



Shire of Busselton E-News May/June 2007

www.busselton.wa.gov.au

MESSAGE FROM THE SHIRE PRESIDENT

It is wonderful to see a great deal of community involvement in the many projects the Shire is currently involved in including the Locke Estate consultation and development of the Local Tourism Planning Strategy and Local Commercial Planning Strategy. Significant community involvement also assisted in the development of the first Walk-Cycle Busselton Guide, released this month.

Another first is the release of the Shire's new Communications Framework document. This Framework aims to underpin the improvement of services and support the Shire's vision to become a high performing organisation by adhering to principles and values in relation to communications. A significant effort has been put into reviewing our activities in this area and each section within the Framework has, or will have; its own more detailed strategy on the actions the Shire is going to take to achieve the required improvements.

In closing I would like to encourage community members to consider nominating for the position of councillor in the up-coming extraordinary election to be held on 28th June. If you miss the nomination period for this election then consider nominating for the ordinary election in October. This is your opportunity to represent the interests of electors, ratepayers and residents by providing leadership and guidance to the community.

Bev Clarke Shire President

ELECTION AND REFERENDUM UPDATE

28th June, 2007

To participate in the referendum on the location of the Busselton Hospital and the extraordinary election of a Councillor to fill a Central Rural Ward vacancy, people must be enrolled to vote (enrolments closed on 9th May).

The Shire is undertaking a referendum to give a clear indication of the electors' preference of location for the new hospital between the existing Mill Road, Busselton site and the Vasse-Newtown site that has been announced as the location for the hospital. All electors in the Shire of Busselton are eligible to participate in the referendum if they are properly enrolled. Voting in the extraordinary election will be confined to enrolled electors in the Central Rural Ward.

Both the referendum and the extraordinary election will take place on 28 June, 2007 and they are being conducted by postal vote by the Western Australian Electoral Commission. Upon finalisation of the count a new Councillor will be elected to the Council to represent the Central Rural Ward and the results of the referendum will be forwarded to the Health Minister, Premier and WA Parliament as a true expression of opinion of the electors of the Shire.

Please note that anyone not at the supplied address in June or not able to access their postal service (voting packages are to be lodged with Australia Post in the first week of June) will need to make alternative arrangements to obtain their mail if they wish to participate. In accordance with the Local Government Act, there is no provision for early or absentee voting during a postal election.

Nominate to Become a Councillor - Extraordinary Election on 28 June

Nominations close TODAY (Tuesday 22nd May) at 4pm. Visit www.busselton.wa.gov.au for further information.

MEETINGS OF COUNCIL

The agendas and minutes of Council's meetings can be located on the Shire's website at:

<http://www.busselton.wa.gov.au/indexpages/indexagendaminutes.htm>

WALK-CYCLE BUSSELTON GUIDE RELEASED

The Walk-Cycle Guide was officially released on Tuesday 15th May and is a project that has been undertaken by the Shire of Busselton in conjunction with the Department of Planning and Infrastructure's Country Pathways Grant Scheme.

The project came about when the Shire of Busselton was successful in obtaining a Promotional Grant from the Country Pathways Grant Scheme to the value of \$9,350, which was matched by the Shire, to promote current walking and cycling facilities in the Shire of Busselton.

The aim of the project has been to promote physical activity in the form of walking and cycling within the community of Busselton. This includes walking and cycling groups, schools, community members and tourists.

The Guide that has been produced is a small "snap-shot" of some of the walking and cycling opportunities available and it is hoped that it will promote increased interest in these and other forms of physical activity within the Shire of Busselton. The Guide is a working document and it is hoped that in the future further maps will be added to it.

A copy of the Guide is available free of charge at 44 different participating outlets in the Shire of Busselton. Please contact Jeremy O'Neill, Recreation Officer on 97810356 or jeremy.oneill@busselton.wa.gov.au for your nearest outlet.

APPROVALS ISSUED FOR LAURENCE WINERY, BUT STATUE TO GO

The Council at its meeting on 26th April considered applications for planning consent for development that has occurred at Laurance Estate in Wilyabrup and it provided approval for several aspects of the development.

Laurance Estate sought retrospective approval for development that was undertaken at the property on Caves Road some time ago, which included the use of an existing building as a restaurant and reception centre, the extension of an existing dam, a structure within the dam and other ancillary features. All applications were assessed in accordance with the relevant planning law, scheme and policies.

The Council granted approval for the restaurant and reception centre use and the extension of the existing dam, subject to maximum residual volume of the dam being reduced. It refused consent for the structure within the dam ('Free as a Bird' sculpture), an apple tree sculpture and exotic vegetation at the property's entrance, and overflow car parking. All other current landscaping at the property was also granted approval by the Council.

