



DRAFT MINUTES

QUEANBEYAN BUSINESS COUNCIL GENERAL MEETING QUEANBEYAN LEAGUES CLUB TUESDAY, 5th AUGUST 2008 at 4 pm 'MEET THE MAYORAL CANDIDATES'

Present: 57 attendees as per separate lists attached to original minutes.

- 1. Apologies from Members:** Ian McNamee, Paul Walshe, Rod Studholme, Graham Wise
- 2. Welcome by President:** Bill Baker welcomed guests including Mayor Frank Pangallo MBE and City Councillors Tom Mavec, Tim Overall, Ann Rocca, Kerry White, Sue Jarvis and Steve Stavreas.

Mr. Baker also introduced stated Mayoral Candidates for the 13 September 2008 Local Government Elections Tom Mavec, Tim Overall, Ann Rocca, Kerry White and John Wright. To assist candidates, a schedule of issues raised by QBC Members had been submitted to each Candidate¹ a week prior to this evening. He advised that, with the Candidates consent, he and QBC Secretary Simon Mitchell-Taverner had drawn lots for the order of speakers. The resulting order was Tom Mavec, Kerry White, Ann Rocca, John Wright and Tim Overall.

Mr Baker asked that normal rules of courtesy be respected during Candidates addresses and during question time that would follow from 5.30 pm to 6 pm. He particularly asked that those asking questions firstly introduce themselves and declare any relevant associations with any candidates for the 13 September Local Government Elections.

- 3. Presentations:**

There was a high level of agreement between candidates in their answers to questions put by Members (Attachment A).

 - CBD Redevelopment including Crawford Street. Candidates expressed their support for the current CBD Masterplan currently under development and agreed that Crawford Street, between Monaro and Morisset Streets, was currently in a degraded state. Most put much of the onus back onto the

¹ Attachment 'A'

business community to apply peer pressure on developers who had not proceeded with Council approved major developments in the CBD. Whilst Council can facilitate, it is up to business to be pro-active in developing the city. QBC agrees with this.

- Residential Growth including housing affordability. Candidates supported proposed major developments at Googong and Jerrabomberra Valley with the understanding that these would be based on the principles of sustainability and address affordability issues. High density development within existing areas would be closely scrutinised.
- The suggestion of an integrated regional public transport system was well received, however it was recognised that significant cooperation from Federal and ACT Governments would be required to make this a reality.
- Present CBD Parking was considered adequate, if not always well placed or utilised. Future needs will be covered by requirements as part of future CBD developments. All supported a continuation of free parking.
- All candidates supported the proposed Sports Precinct which would include indoor, outdoor and aquatic activities. The location for such a precinct is uncertain, given the removal of Hoover Road extension as an option.
- Candidates were also supportive of the operations of the Visitor Information Centre.

Other specific comments as below:

c. Mayoral Candidate Tom Mavec:

CBD Redevelopment – Should be business driven, however QCC is major player as it owns most of the car parks. He would encourage a “full range proper department store”, CBD needs to maintain its dominance within growing residential areas, is a strong supporter of QBC as an active driver for business. Council is actively seeking expressions of interest for future CBD development.

Residential Growth – Supports parallel development Googong and Jerrabomberra Valley with affordability guarantee. Growth is essential to provide sustainability items such as high schools, sports facilities etc.

Public transport – Favours an integrated regional approach and will work with Federal Member Dr. Kelly in this regard. Only Federal Government has money for infrastructure such as light rail. He would discuss park & ride with Deanes for city and Jerrabomberra.

Crawford Street – Business Community must be part of the solution to put pressure on owners. Bus interchange must be addressed.

CBD Parking – Sufficient at present. Council's car parking policy was released in January. He supports continuation of free parking.
Other issues – Potential economic lands at Jerrabomberra requires direct access from Googong via Dunns Creek Road.

b. Mayoral Candidate Kerry White:

CBD Redevelopment – CBD Masterplan report number 1 produced in June and \$1.6 million spent on paving main street. Expressions of Interest for a Major developer to redevelop CBD car parks closed on 31 July. The earlier expression of interest received by Council needed to be more transparent. Attraction of a major retail outlet could compensate in part for business lost to the Fyshwick DFO. Red tape relevant to main street improvements grants should be reduced and entrances to the City improved.

Residential Growth – Queanbeyan is an attractive place and needs to grow. He supports Googong subject to a responsible LEP.

Public transport – He is responsive to the regional proposal and, as a Member of the Queanbeyan Development & Advisory Board, would seek cooperation with ACT and Federal Governments and Googong.

Crawford Street – Major developments in Crawford and Morisset Streets were approved by Council but nothing has happened since.

CBD Parking – Sufficient at present though maybe under utilised. Regarding the new State Office Block, whilst QCC had input it was not the final approving authority regarding parking spaces supplied.

Development of office space - The attraction of defence support industries would assist CBD development, building on HQJOC. He noted vacancies following the State Office Block completion and at Canberra Airport.

Sporting Precinct – As a passionate supporter, he believed this must include a full 50m indoor pool.

VIC - Tourism in Queanbeyan needs an icon. Maybe a big?

Other Issues – Council is suffering from severe staff shortages and is behind on projects. He would address this with General Manager. He described his approach as proactive – not reactive.

c. Presentation by Mayoral Candidate Ann Rocca:

As an avid reader of the works of Richard Florida, she supports the theory of the 'Creative Classes' being a major driver of development. Queanbeyan has a vibrant arts community and she pointed to the 'Q' that is built, paid for, and has not created a parking issue.

CBD Redevelopment – Mayors need the support of at least 5 other councilors. CBD Masterplan was supported by all Councilors and new Council will have to decide how implementation funds will be raised.

