



NOTES FROM COUNCILLOR DAVID PLUMRIDGE'S DESK

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URBAN PLANNING - Is it important and can it make us happy?

I am currently reading a book ("Who's Your City" by Richard Florida) that makes the point that **PLACE** forms the third leg in the triangle of our well-being, alongside our **PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS** and our **WORK**. In fact we make 3 critical decisions which shape our lives and our degree of happiness. The first is our career and work, the second is our personal relationships and thirdly is **where we choose to live**. Florida argues that the place we choose to be - and of course it may change at various stages in our lives - is an important contributor to what makes us happy. And that is where urban planning comes in. Half of the world's people now lives in cities and in Australia this figure is even higher with over 75% choosing an urban (or suburban) lifestyle. **Hence, how we plan our cities is a vital element in what makes us happy.**

So we should agree that urban planning is important. And as your happiness is at stake you need to have a say in what sort of a place the planners offer up. You can do this by engaging with the process whenever you have a chance (such as consultations like Picture Adelaide and 5000+). It is also important that Local Government continues to be the driver of local planning and is not taken over by other spheres of government or worse, by well-meaning but unaccountable bodies.

Recognising the importance of strategic urban planning for our cities, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Meeting in December 2009 agreed to reforms to ensure that our capital cities are well-placed to be globally competitive, productive, sustainable, liveable and socially inclusive and are well-placed to meet future challenges and growth. Three high level goals have been set, productivity, liveability and sustainability.

A key conclusion of the COAG Report is the importance of developing a **Vision** for our city, how we want it to develop and the need for the community to buy into that visioning process. **In other words what kind of a city will make us happy?**

So what do we mean when we talk about Urban Design? Do citizens, elected members and urban planners all mean the same thing? I doubt it but I am going to try to define it with the help of the *ADC Forum Cities Report 2010*

"Urban design encompasses the buildings, places, spaces and networks (both public and private) that make up our towns and cities and the way people use them." There are 8 core elements of urban design:-

1. **Local Character** - This is the distinctive identity of a particular place that results from the interaction of many factors, including built form, people, activity, heritage and history.
 - eg North Adelaide Historic Zone, The South-West community, The Hindley St night life area, The Central Market.
2. **Connectivity** - The physical conditions facilitating access within a region, city, precinct, or neighbourhood.
 - eg Wide grid-pattern roads, undeveloped laneways, inadequate, poorly-maintained footpaths, incomplete bicycle lanes, an abundance of car parks, poor cross-city connectivity, pedestrian unfriendly streets.
3. **Density** - The concentration of population and activity in an area.
 - There is a disparity in city densities; we need to consider controlling not only **maximum** but also **minimum** heights to achieve an overall increase in density without being overrun by totally inappropriate skyscrapers.
4. **Mixed Use** - Where a variety of different living and working activities are in close proximity within a neighbourhood.
 - Maybe MU has merit but there are many downsides. The juxtaposition of residential units (including students) with night entertainment venues, licensed night clubs with colleges and many others leave a lot to be desired.
5. **Adaptability** - The capacity of urban buildings, neighbourhoods and spaces to adapt to changing needs.
 - Adelaide has many older buildings crying out for adaptive re-use and the activation of disused upper floorspace.
6. **High Quality Public Realm** - All parts of the physical environment of cities and towns that the public has access to and that form the setting for community life.
 - We have 'feast and famine'! North Tce is a 'feast', Victoria Square is a 'famine'. We just have to invest more.
7. **Integrated decision-making** - Integration within and between organisations involved in urban policy, planning and implementation of the different urban design elements.
 - As a result of renewed interest by the Federal Government in building better cities (after the drought years of John Howard), a commitment by the State and City Council through the Capital City Committee, we have joint funding of Strategic Plans for Adelaide & the Rim Councils to be delivered by the Integrated Design Commission.
8. **User participation** - The public consultation process and other forms of involvement in urban design projects.
 - The Council is looking for new ways to engage with the community and has recently introduced Picture Adelaide together with Facebook and Twitter pages as well as maintaining the more traditional modes of communications.

The qualities of Urban Planning would be incomplete without the essentials of social inclusion, equal opportunity for all and living within global emission constraints. Then we may have all the elements required for a happy life.

Some recent meeting decisions (full details are available on the Council's website 5 days after the meeting)

DEVELOPMENT ASSESSMENT PANEL – Meeting held 1 August (next meeting 15 August)

2. Non-Complying Applications

- 2.1 257-259 Melbourne St NA – DPC granted subject to concurrence from the Dev^t Ass^t Commission. (DA/272/2011)

3. Applications for consideration on Merit

- 3.1 22,22A,B & C Moger Lane – DPC granted to demolish partially built t/houses and build 4 dwellings (DA/164/2011)

4. Schedule 10 Matters There were no Schedule 10 Matters to be considered.

5. Other Applications

- 5.1 176-186 Morphett St – DAC was advised that the Panel supports variations to an earlier DA ((DA/607/2010/A)
- 5.2 195-209 Halifax St – was advised that the Panel did not support variations to an earlier DA (DA/948/2009A)

DEVELOPMENT ASSESSMENT PANEL – Meeting held 15 August (next meeting 5 September (tentative))

3. Applications for consideration on Merit

- 3.1 209-211 Melbourne St NA – DPC was granted for alterations and conservation works to existing office building and construction of a 3-storey residential building consisting of 4 dwellings, with rear car parking. (DA/429/2011)

4. Schedule 10 Matters (Panel advice to Development Assessment Commission)

- 4.1 The Panel did not support the construction of a 6 level retail/hotel building at 8-10 Union St (DA/27/2009)

COUNCIL MEETING - Meeting held 23 August (Next Ordinary Meeting 27 Sept –Committees 6 & 13 Sept at 5.30)

Public Forum Mr Barney Medlin (Classic Bicycle Shop) put forward ideas for revitalizing the retail precinct of Pulteney St
Motions on Notice were moved by ■ Cllr Llewellyn-Smith calling for a report on Regent St North Streetscape options; by myself on ■ support for the Roads to Recovery Program; ■ Food Security, including planting of fruit and nut trees; ■
Motions to go to the LGA AGM on changes to the Road Traffic Act and increased powers to deal with dilapidated buildings and by Cllr Henningsen to restore policing of private commercial car parks and a rescission by Cllr Hamilton.

