

NEUTRAL PRECINCT MINUTES
Tuesday 12 November 2024, commenced at 7:00 pm

1. Apologies – HW, PG
2. GC welcomed Councillor Efi Carr to the meeting and congratulated Efi on her election to Council in September. Cnr Carr was Co-Convenor of the Precinct prior to being elected to Council.
3. No additional items were added to the Agenda
4. Business from minutes of meeting held October 2024:
 - i. October minutes were confirmed as accurate, proposed by BH and seconded by SL.
 - ii. Nil Council responses to Precinct motions were received at time of meeting.
5. Updates
 - i. Warringah Freeway Works Upgrade
 - GC advised the work continues 6 days per week and 3 nights per week with the continuing noise and vehicle access problems for residents
 - The contractor was fined recently for operating 4 nights per week.
 - ii. Alfred Street Off-Ramp (North Sydney Exit).

Discussion:

 - Residents expressed serious concern that only 10 days-notice has been given for the closure of the off-ramp from 22 November for a minimum of 8 months (subject to weather).
 - The impacts of the closure are enormous. It will force vehicles from the north to exit at the Falcon Street toll off-ramp and then turn right into Watson Street and make their way down through Neutral Bay residential streets causing multiple rat runs.
 - Accessing the North Sydney CBD from the north on the Warringah Freeway will require vehicles to use the Pacific Highway.
 - Improved signage is needed now. The ongoing, almost daily, changes to lane access to off-ramps has been poorly signed and thus confusing for some time with many residents reporting being forced to proceed into the city, turn with difficulty and return, all with the addition of paying the Bridge toll.

The following suggestions were made to advise residents of lane changes and access to off-ramps:

 - A letterbox drop of maps for residents;
 - Regular updates for the Navigational Apps such as Google Maps; and
 - Updating the Mosman sign to include Neutral Bay directing vehicles from the north to the Falcon Street off-ramp

- The impact on Watson Street was discussed.
The turning time from Military Road into Watson is regularly inadequate to clear, on one light change, the two turning lanes in Military Road and will only worsen with additional vehicles needing to use Watson Street.

Vehicle parking spaces (6?) on the eastern side of Watson Street already impact traffic flow causing the two lanes to merge and impacting the ability of both waiting lanes on Military Road to clear.

Council has advised that the Precinct's September request to remove the eastern side parking space at the corner of Watson St and Yeo St, to prevent back up of traffic, wanting to turn left, has been referred to the Traffic Committee of Council.

- It was noted that the Council at its meeting on 11 November agreed to:
 - i. Urgently seek a commitment from Transport for NSW to waive the toll on the Mosman exit upon commencement of the "long term temporary closure" of the Alfred Street exit, and that the waiver expire upon the reopening of the Alfred Street exit.
 - ii. Make a submission on behalf of the community to Transport for NSW regarding the closure, and that the submission raise likely rat runs, congestions, and the inequity impacts on the LGA; and
 - iii. Request that the closure be delayed until such time as Transport for NSW has undertaken emergency access and traffic management modelling, and that any closures do not occur prior to January 2025 at the earliest.
- The meeting proposed the following motions:

MOTION: 1

The Precinct Committee write to the Minister for Transport, cc Ms Felicity Wilson MP(North Shore), Ms Natalie Ward Shadow Minister for Roads & Transport, and Secretary Department of Roads & Transport, and request the following actions:

- 1. The removal of the toll from the Falcon Street exit ramp to Military Road from the north.**
- 2. Updating the 'Mosman' sign so that vehicles for Neutral Bay don't miss the off ramp and continue into the City.**
- 3. Ensure there is adequate turning time at the Falcon Street Off-Ramp traffic lights to clear the waiting lanes. Also to ensure there is adequate waiting area in the two lanes exiting the freeway, otherwise we will end up with stopped vehicles on the freeway. People don't expect stopped vehicles on a freeway and accidents will ensue.**

4. **Increase the turning time for vehicles at the traffic lights from Military Road into Watsons Street. The turning time is already often inadequate at peak times to clear the two waiting lanes in Military Road. The Precinct has requested North Sydney Council temporarily remove the 6 parking spaces on the Eastern side of Watsons Street which will remove the necessity for two lanes to merge into one in Watson's Street and improve traffic flow.**
5. **Increase the turning time for vehicles from Military Road into Watsons Street.**
6. **Ensure that the Navigation Apps. e.g. Google Maps are advised of this change**
7. **Provide a letterbox drop of the changes for all residents in the affected area.**
8. **Advise the Precinct of arrangements for emergency services to the area.**

