

NEUTRAL PRECINCT MINUTES
Tuesday 9 July 2024, commenced at 7:00 pm

1. Apologies – EC, HW
2. Additional items added to the Agenda
 - i. DA 144/2022/3: 7-11 Premier St. Neutral Bay (See 7 iii)
 - ii. Caretaker period for Council 16 August to 14 September (See 8)
 - iii. Traffic issues: the Woolworths' driveway in Yeo St. and Watson St. corner with Yeo St. (See 6)
3. Business from minutes of meeting held June 2024:
 - i. June minutes, with the following amendment, Traffic & Transport Forum, proposed by CB and seconded by GC.
Delete:
33 May
“MR advised that northern beaches bus travellers on the B1 line have complained about a delay in the evening services from the city to the northern beaches. Mr G indicated 2500 passengers per day alight the B1 at Neutral Bay Junction and therefore he suggested this stop possibly be removed as a set down in the services.”
Replace with:
23 May
“Mr R indicated 2500 passengers per day use the B1 at Neutral Bay Junction and he suggested this stop should be removed from the B1 schedule. CB challenged Mr R and said that that this was not acceptable to the already inadequate public bus services for NB residents, particularly in light of the State Government's proposed increases in housing density for Neutral Bay. Mr R responded that the removal of the B1 stop at Neutral Bay is only being “reviewed” at this stage.”
 - ii. Council responses to Precinct motions.
Nil received this month.
4. Updates:
 - i. Neutral Bay Village Centre Planning Study
CP provided background to and the result of the Extraordinary Meeting of Council on 18 June.
In early June a member of the Brightmore Precinct, who had been researching the State Government proposal to increase housing density through a new Housing Policy, at identified train stations and town centres, discovered a form document provided to the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) by NS Council that ticked a box identifying Neutral Bay as meeting criteria for a ‘town centre’. This is contrary to a prior Council resolution to refrain from identifying ‘mixed use 1’ zones a ‘town centre precincts’.

The discovery was raised with the Mayor who wrote to the Secretary DPI to correct and clarify the Council's decision.

It turns out that the form had been provided to the DPI staff by Council officers in a meeting on the State housing policy issue.

Cr. Spenceley attended a Brightmore Precinct meeting where the issue was raised and discussed. Councillor Spenceley subsequently sought an Extraordinary Meeting of Council (EMC) and submitted a Notice of Motion, seconded by Cr. Bourke, regarding Council's position on the State Government's housing reforms.

5 members of the community spoke in the public forum held at the EMC on 18 June, all expressing serious concern about how this information contrary to a Council decision could have been given to DPHI.

In summary Council resolved to write to the DPHI to formally rescind its earlier response to the Station and Town Centre Selection Form; to have the CEO review the internal process that resulted in a submission was contrary to Council's resolved position and report back to Council on improvements to strengthen Council processes; publish on Council website all current and future correspondence between Council and the DPHI on housing reforms; and other actions regarding the State Government's housing reforms.

The full minutes of the EMC can be accessed through this link:

<https://www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au/ecm/download/document-11107994>

Discussion:

- Concern was expressed that the State Government housing policy zones impacting Neutral Bay are not clear.
- In an LGA of approx. 10 square kilometres virtually all areas appear to be in or close to within 1200m of a Transport Centred Development (TCD), or within 400 metres of a mixed Use Area (MUA) allowing heights up to 6 storeys.
- While the TCDs appear to be agreed, decisions on the MUAs probably will not be decided until after the LGA elections in September.
- It was agreed that Neutral Precinct could benefit from receiving the presentation given to the Brightmore Precinct regarding the State Government's new housing policy. CP to organise for August meeting.

ii. Warringah Freeway Works Upgrade

GC provided the following progress:

- Current work is focussed on building bridges and structures.
- Widening of the footpath along Alfred St. North approaching the Ridge St. pedestrian overpass.

- The centre section supports for the Ridge St. and Merlin St. pedestrian Overpasses have been installed.
- North Alfred St. remains closed for through traffic for the next 12 months. A boom gate is in operation for resident's access.
- A small bonus for residents, impacted by the loss of approx. 100 street parking spaces, has been the installation of 12-15 parking spaces between Wyagdon St. and Rose Ave.

Discussion:

- What is happening to the south bound left turn off Military Rd. to the Freeway?
GC advised that currently all vehicles use two lanes to turn left. A third lane allows both left turn and straight ahead to Falcon St. There is no separate bus lane.
Long term the proposal is for a bus lane left turn onto a ramp along the eastern side of the freeway. There will be two left hand turn lanes for other vehicles.

5. Planning Proposals:

- i. PP 4/23: 183-185 Military Rd. Neutral Bay. (Subject to rezoning review)
The meeting noted this PP is currently with the Department of Planning seeking Gateway approval. If Gateway is approved the PP will then go on public exhibition.