Motions w/o Notice were put by Cllr Llewellyn-Smith on Council planning issues and by Cllr Moran on various planning and licensing issues relative to the Pimp TV bar in Franklin St and by Cllr Clearihan of NA Safety concerns.

Items referred by Committees to Council (NB Not all items are reported)

- 16 Recommendations of the City Design and Character Committee – 2 August (Chair: Cllr Llewellyn-Smith)

- 1. Council noted the Operating Guidelines for the Mainstreet Building Improvement Scheme (MIS) and the preliminary list of potential demonstration projects in the Mall and Hindley St. All costs to be funded from the \$250k MIS budget line.
- 2. Council endorsed the updated Public Art & Memorials policy and operating Guidelines and noted that 2 models of delivery are to be further considered. Council will also ask Govt to require a % of development costs be used for public art
- 3. Council reversed its earlier decision to allow Early Bird Parking to revert 9.15am. *Hardly Early Bird and a poor decision where dollar considerations have overridden environmental ones. The parking lobby is alive and well in Adelaide!*
- 4. Council resolved to require ETSA to locate a new transformer in Mills Tce on the Park Lands with U/G cabling .
- 5. A report on the community engagement program Picture Adelaide showed that 1074 people had submitted a total of 2848 ideas between 15 April and 30 June. Main sources were Website (38%) Postcards (31%) and Polaroid events (22%)
- 6. Council rejected a call for 40k speed trial in Hutt St but called for a report on an alternative street for a trial 40k zone.
- 7. Council called for a report on better parking for netball players in Park 22, where substantial damage is being done.

- 17. Recommendations of the City Development and Sustainability Committee – 2 August (Chair: DLM Plumridge)

- (The Committee had rec'd a presentation by Mr Kym Good, Regional Manager of the Adelaide & My Lofty NRM Board)
- Council received and noted the 4th Quarterly Progress report on the Carbon Neutral Council Action Plan 2008-2012 and also noted that the plan has been superseded by the Energy Management Action Plan 2011-2014.

- 18. Recommendations of the Community Services, Events and Facilities Committee – 9 August (Chair: Cllr Clearihan)

- 1. Council noted that the Committee had been briefed Minister Weatherill on plans for Adelaide H.S. expansion.
- 3. It was agreed to grant a 5-year lease to Golf South Australia to run golf programs at the North Adelaide Course.
- 4. Council agreed to amend By-Law 6 to give Council the ability to control smoking in Rundle Mall and adjoining streets.
- 5. Council agreed (subject to consultation) to grant a 12 month licence to ETSA for upgrading works in Parks 2,3 and 4.

- 19. Recommendations of the Corporate Planning, Governance and Finance Committee – 9 August (Dep/Chr Cllr Moran)

- 1. It was agreed to remove significant trees in Parks 6, 21, 23 and 27 and at 331 Angas Street.
- 2. Council Standing Orders were adopted as a draft document for consultation and further consideration in September.
- 3. Quarterly reports tracking member Resolutions with/without Notice will be attached to future committee agendas.

- 20. Advice of the Adelaide Park Lands Authority – held 11 August (Chair: The Lord Mayor)

- Council noted and adopted APLA advices on lease to Golf SA (item 18.3) and Royal Adelaide Show Parking (item 21)

Items for Council

- 21. Council agreed to enter into a deed with the RAHS to provide more sustainable parking options for the Royal Show and to work towards increased use of public transport and off Park Lands car parking and more use of city car parks.

- 22. Council stated its ongoing support for the closure of Barton Tce W and will advise all stakeholders including MP's

- 23. It was agreed to reduce parking fees and to donate nett UPark profits to the Little Heroes Foundation West End State of Origin Slowdown X1 match at the Adelaide Oval on 3 October. Pinky Flat is not to be used.

- 24. Council agreed to deal with requests for occasional Park Lands parking on a case by case basis until relevant CLMPs are reviewed which is due to be completed by 30 June 2012.

- 25. Temporary leases were granted for ■ Australian International 3 Day Event on 17 to 20 November. This year the event is to be focused on the heritage grandstand in Victoria Park as well as Park 15 and Rymill Park (let's hope we don't see a repeat of last years mindless damage to trees) ■ Feast Festival Hub to be staged in Light Square from 12 to 27 November and Stereosonic 2011 to be held on 3 December in Bonython Park.

- 26. The Prelim End of Year Financial Performance Report was noted & appr'd budget adjustments and carry-forwards.

- 28. Cllr Hamilton, having resigned as chair of the Corp Planning and Governance Cée, was replaced by Cllr Moran.

Confidential Items covered ■ a Heritage DPA matter ■ Sturt St Housing and NRAS Allocations ■ West End Safety Action Plan ■ Adelaide Bus Station and Grote St Retail Tenancy and ■ Presiding Member's Report re CEO Contract.

Any views expressed herein are those of Cllr Plumridge and do not purport to be those of the Adelaide City Council.