



Celebrating 50 Years!

50 years ago a group of residents from the streets close to Rawson Street and Carlingford Road met to form a 'progress association' and lobby against a council plan to zone an extensive area for three storey walk up units. In months to come, they adopted the name Epping Civic Trust and expanded their reach and remit to the area from east of Pennant Hills Road through to North Epping.

This issue includes our 50th Anniversary History – a short overview of major campaigns and projects the Trust has undertaken. The aims of the organisation have stayed the same – the betterment and enhancement of our local area for the benefit of residents. This includes respect for heritage and the environment, better planning and development and more community facilities. We hope you can share this history with your neighbours and encourage them to join the Trust – we are only as strong as our membership. Additional information on our history can be found at the Trust website. <https://eppingcivictrust.org/the-history-of-epping-civic-trust/>

General Meeting and 50th Anniversary celebration:

The Trust is pleased to return to an in-person General Meeting to be held on Tuesday 18 May at 7.30pm in the hall behind the Church of Christ in Bridge Street. This face-to-face meeting (following all Covid-safe requirements) will feature an overview of current Epping news and Q&A with our Epping Ward councillors. Please also join us for supper after the meeting to celebrate 50 years of the Trust.



REPRESENTING
THE COMMUNITY
SINCE 1971

NEXT MEETING: 7.30pm TUESDAY 18th MAY 2021



in the Church of Christ Hall, 31 Bridge Street, Epping.

All members are invited to the next General Meeting.

- 1) Overview of current Epping news
- 2) Q & A with Epping Ward councillors

Followed by a special supper to celebrate 50 years of the Trust

FROM THE PRESIDENT, JANET MCGARRY ▶▶▶

As our lives have changed during Covid, it has become increasingly clear that people are living local, and looking for the recreation and outdoor spaces to pursue a healthy life. Local sporting clubs have seen a big increase in enrolments for this soccer/netball season, and we have all experienced our busier parks and bushland.

I was reminded of this recently listening to Cllr Wearne speak in memory of the Trust's Vice President, and local activist, Margaret McCartney who sadly passed away in March (see tribute page 2). She commented on Margaret's love of Forest Park near her home; her work in getting this space enhanced and well maintained; and her lobbying to have the adjacent old bowling club land be retained in community ownership and used for its zoned purpose of public recreation to offer much more open space in this part of Epping. Margaret sought

peace and refuge in Forest Park – it was a place for contemplation and thought in the open air. She loved its mature trees and quiet spots. During illness, it was soothing to her soul.

There is no finer articulation of exactly why we need to be increasing open space around Epping. Our population will likely double over two decades, putting pressure on existing parks. Council has recognised this in their recently exhibited Developer Contributions Plan, which plans for new and extended open spaces on both sides of Epping. But will this be just a pie-in-the-sky ambition, or is there the vision and will to source sufficient funds to purchase land and transform it into places that will truly feed the soul of our suburb? I know Margaret McCartney devoted her last years to this, and we all need to hold our council to account to deliver their plans.

The Trust needs your help. The Trust is entirely dependent on people volunteering – it can be a small amount of time or expertise or a greater involvement. Without people stepping up to join the Committee, the Trust will cease to exist. There are vacancies on the committee, so why not get involved? As well as the main committee, there are active sub groups looking at Trees, West Epping issues and North Epping.

Vale Margaret McCartney



The passing of Margaret McCartney a few weeks ago is a sad loss for Epping and for her many friends and family. Margaret played a major role in the Epping Civic Trust, as chair of the Tree Subcommittee and recently elected Vice President. We wish to pay tribute to Margaret's significant work by describing some of her many volunteer activities below.

Margaret was passionate about Epping's Forest Park, a beautiful local park where she found peaceful solace after her earlier diagnosis of cancer. Margaret founded a local group, Save Epping's Forest Park, to campaign vigorously to maintain the park, and to preserve the adjacent Epping bowling club site from development. She recognised that for Epping's rapidly growing population of apartment dwellers, with limited access to open space on the east side of the railway line, this tree-lined park was very important.

As a member of the Epping Civic Trust Committee, Margaret was a hard-working and effective volunteer. She had an excellent knowledge of DAs and relevant regulations, and the patience to read through the many pages of numerous DAs time after time, and to identify and make submissions on the key issues. Margaret was unfailingly polite and her submissions were always carefully constructed and argued. Margaret held a love of trees and living things for her whole life. Later in life, her concern about climate change and its

impact in urban areas as mature trees are removed contributed to her passionate defence of trees in Epping and surrounds. Whilst the Trust always had environmental preservation within its objectives, it was at her instigation that we started a Tree subcommittee to lobby on tree-related issues around Epping. Margaret chaired that committee and built up a group of volunteers to monitor tree removal applications, lobby Council for more street trees, and bring to Council's attention the illegal removal of trees. We attribute the many street trees that the City of Parramatta planted around Epping last year to her tireless lobbying.