CP advised that documents held on Council website indicate that the proponent is seeking an amendment to North Sydney Local Environmental Plan (NSLEP) 2013 for a 12-storey tower on the site, with ground and basement retail below a podium composed of community centre and office uses with residential above and a public plaza with open-air through-site link joining with the Woolworths site. The proposed community centre is offered as part of a VPA.

Discussion:

The meeting viewed a copy of the site diagram indicating the proposed development of a 12 Storey building and the alignment with the adjacent Woolworths proposed development was tabled. The meeting noted the diagram was taken from the Military Road Corridor Planning Study- Stage 1, rescinded by Council.

6. Traffic issues: Woolworths' driveway in Yeo St. and in Watson St. corner with Yeo St.

- i. Woolworths' driveway to underground parking in Yeo St: A resident advised that exiting the Woolworths car park is dangerous when sightlines are restricted by large vehicles parked on either side of the driveway.

Discussion:

- Meeting attendees agreed they often feel unsafe driving out of the underground car park.

- The situation is made worse by vehicles travelling quickly from the Rangers Rd. intersection around the bend in Yeo St.
- Removal of parking spaces on either side of the driveway would improve sightlines.
- The motor bike parking space on the corner of Military Lane could be relocated to the sides of the driveway replacing vehicle parking.

Motion: That the Traffic Committee of Council investigate improving the sightlines for vehicles exiting the Woolworths underground carpark in Yeo St. Neutral Precinct recommends:

- a. the removal of vehicle parking up to 10 metres each side of the Woolworths' driveway in Yeo St;
- b. the current motor bike parking, on the corner of Military Lane and Yeo St., be relocated to either side of the Woolworths' driveway.
- c. The current motor bike parking space be allocated to vehicle parking.

Vote: Unanimous (8); Against (Nil); Abstain (Nil)

- ii. Watson St. corner with Yeo St.: A resident raised the following issue: When a vehicle is parked in the parking space on the eastern side of Watson St. at the corner with Yeo St. it impedes traffic flow turning left into Yeo St. when, at the same time, there are vehicles waiting to turn right into Yeo St.

Discussion:

- Meeting attendees agreed they often experience this issue.
- For Neutral Bay residents living south of Military Rd., Watson Street is the only right hand turn off Military Rd. for vehicles travelling eastwards. The next right hand turn from Military Rd. is Murdoch St. in Cremorne.
- The problem occurs most frequently during the evening peak period, causing a back-up of vehicles along Watson St. to Military Rd.
- The backup of traffic also often prevents all vehicles waiting in the turning lanes on Military Rd. from turning into Watson St.
- Solutions proposed included removing the car space or disallowing parking in this space during the evening peak.

Motion: That the Traffic Committee of Council investigate traffic flow being impeded on the corner of Watson St. and Yeo St. The Neutral Precinct recommends:

- a. the removal of the single parking space on the eastern side of Watson St. at the corner of Yeo St. /or
- b. Disallowing parking in this space during the evening peak period.

Vote: Unanimous (8); Against (Nil); Abstain (Nil)

7. Development Applications

- i. DA 112/2024: 30 Bydown St. Neutral Bay. (Proposed ground floor alterations and minor addition with first floor addition and associated works.)

Noted information from CP that No. 30 is attached to No. 28 and that No. 28 has a second storey added at the rear of the dwelling.

No affected resident attended the meeting.

- ii. DA 63/24: 52 Raymond Rd. Neutral Bay.

Noted advice from Council of their approval for the Attic conversion with additional two dormer windows and skylight, subject to conditions.

- iii. DA 144/2022/3: 7-11 Premier St. Neutral Bay (To modify DA 144/22 for the demolition of the existing residential flat buildings and bulk excavation works and construction and use of a part four (4) storey, part five (5) storey residential flat building including 18 apartments, landscaping works including ground level communal open space and private open spaces and associated works including minor modifications and tree removal.

No affected resident attended the meeting.

8. Caretaker period for Council

The meeting noted Council's Memo of 18 June advising the caretaker period for the 2024 Local Government elections commences on Friday 16 August 2024 and ends on Saturday 14 September 2024. The memo reminded Precinct Committees of the need to operate for their principle purpose, which is communication between Council and the community, and to avoid the Precinct System being used for political purposes.

9. Current & Ongoing Community consultations were noted and residents encouraged to have their say.

- i. Amended Outdoor Dining and Goods on Footpath Policy - closes 17 July
- ii. Draft Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy - closes 24 July
- iii. North Sydney Council Garden Competition 2024 - entry closes 30 August

10. The following upcoming meetings were noted:

- i. Neutral Precinct – 13 August www.neutralprecinct.com
- ii. Council – 22 July, 12 August www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au

Meeting concluded at 8:05pm.