The aspects of the development that have been refused planning consent are some of those which have been assessed to be inconsistent with the provisions of the Town Planning Scheme and policies of both the local and state government.

This included the 'Free as a Bird' sculpture. While several Councillors acknowledged the beauty of the sculpture located in the dam, the Council determined that planning consent would be refused due to its height and location relative to Caves Road.

While maintaining the integrity and requirements of the Scheme and policies, staff have gone to considerable lengths to assist the proponents to obtain the licences they need to carry out the approved aspects of the development.

Council is hopeful that the proponent would consider reviewing the location and height of the 'Free as a Bird' sculpture, such that the visual amenity of the area could be maintained and the sculpture could be located on the property to comply with the policy provisions.

CAVES ROAD VISUAL MANAGEMENT POLICY WORKSHOP

The Shire of Busselton held a workshop in February to canvas community and stakeholder feedback for its review of the Caves Road Visual Management Policy. The workshop, facilitated by local landscape architect,

Bill James at the Wardan Cultural Centre, included a bus trip along Caves Road. Definition of landscape character and consideration of land use changes were explored by representatives of the wine, tourism and arts industries, Yallingup, Wilyabrup and Dunsborough resident associations and state and local government agencies.

Workshop participants generally agreed that Caves Road has a distinctive and unique character that should be protected and that land use changes have the potential to either strengthen or weaken the identifiable character. There was particular concern that elements close to or adjacent to the road had a strong, sometimes negative, impact on the existing character. Participants expressed a willingness to participate further in the development of provisions which would guide the Shire in making land use planning decisions. Shire President Bev Clarke, who attended the workshop, said the Shire continues to review and adjust its policies to reflect community desires and aspirations. Caves Road is much loved by residents and visitors and has important landscape values which must be identified and preserved for the future.

A draft policy will be developed for consideration by Council, followed by a formal consultation period with shire residents and stakeholders.

A full report on the workshop outcomes has been produced by the Shire and is available for viewing on the website at www.busselton.wa.gov.au or by phoning David Brash at the Shire on 97810481 to obtain a copy.

LOCAL TOURISM PLANNING STRATEGY

The Shire is working towards completion of a Local Tourism Planning Strategy (LTPS) during the remainder of 2007. The LTPS will feed into preparation of the Shire's Local Planning Strategy and Scheme Review process. Already complete is an Accommodation Audit and Issues and Opportunities Paper. Input to the Paper was provided by a community group of over 40 people who participated by providing valuable feedback and local knowledge.

A Local Tourism Planning Strategy Newsletter provides further information and is available on the Shire's Web site www.busselton.wa.gov.au or by contacting Mersina Robinson at the Shire on 97810342.

LOCAL COMMERCIAL PLANNING STRATEGY

The Shire has commenced formulation of a Local Commercial Planning Strategy (the Strategy) that will provide a long term framework for the location of adequate commercial and industrial uses throughout the Shire. A consultant team led by Connell Wagner has been contracted by the Shire to work with the community and industry on its preparation. The Strategy will guide future development of retail, commercial and industrial areas to promote sustainable growth. The Strategy will also be used to inform the development of the Shire's Local Planning Strategy which will form the basis for the review of the District Town Planning Scheme.

The Consultant team is led by Jeff Barham of Connell Wagner. Jeff together with the Shire staff will be giving a briefing on the Project to the Dunsborough Townscape Advisory Committee on Tuesday 22 May 2007 from 3.45pm to 4.45pm at the Dunsborough Playing Fields Clubrooms, Dunsborough Lakes Drive.

The project is currently in its formative stages with the focus on data collection and preliminary stakeholder consultation. The purpose of this briefing is to hear and understand community views and aspirations on the strategic commercial issues facing the Shire and in particular Dunsborough. The outcomes of this briefing will be included as inputs to the Issues and Opportunities Paper being developed by the Consultants. This paper is expected to be available by mid year for public review.

NO GRAVES, BUT IMPORTANT TREES AT KOOKABURRA CARAVAN PARK

The Busselton Jetty Working Group has released an independent report which concludes that there are no official records indicating there were burials inside Kookaburra Caravan Park.

Co-Chair of the Working Group, Hon Adele Farina MLC said the Working Group engaged the consultants to prepare a detailed report following concerns expressed by local community members about the possibility of graves on the existing caravan park site.

The report has found that there is no evidence of graves existing, however given the oral accounts which cannot be entirely discounted, should any development occur on Kookaburra Caravan Park, the Working Group will recommend Landcorp develop and maintain an Archaeological Watching Brief.

