

## Time to Act - Report from Lorraine Wearne

As many of you would know, City of Parramatta is carrying out updated planning for Epping. A public meeting was held prior to Christmas (as detailed in this newsletter) and currently, work is being undertaken on four sections of the proposed plans for our area:

1. An economic plan which will look at the amount of commercial and retail development needed to make the area successful and thriving;
2. A transport plan to propose works and solutions for cars, buses, trains, bicycles and pedestrians for the CBD and approaches;
3. A social plan to identify community needs for libraries, childcare, parks, community centres, pools, sport facilities and all other needs for services for the growing community;
4. A review of the Heritage area in the previous Hornsby section of our area.

The existing planning controls apply to developments, and this is unlikely to change until the new plans are completed. It is expected that draft plans will be completed by the beginning of April and will subsequently go on public exhibition for comment.

This, in my view, is often too late to achieve major changes.

I am extremely concerned that there will be a push to review the Heritage Conservation Zones on the western side of the railway line, which was always Parramatta Council area, with a view to increase development. I encourage Trust members not to wait, but to express their thoughts and concerns on the issues that may be in the new plans now.

**We need to act now to save what we value in Epping.** Write now! Don't wait for completed plans. **Our voices need to be heard,** not just the development lobby. Do you want Carlingford Road in your backyard? If it is obvious that the community supports the existing plans and controls, it is unlikely they will be reviewed.

To lodge your concerns, thoughts and suggestions please forward them to either/both:

**Amanda Chadwick, The Administrator**  
achadwick@parracity.nsw.gov.au

**Sue Weatherley, Strategic Planning**  
sweatherley@parracity.nsw.gov.au

City of Parramatta, P.O. Box 32 Parramatta 2124



# EPPING CIVIC TRUST

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Representing the community since 1971

# Newsletter

February 2017

**NEXT MEETING:** ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING and ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING of the Epping Civic Trust will be held on TUESDAY, 21 FEBRUARY 2017 in the Church of Christ Hall, 31 Bridge Street, Epping at 7.30pm.  
**Kindly note that only financial members are eligible to vote.**

**AGENDA:** ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

1. Confirmation of Minutes of Annual General Meeting of 16 February 2016
2. Receive and adopt the President's Annual Report for 2016
3. Receive and adopt the Treasurer's Audited Annual Report for 2016
5. Elect Office Bearers for the positions of President; Vice President (2); Treasurer; Assistant Treasurer; Secretary; Minutes Secretary; Publicity Officer; Newsletter Editor and Committee Members
6. Appoint an Auditor for 2017

**AGENDA:** ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING

1. Decide on the Ordinary General Meeting dates for 2017
2. Approve expenditure for new website
3. Epping Planning Review 2017
4. Report on the Forest Park proposal
5. Report on the status of development proposals and applications
6. General Business

## Work underway on West Epping Park



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- **PRESIDENT** - Graham Lovell Phone: 9872 4950
- **VICE PRESIDENT** - Graham Medhurst Phone: 0434 356 361
- **TREASURER/ MEMBERSHIP** - Alan Swales, PO Box 2509, Carlingford Court 2118 Phone: 9869 1954

**Proposed Ordinary General Meeting Dates for 2017:**  
Tuesday, 21 February  
Tuesday, 16 May  
Tuesday, 15 August  
Tuesday, 21 November

Church of Christ Hall,  
31 Bridge Street, Epping  
at 7.30pm

## Happy New Year to all members!

### From the President, Graham Lovell

The Epping Civic Trust is a major voice for shaping the community we live in and keeping state and local government informed on matters of concern to the community. This involves regular consultation with both levels of government. The Trust is in regular discussion with councillors, and currently the Council Administrator, to progress Trust policies and to present members' concerns.

Over the past year, The Trust was successful in influencing change through major submissions lodged with Council. Development proposals were refused and amended as a result of the Trust's intervention. In 2016, the Trust also pursued its long term policy to have a town square/plaza in Epping and to have a better bus service operating between Carlingford and Epping.

One of the major changes last year was the transfer of that part of Epping previously under the management of Hornsby Council into the new Parramatta Council. The NSW government appointed Administrator has since pursued an active program to consolidate the new area into Parramatta Council. This has involved a program of consultation with the community - a major focus for the Trust which involved a considerable amount of time and effort from the executive. We believe that the Administrator should now have a clear picture of the issues of concern to the community and that the Council should now address these concerns.

While Council has progressed a number of significant projects in Epping, including the refurbishment of Boronia Park and a start on the upgrading of West Epping Park, all is not well in Epping. Developers have been running riot, with disregard for community property and residents. Council has clearly not been adequately regulating builders operating in Epping. However Council is undertaking studies into the traffic

problems plaguing Epping, a study into heritage protection and a study into community needs. These studies will lead to a review of the planning controls approved for Epping in 2014.

In 2017, the Trust has a long list of issues to deal with. For example, the NSW Planning Minister is proposing major amendments to the planning legislation that will influence development in Epping. The Greater Sydney Commission and Parramatta Council are also undertaking planning exercises that will impact on Epping. It is important that the Trust responds to these changes accordingly, but it is also important that it keep an eye on local development activity. There are a number of major proposals currently under assessment or in the pipeline in Epping. Most of these are for development which exceeds the planning controls currently in place for Epping. These proposals will demand the Trust's attention and timely response.

The Trust continues to struggle to keep up with all the issues before it, which means important concerns regarding developments, infrastructure and services will not be adequately addressed. Members are urged to become actively involved in our work and to seek out new members to support our efforts. The Trust can be a strong voice in the community in 2017, but your active support will be critical in achieving our objectives.