VOTE: Unanimous (11)

MOTION 2:

The Neutral Precinct:

1. **Supports the Council's decisions made on 11 November regarding the closure of the Alfred Street (North Sydney Off-ramp); and**
2. **Requests the Council remove the six parking places along the eastern side of Watson Street to support improved traffic flow during the closure of the Alfred Street (North Sydney off-ramp):**

VOTE: Unanimous (11)

iii. **1-7 Rangers Road & 50 Yeo Street (Woolworths)**

CP advised that the Northern Sydney Planning Panel (NSPP) held an on line session on 31 October with Woolworths and interested members of the public who had registered to speak. The purpose was to hear any further concerns before making a final decision on the building height. The key issues discussed were the probable overshadowing of properties in Yeo Street reducing their hours of sunshine to below the standard and also the functionality of the loading dock in Military Lane. Usually the NSPP makes a same day decision but a decision remains unknown.

DA 281/2024 1-7 Rangers Road has been lodged with Council for redevelopment of land including demolition of all structures, construction of a mixed-use development comprising 70 residential units, commercial spaces including a supermarket, public plaza, and basement parking for 326 vehicles and associated site works associated with Concept DA 162/2024.

The Committee will review the DA documents and list the DA for discussion at the December meeting. Consultation closes on 10 January 2025.

iv. New parking meters in LGA

Discussion

- The key issue remains the 8½% loading on the cost of parking when using the App.
- and new meters. This should be made clear in signage and on the App.
- Council's argument that there are old style meters every 600 meters doesn't really help.
- Council's decisions on 28 October to run training sessions for the community and to install more credit card meters was noted.
- Councillor Carr mentioned that she and Councillor Keen included a recommendation to seek alternative suppliers such as Park and Pay. The motion was defeated.

6. Arkadia Plans to redevelop Theo's Arcade and the Grove Shopping Centre into 4 towers

The meeting noted the planning proposal lodged with Council. The Committee will monitor and provide an update at the December meeting.

7. Councillor Carr was invited to speak on current issues.

Young Street Plaza

The historical background is that the Council, previous to the last one, installed the Young Street plaza temporarily and sought community feedback. Council received money from TfNSW to upgrade the plaza. The last Council made a commitment to open Young Street to traffic and has proposed a redesigned plaza with one lane opened to traffic. Councillors Keen and Carr did not agree to the proposed redesign of the plaza.

A resident raised the safety issue of vehicles emerging from Young Street into the afternoon peak bus lane. Cr. Carr said that the pedestrian crossing traffic lights will take care of safety issues.

Grosvenor Lane Shared Zone

The shared zone on Grosvenor Lane presents pedestrian safety issues. Council has proposed to change the traffic conditions to only allow a left turn at Young Street which it is hoped will minimise vehicle movement down that Lane.

The Grosvenor Lane (Council Carpark) and Coles development

The Coles DA did not get through. As a result, Coles has submitted a revised DA for the site for a two storey building. Therefore, there will be no development of the car park which is Council land. At the same time Arkadia submitted a

planning development proposal. Arkadia is also interested in that car park. Coles will be submitting a Development Proposal for the site.

The Council decided to put the site up for tender, the idea being that Council can negotiate with Arkadia and Coles individually, for the development of the plaza and under grounding of parking.

Woolworth's lease has been extended to enable them to trade until February 2025.

The meeting expressed strong disappointment at the development outcome for the supermarket site and the potential not to get the best outcome for a new plaza through a tender process rather than a voluntary planning agreement (VPA) that had been proposed by Coles.

8. Development Applications

- i. DA 2017/82: 104 Wycombe Road. Alterations and additions to heritage item including fenestration changes, fencing and associated site works. No affected resident attended the meeting.

9. Have Your Say

The meeting noted the Community Transport Review.

10. The following upcoming meetings were noted:

Neutral Precinct – 10 December (AGM and refreshments after)

www.neutralprecinct.com

Kurraba Point /Hayes Precinct first meeting - Wednesday 20 November Hayes St Studio 11 Hayes Street NB. Mayor Baker is attending.

Council – 25 November www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au

Meeting concluded at 8:40pm