This will mean that should relocation of the caravan park occur, national best practice processes to monitor all ground disturbances on the site will be employed. These are the practices used on significant Indigenous or European heritage sites.

Co-Chair of the Working Group, Shire President Cr Bev Clarke said that given the concerns of some people in the community about this matter the Working Group has decided to release the report to the public to review and make their own conclusions.

The report is available on the Shire's website www.busselton.wa.gov.au and in hard copy at the Shire should anyone want to review the report.

In addition to this, to address concerns raised during the community consultation, the Working Group has asked Landcorp to engage surveyors to plot the location of peppermint trees on the three sites that make up Kookaburra Caravan Park.

The design over the three Kookaburra Caravan Park sites will be reviewed with a view to being able to retain as many established peppermint trees as possible as requested by the community said Ms Farina.

This work is to ensure as much retention of Western Ringtail Possum habitat as possible in addition to establishing new peppermint trees on nearby sites.

The Working Group is attempting to address as many issues as possible raised by the community and stakeholders in a review of the concept plan prior to consideration by Council and the State Government, Cr Clarke said.

Cr Clarke and Ms Farina stressed that no decision has been made concerning the development of the current Kookaburra Caravan Park. This decision is to be made by Cabinet and Council.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS JOIN STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN SECOND LOCKE ESTATE WORKSHOP

Community members joined representatives from State and Local Government agencies in formulating concept plans for the future of Locke Estate.

At the second workshop, held on May 8, 33 people attended to discuss three example concepts and refine plans for Council to consider prior to releasing for public comment.

Participants included randomly selected community members, community groups, council officers and representatives from government departments including Busselton Water, FESA, Planning and Infrastructure, Sport and Recreation, Environment, Main Roads.

One of the key issues raised was management of various aspects of the sites, including overall environmental management. The three example concepts were prepared as a base for the workshop participants to work with and build on.

Two groups worked on each concept separately. They were able to draw plans, and were asked to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and constraints of those plans. These ideas were then presented to the whole workshop to discuss further.

The three broad concepts discussed involved: retention of the existing campsite areas; consolidation of the site into compatible uses on existing campsite areas (this could incorporate a low key caravan park or public open space, as suggested by the community); and removal of all lease boundaries following lease expiry in 2011 with a view to planning the site into zones, to cater, for example, for educational/eco style uses (as also suggested in the workshop).

These workshops took into account the community consultation to date, along with the results of the first workshop, to ensure all ideas were input into the process. The consultant Connell Wagner is now further developing the concepts discussed at the workshop to present to council for public advertising.

Obviously the clear themes of low cost accommodation, environmental protection, improved access for other people in the community, and debate about a caravan park continued through the process. The Shire has received very positive feedback about the whole process so far, and hope to maintain the momentum towards achieving a good community outcome.

The community will have another opportunity to comment on the concepts developed from this workshop during a four week public comment period, which is expected to occur in June/July, subject to Council approval. Dates will be advertised.

Information from consultation will be considered by Council prior to recommendations on the future of the reserve being submitted to the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure, who will make final decisions on the site's future.

COMMUNICATIONS FRAMEWORK RELEASED

The Shire of Busselton recently released its Communications Framework to the community. This framework is in direct response to the community's call for the Shire to be more proactive in its communications.

This call came through loud and clear in the community survey undertaken in 2005 which identified that while the Shire generally communicated well they didn't listen well and improvement was need, Council subsequently included a communications focus within its Strategic Plan 2006-2011.

The Communications Framework that has subsequently been developed provides an over arching statement to our community and various stakeholders on how and when we plan to communicate with them.

This Communications Framework aims to underpin the improvement of services and support the Shire's vision to become a high performing organisation by adhering to principles and values in relation to communications.

Each section within the Framework has, or will have; its own more detailed strategy on the actions the Shire is going to take to achieve the required improvements.

Sections in the Framework refer to the Shire's brand image and reputation, the intention in relation to communications with residents and ratepayers including consultation and engagement, plus an internal communications plan which will assist staff in their own effective communications.

This Framework document and its underpinning strategies and plans are never "finished" they will be constantly reviewed, revitalised and rewritten to ensure they reflect the changing expectations and environment in which the Shire operates.

In developing the Communications Framework and its associated strategies and plans other corporate documentation has been consulted and utilised including the Strategic Plan 2006-2011, the Corporate Plan, the Customer Complaints Charter, the Access and Inclusion Plan and the Customer Service Standards Plan and Staff Guide, currently under review.

