

# Middle Head Consultative Committee

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## Adopted Minutes for the 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting, 6:00 pm 25<sup>th</sup> June 2001

### **a. Attendance**

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#### **Present:**

Jean Alexander, John Allen, Tim Allerton, Phil Cannane, John Carmichael, Peter Deakin, Edward Elsom, Don Goodsir, Patricia Harvey, Virginia Howard, Jill L'Estrange, Audrey Lenning, Martin Skipper  
Geoff Bailey, Nick Hollo, Bob Clark, Colin Menzies

#### **Apologies:**

Tim Allerton, Peter Caldwell, Phil Cannane, Jillian Skinner MLA,

### **b. Minutes of the 1st meeting**

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The draft minutes of the previous meeting of 19<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> March were accepted as a true and correct record.

### **c. Activity since last meeting**

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#### **Exhibition Feedback**

The committee was very congratulatory on the Exhibition, describing it as inspired.

Nick Hollo reported that the attendance was larger than expected, with 250 –500 a day (higher on weekends), averaging ~300 a day. Attendance had declined slowly since the initial publicity but later advertising was planned to address this. Visitors tended to see everything in the Exhibition, taking ~45 minutes on average. About half completed the surveys. Guided tours were held on Thursday and weekend afternoons. Promotional material has been sent to all schools.

#### **Openness of Consultative Committee meetings**

Mosman Council has written to the Trust requesting that *meetings be open to the press and public, and that the same procedures in relation to meetings of the Trust apply to meetings of Committees*. The Trust sought the Consultative Committee's view. There was a strong consensus among most members that that would be counterproductive to the effective working of the Consultative Committee.

Comments supporting Council's position were:

- The principle that meetings should be open.
- Full and frank discussion can still occur in open meetings. People in Mosman still don't know about the committee.
- Meetings should be open to show the rationale behind decisions.
- There was criticism of the previous Steering Committee, which was seen as closed and secretive by some.

Comments from the Consultative Committee members included:

- It was important that things be communicated and there be some open meetings of the cc, but fully open meetings were not conducive to full and frank discussions. Sometimes it was better to wait until agreement was reached before reporting on a matter.
- It was important to differentiate two issues – keeping the public fully informed and the role of the cc, which is not served by being open. There were also commercial-in-confidence matters that the committee may want to discuss freely.
- Open meetings take longer because people show off. They will inhibit and slow discussion.

- The results of meetings should be publicly issued and comments invited.
- The Consultative Committee meetings should follow the same policies as the SHFT Act lays down for the Trust, with some meetings open and some not.
- Open meetings were inappropriate when trying to reach a consensus. Not everyone on the Consultative Committee represents formal groups. People want to be able to take in other's views, not be on show to stick to their group's view. The committee needs to use mediation and consensus if it is to go forward.
- The Consultative Committee was not involved in a political process and did not take votes. It was not accurate to compare it with a Local Government Council because Councils are dm groups. If the meetings are regularly open, there will be lobbying.
- Groups wanting to send a person to meet the Consultative Committee on a issue should be able to; conversely, the committee should not have meetings with small groups but should be open to all; there was little point in having lobby groups attend to present a known view.
- A uniform set of directions across all Consultative Committees was preferred to different rules.
- Regular newsletters to inform people of committee activities would be useful.
- Having some meetings open is useful do the committee can hear from the community.

Colin Menzies advised the committee that he would be revising the current Gs for Consultative Committees into draft Directions for Community Advisory Committees under the SHFT Act, for consideration by the Trust when formed. Key points from this meeting reflected the consensus at the Combined Consultative Committees meeting, notably:

- The Consultative Committee meetings should generally be closed;
- Consultative Committees should be allowed to invite guests for sessions;
- Consultative Committees should have some meetings open to brief the public and hear about their issues.
- The core role of the Consultative Committees is to allow free exchange of views between the Trust and a cross-section of interests in order to explore ideas and agreements. The Consultative Committees are not the only consultative mechanism.

### **Recreational Advisory Group**

Nick Hollo reported that he and Colin Menzies had attended a meeting of Mosman Council's Recreation Advisory Group (RAG). The RAG had been briefed on the Trust's planning process and assured that sporting interests were recognised and would be involved.

There was discussion on the interest of some sports in the Commando building. John Carmichael reported that Council was looking at multi-purpose courts on Rawson Park and that the Trust had submitted objections to a Development Application. Council saw the Commando area as one option for courts and wanted to explore this. Patricia Harvey said that Council was responding to the Trust's view that Rawson Park was inappropriate site for courts. Council saw it was putting ideas into the planning process.

The importance of following proper process was stressed. Geoff Bailey said there was a disjunction in timing between the Trust's planning and Council's desire for resolution on the courts. The draft Management Plans were expected early 2002. Martin Skipper said that there was not a long time until the draft Trust plans would be out. Don Goodsir hoped that Council could wait a little longer before making a decision on the courts. Mayor Harvey responded that Council was trying to do this.

There was some discussion on the drainage problems around Georges Heights oval. Nick Hollo said the Trust was cognisant of the issues. The broad principle was to use disturbed areas for facilities. With paved areas, how can these be modified for environmental reasons?

### **Penguin Track**

Geoff Bailey advised the committee that the Trustees wanted to proceed with the next section of the walking track to link Middle Head Road with Balmoral Beach. The section from Chowder Bay to Middle Head Road was about a month behind schedule due to weather. He thought the result would be a fantastic walking track but was aware of the concerns of immediate neighbours (discussed at a previous meeting). He sought the committee's advice. Key points of consensus were:

- The track should proceed

- There should be an on-site meeting with neighbours
- Consult over privacy and lifestyle impacts of neighbours

On comments about rabbits eating new plantings, Geoff Bailey advised that the Trust was about to start rabbit eradication programs.

### **Planning Area**

Geoff Bailey said that under the SHFT Act, the first step in planning was the notification of the planning area. The Trust can plan for areas it does not own but plans only take effect on Trust lands. He sought advice on the planning area for Middle Head – Georges Heights. Key points of agreement were:

- The plan needed to cover the whole area including the National Park, HMAS Penguin and Rawson Park
- There should be consultation and dialogue with the Trust's neighbours (NPWS, Council and Defence).

John Carmichael said that Council's position was that the Trust planning area should include the National Park and Penguin and have regard to Council as well. It was evident that Rawson Park and its Plan of Management was relevant.

Geoff Bailey said that there were immediate issues relating to HMAS Penguin such as the dangerous entry, and that they were keen to be on the Consultative Committee.

### **Short-term leasing policy**

It was agreed that the Consultative Committee members would comment on this draft when received and the comments would be circulated to Consultative Committee members.

The importance of getting short-term leasing underway was stressed by some Consultative Committee members.

### ***d. Other business***

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The next meeting was set for **Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> July at 6 pm.**

The meeting closed at 8:15 pm