

WEST ST KILDA RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION Inc

PRESIDENT'S REPORT FOR 2018-2019

Membership

For the 2018-19 year, there were 135 paid up members, a small decrease on the 169 members at 30 June 2018. This was an OK result but not quite as good as our highest membership years which were in the 170s. It is important, as we deal with the City of Port Phillip and with other organisations, to be able to claim strong support from St Kilda West residents. Although we have maintained good membership levels, we would like these to increase. We had a large committee of ten members giving their time and using their skills to bring attention to the issues that we were addressing. In addition, a number of other members were involved as we dealt with City of Port Phillip staff and councillors on traffic issues and event management and some joined the committee members to assist with newsletter distribution. We continued to see generous financial donations from members, providing valuable support to our subscriptions.

Routine activities

We continued with our routine activities:

- a successful coffee morning in June;
- regular Committee meetings every two months; and
- distribution of two newsletters to every household in St Kilda West.

Key issues

This year we have had a focus on improving and updating our email capabilities and our membership register and on developing our web site.

As in past years, we have continued to deal with a large number of local items and issues:

- Rejuvenation of Fitzroy Street: WSKRA has been part of the reference group guiding the development of a vision and identity of Fitzroy Street and overseeing the implementation of changes- the Placemaking initiative introduced by Peter Smith, the City of Port Phillip CEO at our last AGM. Look forward to some interesting initiatives to be rolled out this year.
- Traffic Congestion: This continues to be a major concern of our residents and consequently our committee. Following the public meeting held last year, and a resolution by Council, we are yet to see any action to resolve the identified issues. The City of Port Phillip, VicRoads and a range of other State transport authorities each explain their inability to act on our grievances by pointing to one or some of the others. We met with our local State member in June hoping to arrange a meeting of the relevant authorities to confirm an action plan and schedule. We are still awaiting a reply.
- Event Management and Related Noise Issues: We reported this was a growing concern of our members at last year's AGM. These concerns have escalated rather than been resolved. WSKRA has been working with another group of concerned residents - the Resident Action St Kilda group- to raise concerns and seek solutions with the City of Port Phillip. This will continue to be area in which we will push for change.
- Safety and Security: Following concerns raised by some of our residents about their personal safety in West St Kilda streets, we have made this an area of investigation. In particular, inadequate street lighting, trees obscuring street lights and overgrown foliage near footpaths have been identified as issues which we will follow up.

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- Flooding in our Streets: WSKRA completed a summary, based on input from residents, on flooding in our neighbourhood over the past several years. This feedback was subsequently passed on to Melbourne Water to highlight the known problems and to assist them in making improvements.
- Master Plan for Albert Park: The development of a master plan for Albert Park, in which we participated, finished this year. The Master Plan, which is designed to guide improvements in the park over the next 25 years, was given a low key launch by Parks Victoria in May this year.

Ongoing communication with other local groups and initiatives

We introduced you to a number of other local resident groups at last year's AGM. We have continued to maintain a close liaison with these and other groups. In particular, we have worked with the Middle Park Library Action Group, Resident Action St Kilda (RASK), Friends of St Kilda Hill, the Ratepayers of Port Phillip (RoPP) and the Fitzroy Street Trader's Association. We have also worked as part of the City of Port Phillip's Placemaking group discussed above. We have also continued to monitor or participate in other local matters. These include: the renewal of the old Gatwick Hotel as the Block, the new Block development in Grey Street, the development of the new Pride Centre and street tree pruning.

Matters for consideration

The committee continues to focus on providing support and good communication to our members. In addition to our traditional means such as newsletters, mail, telephone and email, we want to continue to improve our website processes to ensure the site provides ongoing updates for our members.

We also hope to extend our representation to a broader group of our local residents. In particular we see having an interesting and informative website as key to interacting with this broader community

Thanks

I record our thanks to Councillors and staff of the City of Port Phillip. We appreciate their support and cooperation. And finally, I provide my personal thanks to committee members for their dedicated work and to all WSKRA members for their invaluable support.

Leigh Hardy, President
29 October 2019