Margaret recently joined a local Bushcare group near Plympton Road (under City of Parramatta council auspices), where she was working on weed reduction and native replanting. Members of the Tree subcommittee joined the Bushcare group to plant four Sydney blue gums in her memory. Margaret's Memorial Service was well-attended. We understand that City of Parramatta council plans a bench and tree to be planted in Forest Park as a tribute to Margaret. A City of Parramatta council Mayoral minute was spoken to commemorate Margaret's impact on the Epping area, and Councillors Lorraine Wearne and Donna Davis spoke movingly about her contributions. Margaret spent most of her life in the Eastwood/Epping area, and she contributed to the community in so many ways – improving Epping for residents now and in the future.

Development Applications

2-16 Epping Road and 2-4 Forest Grove, Epping (DA/397/2020) – also known as the Austino Site:

Following the refusal of this DA by the Sydney Central City planning panel in December last year, the Developer has appealed to the Land and Environment Court. On March 9 this year a Conciliation Conference was held under the auspices of the Court. The Trust made a written submission to this Conference. We have not yet heard the outcome, nor when the matter will come before the Court for hearing.

One of our objections to this application was that it used land

zoned RE1 which was part of the old Epping bowling Club site for its access road. The Trust remains hopeful that all this land can be retained for community use for public recreation.

A meeting between officers of the Trust and Federal MP for Epping, Mr John Alexander was held on March 2, in which we sought his support, both moral and financial, for the reacquisition of this site.

We continue to seek the support of our local State Member, Mr Dominic Perrottet, and our Ward Councillors to find the funds to repurchase this site.

25 Ray Rd, Epping - "Woodlands" (DA/19/2020)

As reported in our February Newsletter, this application was refused in October last year by a Local Planning Panel. It found that the driveway and parking arrangements proposed represented an unacceptable safety risk.

The Applicant appealed this decision and put forward the same application for a further Local Planning Panel hearing. This hearing occurred on 20 April, and the Panel approved the DA.

73 Kent Street (DA/180/2021) – Boarding House

Boarding houses on residential streets, like this DA, are controlled by a State Government planning instrument, or SEPP – which aimed to increase affordable housing particularly through community housing providers (not for profits). Unfortunately for-profit developers use this SEPP to try and leverage micro-units onto suburban roads – to the detriment of local areas, and away from proper planning by local councils. The State government has recognised this loophole and are moving to close it – but not fast enough.

Meantime, this DA for 19 lodgers in 12 rooms with a block-like two-storey building dominating the site is strongly opposed by local residents and the Trust. We believe Council should properly plan our suburbs and hope this will be rejected when it comes to the Planning Panel.

123 Ray Road (DA) – Boarding House

Not satisfied with having got their DA through the Land and Environment Court after Council rejected it, this developer now wants to add another 6 lodgers (a total of 30 in 15 rooms) to this development. When will this greed stop?

15 High St Epping Childcare Centre (DA/49/2021)

The Trust objected to this development on the grounds that it was inappropriate because of the size of the proposed centre, and because of its bulk and scale.

The Parramatta Development Control Plan 2011 provides that the

maximum number of places for a childcare centre in a residential zone is 40, unless at least a third of the places are for under two year old children. This is not the case, and the development is for 75 places.

The developer argues that the State Environment Planning Policy, SEPP 2017 allows a greater number, and we have disputed this.

We also argue that the building is of a bulk and scale inappropriate for the area.

The matter remains under assessment by Council.

64 Boronia Ave (DA/594/2020)

This DA for two dwellings to be built on what is the site of a single house on the corner of Boronia Av and Ryde St was approved over the objections of the Trust and neighbours by a Local Planning Panel in late February.

We are disappointed that this approval overrides a neighbour's very strong objection to a 1-metre-wide easement through his property, in order to enable stormwater drainage from the dual occupancy site. We are also disappointed that this development has been approved at a time when the harmonisation of planning and development regulations is being actively considered, and Council has voted to disallow dual occupancy in this part of Epping.

The Langston, Langston Place, Epping

This three-block development which will dominate the east side of the railway line has now reached the 'topping out' stage – maximum height. The developer CBus say they still plan to finish this year, and are actively trying to fill the retail space on ground level. This space, and quality tenants including a supermarket, will be vital to activate this part of Epping. We will also be watching how they complete the shared pedestrian/road space between the towers, and the landscaping – especially tree replacement on Chambers Court. Much has been promised!

Commercial Floor Space in Epping

Considering the commercial floor space plan for West side of Epping Station, Council chose the option to offer developers extra height (beyond the zoning) to include commercial floor space in their new buildings. We await the planning panel outcome.

Development Contributions Plan 2021

This is a draft for the provision of community infrastructure in the Parramatta local government area including Epping. This new proposal will fund the critical infrastructure that council has identified as needed in its Community Infrastructure Strategy 2019.