Residential Growth – Supports sustainable residential growth including employment, schools, sports facilities etc. Affordability issues will result in smaller houses and/or land. Whilst Queanbeyan has more affordable properties than Canberra,

redevelopment of older areas will need to be done carefully to protect the amenity of the area.

Public transport – Deanes Buslines is a commercial company and must therefore run profitably.

Crawford Street – Similar to previous speakers.

CBD Parking – Supports free, time limited parking. Does not support multi level.

VIC – Must remain part of a strong regional network with pro-active marketing

Other issues – As Mayor, would consult. Queanbeyan needs a strong business sector.

d. Mayoral Candidate John Wright:

CBD Redevelopment – Despite Numerous large petitions, everyone had failed to get traffic out of the main street. Can't touch Monaro Street due to heavy traffic, however Crawford Street could be improved. Queanbeyan lacks products such as white goods.

Residential Growth – State action required to release land and Federal action to reduce interest rates. Queanbeyan is less expensive than ACT, however the quality is just as high. Googong development will need a separate western access road. Imperative community spirit not be destroyed by growth.

Public transport – Consideration must given to socially disadvantaged without licences or cars – particularly at extreme traveling hours.

Crawford Street – Understands why The Warehouse 'turned its back' on Crawford Street, and there is no place for shoppers to mix. Monaro Street is an unpleasant place to shop. Due to traffic. Council should get developers to do what they say they will do.

VIC – It is appropriate that VIC is run by QBC.

Other issues – Need to 'open up' Council as it is not communicating effectively. A "VIP" program should be considered inviting people to Council meetings. Notice Boards should clearly display information about projects.

e. Mayoral Candidate Tim Overall:

Supportive of regional road strategy including Dunns Creek, Edwin Land, Northern Ring Road, Canberra Avenue and Kings Highway as providing significant economic and social advantage..

Public transport – Incorporated into the above. Also interconnected Bike tracks between Jerrabomberra and Queanbeyan.

Sporting Precinct – Supports – including indoor, outdoor and aquatic.

Residential Growth – Supports sustainable affordable housing development. Queanbeyan is and always will be, 10 % of Canberra Queanbeyan population. He is not an advocate for unchecked infill high density development.

Development of office space - The attraction of Commonwealth departments was unlikely, however the attraction of defence support industries such as Codarra would build on HQJOC.

CBD Redevelopment – Announced policy incentive “Bringing the City to Life”. Distributed concept drawings of example redevelopments of Crawford Street and Queanbeyan Arts Society. Describing the heart of the city as in ‘drastic need of help’ he believed business had a right to be disappointed with Council’s foresight, planning and leadership. The CBD Masterplan should be a 20 year living vision. New developments to be enhanced by Expos and Food and Wine Festivals.

Other issues – Partnerships with business and community to be developed including a proposed Town Centre management Board.

Following the presentations, Candidates answered a wide range of questions without notice from the floor. These included availability of parklets, more on-street dining, disabled parking, conferencing issues, protecting residents from impending lower employment, protecting Queanbeyan’s water supply and protection of Queanbeyan River and bushland.

An issue apparently not considered previously was the suggestion by a QBC member Peter Middleton that suitable land be found in Queanbeyan to accept clean material from excavations as in-fill, rather than the current practice of transporting it by road to ACT tips. This was well received by Candidates.

5. Informal networking - Bill Baker thanked the five Mayoral Candidates, wishing them luck. Also thanked Queanbeyan Leagues Club for hosting and catering for this meeting and invited attendees to enjoy informal networking.

Meeting Closed 6.10 pm

Next Development Industrial Committee Meeting – Tuesday, 19 August, 12.30 pm at VIC

Next Tourism Retail Committee Meeting – Wednesday, 20 August, 12.30 pm at VIC

Next Executive Meeting – Tuesday, 26 August, at 12.30 pm – venue tba.

ATTACHMENT 'A' – ISSUES SUBMITTED TO CANDIDATES PRIOR TO THE MEETING

The following questions were submitted by Members to assist with Candidates' presentations:

- a. **CBD Redevelopment** – all candidates are likely aware of the current CBD Masterplan project, and the Business Council would be interested in candidates views regarding the redevelopment of the CBD, its place in the region, and as one of the drivers for Queanbeyan growth.
- b. **Residential Growth** – candidates views regarding residential growth within Queanbeyan and housing affordability.
- c. **Public transport** – candidates views regarding an integrated regional public transport system: Growth and fuel costs will likely lead to an increased demand for public transport. How can this demand be met in an integrated regional perspective.
- d. **Crawford Street**, between Monaro Street and Morriset Street, is virtually a commercial wasteland with a great many empty and boarded up shop frontages and a generally run down and dismal feel to what should be a thriving precinct in the heart of the CBD. It must be that either the site owners or Council are not being sufficiently on the ball to ensure that timely and suitable redevelopment occurs in this area of the city. My questions therefore are these:
 - I. What specific actions are proposed to ensure the redevelopment of Crawford Street in a timely and suitable manner?
 - II. The broader issue -what mechanisms are promised to ensure that in future significant parts of the CBD are not allowed to simply deteriorate through willful neglect and/or inaction?
- e. Candidates' views on addressing present and future **CBD Parking needs**.
- f. Candidates' views on the proposed **Sports Precinct**.
- g. Candidates' views on attracting a major player to develop **office space** suitable for a large corporation or Commonwealth department.
- h. How do candidates see the **VIC** fitting within a local framework? Whilst Queanbeyan does have its own attractions, it is accepted that big ticket items are either over the border or regionally located.