
This record is provided as a summary of the questions asked by members of the public during Public Question Time at a meeting of the Yarra City Council. This summary includes the original question, the response provided at the meeting and, where applicable, the response provided after the meeting to any question taken on notice (which is included in red text).

7.1 Ms Jenny Port - Strategic Planning of Brunswick Street/Wellington Street Precinct

Question:

Is there an update on the Strategic Planning work that is taking place on the Collingwood area; Brunswick Street to Wellington Street Precinct?

I live next to Victoria Parade and right next door to the most recent application for a large development by Tim Gurner in Wellington Street. Some time ago at a Council meeting I asked the question on the status of the studies and was advised it would be estimated around August/September. I am a little distressed to hear that it will now be December as I feel that by the time the work is done it will be too late to do anything about the proposed development by Tim Gurner. Can you do something so that the work could be done more quickly?

Response:

The Director Planning and Place Making advised that the study is currently in process and progressing. In terms of the recent Council resolution, there will be a report prepared over the next four to six weeks in terms of an update on all the strategic locations, commercial areas, etc.

The Manager City Strategy advised the report is likely to be presented to Council later in the year and are aiming to have the consultants reports back to officers in September/October. There needs to be a statutory amendment document so that will need to be prepared as well. We are aiming to provide a report to Council most likely in December and that is still subject to that work being completed; completed consultant's reports and the planning scheme amendment.

Mayor: Can the process be accelerated?

The Manager City Strategy advised that the process couldn't be accelerated as the consultants are flat out doing the work that they need to do, including; Urban Design Advice; Heritage Advice and also Traffic and Transport Advice, that will all come together and that will also need to be legally reviewed. Consultants have been advised to progress the work as quickly as possible and are reporting back to officers on a regular basis to ensure that we are keeping to timeframes.

Mayor: When the draft controls are prepared is it possible to have the department ready to review them and approve them as soon as possible?

The Manger City Strategy also advised that regular contact is kept with the State Department to ensure that they are aware of the work that is currently occurring, including Queen Parade, Johnston Street and Swan Street.

The Director Planning and Place Making advised that in relation to the particular development Ms Port mentioned, the Statutory Office sent a letter to the applicant

back in October 2016 from a preliminary assessment point of view expressing concern as it was seen at the time and to paraphrase; "That the proposal does not reflect the rhythm and fine grain of the surrounding area and the extent of demolition in height and scale of the proposed site is of concern."

7.2 Mr Graham Aldridge - IDAC Meetings

Question:

At a recent IDAC meeting two strongly contested Planning Applications failed to obtain a voting decision because there were only two Councillors in attendance. This situation caused great inconvenience and cost to everyone concerned.

Can this Council assure us that this situation will not happen again?

I'm expecting to have a Planning Application listed for an IDAC meeting decision shortly and cannot afford to witness a decision failure like before.

What can this Council do to change the IDAC meeting process to prevent voting failures occurring? i.e. a substitute Councillor for each ward?

Response:

The Mayor advised that it is not usual to only have two Councillors present at an IDAC meeting and it generally happens when we have done everything we can to get a substitute Councillor. Usually if someone is unable to be there someone replaces them but sometimes it's just not possible. Rather than defer the whole meeting for another two weeks the meeting goes ahead. What is rare is that the Councillors don't agree. The item was heard again two days later and a decision was made by Councillors. It is unfortunate that it happened, we are reviewing the process to see if we can come up with something better, but given it is fairly unusual it is possibly the best way we can do things, but we will certainly review it.

Cr Chen Yi Mei: Apologised for not attending that particular IDAC meeting as she was the substitute and advised that she not able to attend due to travelling interstate for her full-time role.

7.3 Mr Herschel Landes - Bridge Road Streetscape Plan

Question:

At the last Council meeting I came and spoke to support the presentation of the proposed draft Bridge Road Streetscape Masterplan being put out for public submission. After I made that submission and during the discussion, a couple of issues came up, one of which was the length in time for some of the initiatives; 10 plus years and the other was a question of funding, in response to one of the Councillors question as to why long term opportunities in the plan could not be brought forward. The comment was made that there was no money to fund initiatives in the Bridge Road Streetscape Masterplan, which surprised me.

Will Council please consider bringing forward the response times indicated in the plan to a more reasonable time limit and provide a commitment to a budget funding mechanism as part of the streetscape submission process and therefore give a little more certainty on the process?

Response:

The Mayor advised that it is a draft plan so we are seeking public input, it is not a final plan and the timelines are not final. Council is committed to improving the

streetscape along Bridge Road and in terms of timelines and budget, the budget is a year to year business and the timelines are offered as a draft so we can consider those timelines and explore them as part of the consultation process.

The Director Planning and Place Making also advised that the draft plan has a short and longer term actions, we have tried to certainly be pragmatic in relation to those, not everything can be done in Year 1. Some matters are relatively minor and easier, some are very complex and need to be analysed to see if it is prudent to proceed and then budget allocation provided. There is money in the forward years and that will be subject to budget bidding process as the Mayor mentioned, in terms of Year 1 and the approved Council budget cycle.

We have engaged with various agencies and there has been advocacy at high levels with those agencies; if they can assist with funding as we try to bring the projects to life.

7.4 Ms Alice Maria Wong - Parking Permit

Question:

I live and work in Richmond. I never knew Yarra Council had a December 2003 ruling until much later when I encountered a parking problem. When I called Yarra Council I then realised the Council decision of the 'December 2003 Ruling.'

Councillor Barbour, a previous Councillor of Langridge Ward made the suggestion of the December 2003 Ruling, contradictory to reality as locals voiced complaints. I believe this should be abolished.

I have applied for a parking permit many times but have been rejected due to the December 2003 ruling. Why do you give me such a hard time?

I parked my car just outside my house and was given a parking fine. Council needs to change the December 2003 ruling. I need a legal parking permit so that I can park my car outside my house. I pay Council rates, I should have the right to enjoy parking in my street.

Response:

The Mayor advised that there has been several responses as to why you are not able to obtain a parking permit. An officer will contact you to discuss the matter.