Examples of the types of works are:

- Open space and recreation facilities, such as parks and indoor sports courts
- Community facilities, such as libraries or community centres
- Traffic and transport works, such as upgraded local roads, pedestrian safety and traffic calming works.

The Council proposes spending over \$450 million in the Epping area over the 20 years. This reflects the huge amount of development that has occurred or is planned for Epping, and how little work on infrastructure has happened to date.

Much of the funding for this work comes from developer contributions – the money companies have to pay to council based on the size and scale of their developments. Unfortunately, this funding falls short of what is necessary to provide adequate local infrastructure, and the council has to meet the gap. You can see a full list of the proposed items for Epping as part of our detailed analysis here <https://eppingcivictrust.org/development-contributions-plan/>

Epping Community Centre

Two and a half years after City of Parramatta Council purchased the old Boronia Grove centre, next to the Rawson Street car park, is it finally about to open for use? Council have been working on internal updates and a terraced area facing Boronia Park for a café. But the pace of these works has been glacial. And there appears to be no Centre management plan that clearly articulates the Centre's objectives, role in the community and usage protocols. It is not good enough to assume that it will run remotely from Parramatta, with a room booking system, and renting out the café. Epping needs a proactive centre manager for this and other council buildings in Epping (e.g. School of Arts and Library) to deliver a vision of a community hub that is well used and brings the residents together.

Epping Aquatic Centre (Dence Park)

Progress on the plans for revitalisation of the pool proceeds very slowly. After endless rounds of public consultation, residents are still waiting to hear about updated plans. The council has approved a budget which will allow for a new 8-lane outdoor pool, and 25 metre indoor pool and facilities. But the failure to include a proper toddler pool and splash area (both are needed!) is just ridiculous. In a family area like Epping, these are core elements. Latest council documents list work completion in December 2023, but it is hard to see how that will be achieved, especially as Council is building the new large pool centre in Parramatta at the same time.

Epping to Carlingford Cycleway

Construction has begun of the Barellan Avenue and Pennant Parade leg of the Epping to Carlingford cycleway. Details of the whole plan can be found at: <https://participate.cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au/eppingtocarlingfordcycleway>



WEST EPPING SUBCOMMITTEE

Council has approved the installation of traffic lights at the intersection of Hepburn Avenue and Carlingford Road.

There has been a delay in the commencement of work in Ward and Ryde Street, Epping to improve the safety of school students and the local West Epping community, due to design changes requested by Transport NSW. Work is now scheduled to commence in June, 2021.

Corner of Hepburn Avenue and Carlingford Road



TREE SUBCOMMITTEE

The Tree Subcommittee has been mourning the loss of our chair Margaret McCartney. Members of the committee planted four Sydney blue gums in her memory at a bush care site in Epping.

The committee focussed on improving street tree planting during 2020, because of increasing urban heat and the importance of trees to cool our suburbs. We identified streets which needed more trees (compiled and sent to Council). Most streets identified had new trees planted, and Council allocated \$100K for street tree planting in Epping. Some individual locations where a tree is missing will be forwarded to Council for spot planting.

We are particularly concerned for the protection and replacement of trees during the extensive development that is occurring in Epping. We regret that City of Parramatta council has withdrawn funding for the Western Sydney Cooling streets initiative.

USEFUL CONTACTS

Members who have concerns about issues in Epping are always free to contact the Trust through our email or website. However, if you have issues that you would prefer to discuss with our elected representatives, here are their contact details:

City of Parramatta Council,
PO Box 32, Parramatta NSW 2124

Councillor Lorraine Wearne
Phone: 0416 035 817
lwearne@cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au

Councillor Donna Davis
Phone: 0447 745 402
ddavis@cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au

Councillor Bill Tyrrell
Phone: 0488 666 335
bttyrrell@cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au

Hornsby Shire Council,
PO Box 37 Hornsby NSW 1630

Councillor Emma Heyde
Phone: 0403 589 722
ehayde@hornsby.nsw.gov.au

Councillor Vince del Gallego
Phone: 9847 6666
vdelgallego@hornsby.nsw.gov.au

Councillor Michael Hutchence
Phone: 0466 008 375
mhutchence@hornsby.nsw.gov.au

PARLIAMENT OF
NEW SOUTH WALES

Member for Epping, Dominic Perrottet
Suite 303, level 3, 51 Rawson Street, Epping
Phone: 9877 0266 **Email:** epping@parliament.nsw.gov.au



EPPING CIVIC TRUST
www.eppingcivictrust.org

PRESIDENT: Janet McGarry (0408 071 707)
VICE PRESIDENT: Mike Moffatt (0421 859 070)
TREASURER: Leo Hart (0417 424 580)
P.O. BOX 271, Epping 1710

Ordinary General Meeting dates for 2021

- Church of Christ Hall, 31 Bridge Street, Epping.
7.30 pm
- Tuesday 18 May - General Meeting
 - Tuesday 17 August - Council Election Meeting - all candidates invited
 - Tuesday 16 November - General Meeting