

WEST ST KILDA RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

PO Box 2022, St Kilda West, VIC 3182

wskrassociation@gmail.com

www.wskra.com

PRESIDENT'S REPORT FOR 2023-2024

Membership

For the 2023-24 year, there were 88 paid up members, a slight decrease on last year and the pre-Covid membership. We would like the membership levels to increase again as it is important to be able to claim strong support from St Kilda West residents. We had a committee of seven 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 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

Over the last year we have conducted our routine activities:

- regular Committee meetings approximately every two months;
- distribution of regular emails to members;
- updating of our webpages; and
- distribution of two newsletters to every household in West St Kilda.

We were able to hold several events for residents: our usual coffee morning where we were lucky to have two representatives from the St Kilda Historical Society give a fascinating account of some local heritage buildings, and an end of year gathering in the park.

Key issues

After the significant lockdowns of the past few years, local activity has pretty much returned back to normal. However, many of the issues and concerns of the past have not gone away.

- Traffic Congestion: After over eight years of raising resident concerns over safety issues, and the congestion caused by the growing rat running through our streets during peak hours, Council agreed to a trial. Although it was not what residents had initially recommended to Council, we agreed that a trial of a no right hand turn from Canterbury Road into Cowderoy Street would be worthwhile. Councillors agreed to implement this for a six month trial with extensive monitoring of traffic on surrounding streets. We agreed with this as it has always been our intention not to just move 'our' problem in West St Kilda to other streets. The trial was conducted from July last year until early this year. Despite the trial being considered to be

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successful by the City's traffic engineers, and a recommendation to make the no right turn permanent, the Councillors voted to not implement the change, **BUT** did not propose an alternative solution! The peak hour traffic problems obviously have not gone away and continue to be a significant annoyance and safety concern to residents. We hope to raise the issue with our new Councillors.

- Hooning: WSKRA and the neighbouring Beacon Cove Neighbourhood Group were part of a State Government task force with local governments, police and other community groups to investigate and make recommendations on controlling hooning. As part of this work, we highlighted to the taskforce the use of 'noise cameras' overseas to help manage excessive vehicle noise. These cameras are like speed cameras but record point of time excessive vehicle noise. A report to government was prepared and we believe a trial of noise cameras will be conducted in Port Phillip. We hope that the recommendations will reduce the impacts on residents.
- Event Management and Related Noise Issues: This continues to be a concern of residents. The new Event Management policy and has been implemented in the past year. We have seen some improvement but there continue to be issues.
- Application to Reopen the Beaconsfield Hotel: An application was made through the year to reopen the hotel. There was general concern amongst residents that the proposal was overly aggressive in the proposed operation of the hotel- hours of opening, patrons, parking etc. There were particular concerns amongst those residents close to the hotel but some enthusiasm from others that the derelict hotel could be brought back to life. A number of objections were made and a public meeting held. We understand that the original application has been modified but no final decision made... Likely passing part of the responsibility on to the new council.
- Other issues: In addition to the above items the Committee has been reviewing and watching a number of issues, for example:
 - the growing use of electric cars and the need for local charging;
 - changes and Council activity on waste management and recycling;
 - the removal of trees behind residences on Canterbury Road with no or minimal consultation or notification;
 - the possible changes to planning that may come if the State government moves responsibility from local government to the State level;
 - the building of the new St Kilda pier and its expected opening later this year; and
 - the upgraded access and improved pathways through the West Beach reserve.

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- Our Twenty-Fifth Birthday: Many of you have been members for a long time. As we indicated last year, our records show that we began as an association in 1999. Thus, we are in our twenty fifth year as an association!

Ongoing communication with other local groups and initiatives

Previously, we introduced you to a number of other local resident groups. We have continued to connect with these groups and work on a number of common interests. Interestingly, none of these groups have been around for 25 years. In fact, most have been around for fewer than five years!

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 to ensure the site provides ongoing updates for our members.

Thanks

I record our thanks to the previous Councillors and staff of the City of Port Phillip. We appreciate their support and cooperation and look forward to working with the new Council.

And finally, I provide my personal thanks to committee members for their dedicated work and to all WSKRA members and donors for their invaluable support.

Leigh Hardy, President
15 November 2024