As we work towards our goals to serve the community, we have introduced EFT for the ease of payment of membership fees. We have also had to implement a small increase in membership fees. These funds are to cover costs of newsletter production and distribution, website development and promotion of the Trust to increase community awareness and membership.

I look forward to seeing you all at our first general meeting.

## Forest Park update - Report by Margaret McCartney, Save Epping's Forest Park Action Group

Planning Proposal:  
**2-18 Epping Road, 2-4 Forest Grove  
 and 725 Blaxland Road**  
 by Austino Property Group



Save Epping's Forest Park Action Group meeting with Amanda Chadwick and Sue Weatherley



Artist's impression of the Austino Property Group project  
 Picture: Austino Property Group

In September 2016, the Sydney West Joint Regional Planning Panel (SWJRPP) found strategic merit with the Planning Proposal and said it could progress to Gateway Certification, provided the Austino Property Group took actions to address the SWJRPP's recommendations. Following this, the proponent and the City of Parramatta Council were to workshop to ensure these recommendations were addressed. Workshops have occurred, however, a planning proposal which addresses the SWJRPP's recommendations is yet to be developed.

It was previously expected the revised planning proposal would go to the Independent Hearing and Assessment Panel on 21 February 2017. However, due to the Council not currently having a revised planning proposal which address the SWJRPP's

recommendations, this will not go ahead.

In November 2016, the NSW Department of Planning and Environment asked the Council to be the Relevant Planning Authority (RPA) for this planning proposal. The Council have advised they will accept the RPA position, on the condition they can make the decision on the planning proposal after the Epping Planning Reviews have been completed. This is to allow the Council to collect information about Epping's needs to assist with making an informed decision. The Council is currently waiting for a response from the Department of Planning and Environment about this matter. A possible outcome is that the Department of Planning and Environment could decide to take on the role of RPA.

On 18 January 2017, representatives from the Save Epping's Forest Park action group met with

Amanda Chadwick, Administrator, City of Parramatta Council and Sue Weatherley, Director Strategic Outcomes and Development, to discuss the concerns of local residents with the planning proposal. During this meeting, Ms Chadwick was presented with the Save Epping's Forest Park petition, signed by 557 people between 6 and 18 January, 2017.

The petition demonstrated people in Epping are not happy with this planning proposal. This includes a desire to keep the former Epping Bowling Club zoned as public recreation land and preferably as open space. Many people took advantage of the petition's section in which their 'other concerns' could be recorded. The concerns expressed were similar to those expressed by residents during the Council's Planning Review meeting on 14 December 2016.

### Out and about in Epping

New exercise equipment Boronia Park (right)

A hand rail now divides the walkway from Beecroft Road to Rawson Street (below)



Painting work has begun on the bus shelter on Willoughby Street to match the shelter across the road (above)

### Residential Development

12 Bridge Street Epping

A development application was lodged for this site (old Coopers Jewellery store) in December 2015 for an eight storey mixed-use building (primarily residential). The Trust lodged a submission in February 2016 opposing the excessive height of the building, and expressed concerns about overshadowing of properties to the rear of the building, as well as design problems with the ground level frontage.

Subsequent amendments corrected some of the Trust's concerns, but in December 2016, Parramatta Council refused the application. Council's refusal was based on the excessive height, but Council also advised the applicant that consideration would have to be given to recessing the frontage along Bridge Street by two metres in any new application to enhance street activation and pedestrian amenity.

It is interesting to note that this high rise development application is the only one lodged in Parramatta Council's old area of responsibility since the Epping Town Centre Urban Activation Precinct came into effect in March 2014.



### Carlingford's Cranes, Cars and Congestion

Latest figures indicate the new units currently being built in Carlingford, together with those recently completed, will exceed 4000 - not unlike what is happening in the Epping CBD.

The basic difference between Epping and Carlingford, is that Epping is serviced by a major rail and bus transport hub, whereas Carlingford falls well short of having good public transport links to where the greater majority of commuters want to travel, including Epping Station, Macquarie Shopping Centre, Macquarie Park and North Ryde.

Currently the most direct way to reach Epping Station from Carlingford by public transport is via the M54 bus service which runs regularly. However, during busy periods it reaches capacity before it reaches Epping, refusing to pick up any more passengers for the remaining journey to Epping Station, bypassing around 10 bus stops. Heavy traffic congestion along Carlingford Road in peak times also means it can take up to 25

minutes to travel the last kilometre to Epping Station.

The question has to be asked as to how the large influx of people from Carlingford will be transported in a prompt and efficient manner to Epping station and beyond. At the moment there are no solutions. However, the Trust remains hopeful that in the foreseeable future the Light Rail from Parramatta to Carlingford be extended to Epping Station and then linked to the technology hubs of Macquarie Park and North Ryde. Previously, both Parramatta and Baulkham Hills Councils fully supported the missing Light Rail link from Carlingford to Epping/Macquarie.

Adding to Carlingford's problems is the increased traffic congestion generated by the main arterial roads that come together at Carlingford- Marsden Road, Carlingford Road, Pennant Hills Road and North Rocks Road.

The Trust will continue to lobby politicians accordingly.

### Epping Town Planning Review Public Meeting - 14 December 2016

Over 400 residents dedicated to saving Epping from total destruction attended the Epping Community Hall for the Epping Planning Review. Attendance was over capacity. Parramatta Council Administrator, Amanda Chadwick, presented an overview of what has been planned for the area and detailed the time frames which spanned from March 2017 to 2018.

Some of the 30 questions and comments addressed to her by the community included suburb identity, traffic congestion and public transport, tree destruction, schools, recreation space, illegal behaviour of construction workers and vehement requests for no further development applications until all concerns are rectified.

Please watch for further meetings.