The Communications Framework is available to view on the Shire's web site www.busselton.wa.gov.au. A copy is also available to view at the Busselton and Dunsborough Libraries and Shire Administration Building.

SHIRE OF BUSSELTON 2020 PROJECT GROUP MAKING PROGRESS IN THE CBD

The new roundabout at the Peel Terrace and Causeway Road intersection is proving to be a much welcomed improvement for locals and visitors alike.

The intersection has long been a problem area for vehicles and pedestrian access and the Shire was awarded State Government Black Spot funding for the construction of a roundabout in the interests of improving road safety earlier this year.

To maximise the opportunity to enhance the access point to the town, the Shire's Busselton 2020 Project Group endorsed a design workshop involving Shire engineers and planning staff, urban design and art consultants. The high value of the site as part of the town's entry precinct was identified by the group and the Shire supported the development of a concept plan for the area.

The concept plan was developed from a holistic view, treating the site as the Causeway Precinct, linking pedestrians to the natural, calm beauty of the river, significant natural parklands, community facilities and heritage areas while creating a sense of entering into another environment rather than an 'entry statement'.

The site already includes a number of features, both natural and man made including the Waljin Aboriginal Garden, Rotary Park and weekend market area, playground, Busselton Visitor Centre, the Old Butter Factory, Heritage Park, picnic areas on the Vasse River and St Mary's historic stone church.

Using the road surfaces, textures and colours from the surrounding environment the concept plan creates a sense of place and an atmosphere of entering a 'significant site'. Design considerations included treatments for the roundabout, road infrastructure, footpath treatments, lighting and potential public art and interpretive trails.

South West artist Lance Chadd has applied a design to the roundabout, pavements and islands to reflect the colours of the landscape as related to the indigenous six seasons, alongside European seasons and the calendar months of the year.

The project offers an opportunity to enhance community enjoyment and provide safer access to the area through improved traffic management.

The next major project involves the installation of another raised road crossing on Queen Street which, along with funding, was recently approved by the Shire. The crossover threshold will be located near the corner of Kent Street in front of the old Fire Station. It will remove safety concerns for pedestrians and act as a calming device for vehicle traffic on Queen Street.

This additional raised pavement will allow for safer pedestrian crossing along a very busy section of Queen Street and is considered a safer alternative to a crosswalk.

The Busselton 2020 Project Group was established by the Shire as an advisory group to help identify and implement the Townscape Guide Plan. Where necessary it makes recommendations on; the 10 year staged implementation of the plan, key design elements not covered by the plan as well as budget requirements for future projects.

The Group, which is made up of representatives from tourism, business, Shire staff and Councillors and community members, continues to develop and recommend theme/s for the townscape works that reflect existing local amenity and character of Busselton and enriches the history, diversity and vibrancy of the town through effective community representation and participation.

SMOKE HAZARD ALERT

Shire of Busselton Environmental Health Officers have called on home-owners to help reduce smoke haze this winter.

Research confirms that smoke from incorrectly operated domestic wood heaters is the main cause of the dark haze that often can be seen and smelt during winter.

This pollution, particularly on windless days, is unfortunately getting worse - but there are ways people with domestic wood heaters can help.

By maintaining clean chimneys and heaters and burning dry seasoned hardwoods in an efficient fire, residents could help reduce the amount of haze.

Wood smoke is a pollutant that can adversely affect our health as it contains very small airborne particles that can be trapped in our lungs when we breathe. These fine particles can aggravate respiratory illnesses such as asthma and emphysema. It also affects people who have heart conditions. The elderly and very young children are also at risk.



For more information contact the Shire of Busselton's Health Services on 97810444

Note: Did you know it is an offence to sell second hand wood heaters that do not comply with the standard. All wood heaters offered for sale must have attached an identification plate that verifies compliance with AS4013.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE TO SOMEONE LIVING WITH A TERMINAL ILLNESS

The Shire of Busselton is giving its support to a new National Community Education Initiative that will promote a better understanding of palliative care.

The theme of the national Initiative is 'MAKE A DIFFERENCE...to someone living with terminal illness'.

Research has shown that a majority of Australians have only a poor understanding about palliative care and its benefits for the patients, families, friends and community.

While terminal illness and death are part of life and will touch us all, in some way, at some time, it is a subject many would rather not know or talk about. Unfortunately not knowing does correlate with poor access to available services and poorer outcomes for the patient, families and caregivers.

This education campaign is an opportunity for everyone in our community to have access to this important information - terminal illness and palliative care.

For information about the National initiative go to www.pallcare.org.au or www.livingcaringworking.com

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