

Editorial : Review of Monash VPO Amendments

The Planning Panel hearings into Monash Council's amendments were heard in the middle of June. As well as the Monash Council submission, presentations were also made by Frank Carder on behalf of FODCR, Sally Walker on behalf of FOVC&VR and a number of other interested individuals.

Council submissions were based largely on a reduction of bureaucracy and improved amenity for residents wishing to remove unwanted trees from their properties within the VPO areas. Their submission also relied heavily on the principle of "Preservation of neighbourhood character". Council contended that the replacement of mature trees with two new plantings which "will grow to become mature canopy trees with spreading crowns to the satisfaction of the responsible authority" would ultimately enhance the neighbourhood character. At a number of points in their submission Council stated their environmental objectives and subsequently dismissed any impact on the environment from the VPO changes.

The VPP requires (among other things) under the topic of "Landscaping Objectives" :

"To encourage development that maintains and enhances habitat for plants and animals in locations of habitat importance"

and also

"To encourage retention of mature vegetation on the site"and

"In locations of habitat importance, maintain existing habitat and provide for new habitat for plants and animals".

"The Monash Planning scheme itself warns against the erosion of the garden city

character "through loss of significant vegetation and tree canopy".

However, Council also contends that the purpose of the clause is "founded in neighbourhood character rather than environmental significance of vegetation."

Clearly, various source documents are at odds and Council is selecting those which reflect their position.

When summarising the types of objection received, one category "The ecological and environmental benefits of mature trees would not immediately be replaced by the planting of smaller trees" was responded to by the statement that "This is not the primary purpose of the VPO". In the summary against the "Strategic Assessment Guidelines" the Council states that "The amendment does not give rise to any adverse environmental effects."

The submission on behalf of FODCR was presented by Frank Carder. Frank reflected on the change to neighbourhood character that had taken place during his time in Mount Waverley and went on to explain that the environment of Damper Creek was heavily dependent on the neighbouring gardens to provide a buffer for wildlife that resided in and visited Damper Creek. Hopefully the Panel's findings will give appropriate weighting to the environmental argument.

Our Annual General Meeting

Yes, it will soon be AGM time again and we will require a new committee. Our constitution limits the tenure of several of our officers so replacements must be found. The positive aspects are that if you volunteer you will not be saddled with a lifetime job and the critical functions of our "friends" group are periodically reinvigorated. Nominations for

Secretary, Vice-president, and Treasurer have been received, we require any additional nominations and nominations for all other positions prior to the AGM.

New Councillor

I see on MCC website that our new ward councillor is "**Rebecca Paterson**". We hope to see her soon at one of our meetings.

Guest Speaker July Meeting

Our guest speaker for July is Annie Mayo from Bush Heritage.

Bush Heritage uses donations to fund the purchase and management of ecologically significant tracts of land in Australia. Bush Heritage currently owns 30 properties around Australia. It will be fascinating to hear how these properties are managed in order to preserve our wildlife and ecosystems. Don't keep this special night to yourself. Invite your friends.

Our Community Planting Day

Our Community Planting Day on June 30th was a wonderful success with around 50 people attending, comprising FODCR members and other members of the local community. Much of the success of the day could be attributed to leaflet dropping in the



immediate Damper Creek neighbourhood. The printing was done by the office of our local Federal Member Anna Burke and various committee members gained some meaningful exercise by walking the streets to deliver the leaflets. Around 3000 plants were planted in the area north of High Street Road, bounded by Park Road.

At the conclusion of the planting the volunteers enjoyed a free BBQ. Many thanks to all who attended.



Mick, our Bushcrew helper, unloading for our Community Planting Day

Like us on Facebook

Don't forget to check us out on Facebook. Your photo submissions, both recent and archival, will be welcomed.

Friends of Damper Creek Important dates to remember:

	July	Notes
Meeting:	Wed 24th - 7:30 pm	Alvie Hall
W-Bee	Sun July 28th 10-00am to 12-30pm	Middle Bridge
August		
Meeting:	Wed 28th- 7:30 pm	Alvie Hall
AGM		
W-Bee	Sun Sept 1st 10-00am to 12-30 pm	Middle Bridge

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The Friends of Damper Creek Reserve Inc is supported by the City of Monash and Melbourne Water.

Damper Creek Reserve Inc is a member of 'Landcare' and 'Land for Wildlife' Volunteer Nature Conservation.

Damper Creek Bushland Reserve: part of the Yarra Catchment.

Please address all mail to:
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The Newsletter of

**FRIENDS OF
DAMPER CREEK RESERVE INC.**

Reg No. A0029531G

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DAMPER CREEK DOINGS

July 2013

