wider community
- Accept high rise development in inner city – Yarra wide.
- Multi- use
 - Community facilities
- Rejig use of space
- Access
- Landscape – oval
- Control by community Centres/people
- Variety of economic background
- Open space below towers
- Waiting list for sole person elderly = modifications of dwellings
- Space for community activity indoor and outdoor
- Various activities – different needs
- Media buy-in
- Redesign of existing space
- Granny flats
- Placing older/additional needs on lower floors
- Change housing stock – reallocate lone person:1 bedroom
- Maximising land use
 - Housing
 - Recreation
 - Sustainability
 - Retail
 - Accessibility.

Housing for Ethnic Groups

Question 1. Who would this work for?

- All CALD communities in Yarra

Question 2 What would make it work?

- Key consideration for Yarra could be for high density living
- A community venue
- Provide social support groups
- Planned activity groups
- Remove barriers to access to services
- More social support groups
- A venue for information about aged care groups and services
- Social activities, engagement.

Question 3 What could be the options for Yarra?

- Multigenerational engagement
- Keep people in their local neighbourhood.
- Netherlands example can work at Yarra if some % of houses can be reserved
- Community connection and engagement like in UK is good. Dept of Housing and Council can promote social connected hubs.

Recommendations

Promote

- Cultural and linguistically appropriate support groups and (enhance) services with increased and a variety of housing options.
- Learning from other inner city municipalities.
- Need more paid bilingual coordinators and workers.
- Access to information.

- More free translators/interpreter services for aged care to enable better access to information
- Watch the trends of growth of ageing community and reasons for that.
- More single room housing being built in Yarra which may bring more ageing population.
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Homeshare.

Question 1. Who would this work for?

- People with PETS
- No fees at present – trying to seal concept and hard to charge up front.
- Good outcome for HACC – reduce service demand
- Commitment is for 6 months minimum
- HACC Social Support program. Homeshare has not been funded to grow, but hopeful of more funds from State government.

Question 2 What would make it work well?

- Secure funding
- It works for couples, not just singles
- Range of skills to assess for Homeshare is specialised. Got to have a good recruitment strategy. Advertise on the internet now on Gumtree. People have to reflect on themselves. You can't 'book in' to a house. Accommodation varies a lot; maintenance costs of house might mean some financial contributions. \$70 a week is the highest contribution.

Question 3

- Public housing authorities support
- One coordinator match workload 25 – 30
- Like running a small hostel with one EFT.
- Representative from Vietnamese Women's Assoc is very supportive, great for Vietnamese students. Disability much more complex, workload around 10 maximum.

Recommendation

- To see Homeshare grow in City of Yarra, building on initial discussions with Council Officers.
- Accessible to all Yarra residents including tenants of public housing.
- City of Yarra to advocate on residents behalf for Public Housing to accept Homeshare students as residents in older people's accommodation.

Private Rental

Question 1 Who would this work for?

- People who cannot afford to purchase or do not want to buy
- Yarra 50.7% of household are rented
- Pensioners – Retirees/older people/ethnic community who have been in rental market. MA Council rec to Minister – Lisa Neville.

Questions 2 What would make it work well?

- Office of Housing new ideas.
- Government investment/involvement in provision
- Rental controls/Ren assistance % of Y not %of rental market puts up price of rental.
- Long term lease option
- Community Facilities included – link with services
- Retirement Villages Act rental controlled by link to CPI
- Research of how Europeans control long term rental.

Question 3 What could be the options for older residents living in Yarra?

- Conversion of high rise to retain public ownership and multigenerational living
- Homeshare because of the number of people living alone
- Abbeyfields – model Burnley St, communal dinning new facilities, funded jointly by government and Housing Ass.
- Private developers, high rise of Bondi Development high rise.
- More public rental housing with a range of models
- Affordable security of tenure, universal design.
- A revamped Office of Housing
- Government legislation for rent control in the private market to enable long-term rental for older people.

Recommendations

1. More public rental housing with a range of models
 - Market tends to cover younger renters
 - High rise
 - Rent control
 - Good design with access to close facilities
 - Combined with Housing Ass, City Housing/Office of Housing/DHS/Local Government – Better integration/High rise program
 - Require workers to speak many languages.
 2. Retail Public ownership.
Lost opportunities
 - Newlands Estate – Kodak
 - Pentridge Estate.
- Government provision

- Involve Developers
- Round table discussion with Minister and local members and local government
- Cooperative approach with Office of Housing
- Rathdowne St – development – other site
- Tap into federal infrastructure funding \$6B.

Wildcard

Question 1 Who would this work for?

- What do Council do?
- Asset rich/home owners
 - Onerous to move/change house
 - Choose – keeping pets, retrofitting, alternatives suitable local area
 - Declining condition of houses
- Focus on social housing (low income older pop)
- Planning for next 10 – 20 years

Question 2 What would make it work well?

- What is an age-friendly community
 - UN project
 - Eg transport, housing, physical infrastructure
 - Part of Positive Ageing Strategy – how assessed, wider circulation?
 - Progress report
- How to make the project more common place, minimise barriers (Council)

Question 3 What could be the options for older residents living in Yarra?

- Investigate sites suitable for development in partnership
- Register one stop shop of information
 - Options and implications of each (security of options)
 - Local, rather than a state-wide service (eg Seniors Vic)
 - Should Council replicate
- Universal housing – suitable for all ages groups or adaptable and written into local planning policy (eg bedrooms on ground floors, wide doors passageways)
- Leading city
- Accessibility – footpaths, mobility, bluestones, gutters.

Recommendations

- In 12 months
 - 'One Stop Shop of information' providing information on housing alternatives
 - Localised
 - Accessible for all
 - High level of awareness
 - Investigate development opportunities/partnership to use council land (eg sell 'air rights').