

Western Adelaide Coastal Residents Association Inc.

President's Report AGM 2014/15

Thank you for privilege of holding this position within this very active community organisation.

I read through my AGM report of last year and we have many of the same issues that we are dealing with. However, in a few we are getting closer to a resolution.

Coast Park

You will all know that Council convened a Community Reference Group that met for 12 months and did a remarkable amount of work that brought a recommendation to Council that basically is two preferred positions that have now been sent to the Premier and the Minister to work with Council and residents in settling on a final position. WACRA has developed a Position Paper that mainly supports a continuous pathway through the dunes and we have sent our position to the five Resident Interest Groups along the 4.7 kilometre coastal strip with the intent to find an agreed compromise. We thank Richard, Marg and David for their dedication and the democratic process we put in place to enable WACRA to come to a preferred position.

Henley Square

After 3 years of meeting as a Community Reference Group with officers of Council, designers and architects, and with many opportunities for the community to have an input into the design features, Council agreed on a final design. All contracts have been signed and work is due to commence in April and be completed by December this year. We thank our representatives who attended all or most meetings – David, Anne, Theo and your president.

Ground water

It is over 4 years since WACRA brought this issue to the attention of Council, the Minister for Water and, of course, the community. After considerable pressure from WACRA, we were successful in eventually bringing the developer to the table to find a resolution to an extremely serious environmental and structural problem. For those who may not be aware there is a real possibility of sea water encroaching inland as a result of unequal water levels and this must be rectified to the satisfaction of DEWNR (Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources). At the most recent meeting your negotiating team have been advised that the trench of over 100 metres must be constructed on Seaview Road with a number of soakage cells. We were expecting a start date by now, but once again there are problems that we are told are legal and confidential but we will keep hammering away to get a resolution. Thanks to Paul, Lara, Kenzie Anne, Pedro and Julie for their ongoing insistence to have this huge problem rectified.

Traffic management

Recommendations for speed reductions within the Henley Precinct came from the Henley Community Reference Group and you will all have driven, ridden or run through the 40K sections between North and South Streets.

Car parking

This is an unresolved nightmare. It could be helped a lot if Mr Antunes abided by his development consent and that council had a bit more intestinal fortitude to force him to comply. There is talk about a public/private car park in one of the 'excess to use properties' of Council. WACRA will oppose this expenditure as there are other ways of dealing with this problem, such as walking a bit further or riding a bike, park and ride, use of public transport and timed parking.

Jet Ski Exclusion Zone

This is a success story and one WACRA can be well proud of achieving. We need to continue our vigilance to retain this zone for next summer with a view to extending the zone further north to protect Grange Beach. Rumour has it that other councils want the same conditions and this may create concerns of liability in the future.

Torrens Wetland 3rd stage

It has taken almost eight years to finally convince the Natural Resources Management Board to set aside a parcel of money to conduct a Community Consultation and Concept plan for the 3rd and final wetland from Tapleys Hill Road to the Gulf St Vincent Outlet. A sum of \$50,000 has been allocated to conduct the consultation and right now this is happening with the West Torrens and Charles Sturt Councils, to be followed by community consultation. This money won't go far but it is a start and we must keep agitating for this final stage. Of course it won't be without concerns for the horses and we give a commitment to work with the riding club to find a resolution.

West Beach and the Dunes

Over 600 community residents tried hard in 1997/8 to stop the Barcoo Outlet and the Boat Harbour at West Beach, knowing that northern natural sand drift would be held up behind the rock walls at Patawalonga and the boat harbor, wrecking the beach. This has put the dunes and the SLSC at terminal risk and we have written to Environment Minister Hunter, Local Member Paul Caica and Council outlining the seriousness of the issue and seeking answers. We are also aware of the recently formed West Beach Community Reference Group and would like to work with them in finding a strategy that will at least provide a beach at West Beach.

Federal Budget

Cuts to community services and health has meant a downsizing of primary and acute services in this State. Cuts to community services that have the benefit of keeping people healthy just don't make sense. We will continue to advocate for primary health care dollars but we really haven't come across any genuine listeners.

Cuts in pensioner payments, youth allowance and unemployed benefits is something we should all have concerns about. WACRA have written to the Federal Member for Hindmarsh Matt Williams and we received what we consider to be an unsatisfactory response. We will continue to raise our concerns, seeking justice for those most vulnerable in our society.

Climate Change

WACRA believe that carbon emissions are a major contributor to Climate Change. We also believe that alternate energy resources such as wind power and solar are a much better than fossil fuelled power generators. This issue needs to be at the forefront of discussion to reduce our carbon foot print and to consider alternative power production. There is also the concern about job losses and in particular here in SA, where the shutting down of the vehicle industry and threats to the Submarine build threaten future job opportunities.

Adelaide Airport Development and Aircraft noise

WACRA is concerned about the significant development proposed in the Airport Master Plan that has the obvious potential to increase air craft visitation. This also raises the concern of ensuring that the present curfew from 12 midnight to 6am be retained. Already a few chinks in the curfew are allowing air craft to enter the airport outside of curfew hours. Use of the diagonal airstrip is also creating problems for those living on the flight path in Henley and West Beach. WACRA has written to the Federal Member for Hindmarsh Matt Williams and the Federal Air Services, and has also requested the Council representative on the airport community consultation committee, Mayor Angela Kenneally, to raise our collective concerns.

Public art

WACRA made presentations to the City Charles Sturt seeking support for a payment of \$25,000 for a public art sculpture named *The Wheels of Peace* to commemorate the 100 Years of ANZAC. Council originally supported the project; however, unbeknown to us at the time Council considered the project needed to go through a development assessment process and were claiming that to install the works an additional \$25,000 would need to be found. After a number of meetings with Council we were informed that there were 17 objectors (some very questionable), that there wasn't the money in the budget, and that the project should have been dealt with through the Public Arts Policy process. This has been an interesting and no doubt very frustrating process, particularly as the project had the full support of the RSL and the State Member Paul Caica. We would like to thank Anne Wheaton for her commitment to the project.

But the good news story is that WACRA will continue to raise the issue of public art and its importance to our history and culture, so we have made a commitment to set up within our new website (www.wacra.org.au) a photographic and educational Public art section that will show the works and places of the Cormorants at Semaphore, the Sea Eagle at Grange, the Pelicans at the mouth of the Torrens River, the mosaic Sea Creatures along the Henley foreshore, and the Mosaic biodiversity pathway on the banks of the Torrens River. They are all projects that WACRA initiated, working with Council. We will add more public art work, such as the wall of the Marine Discovery Centre and the new shelter at the end of Henley Beach Road.

Other

There are other things we have either initiated or have been involved in, such as:

- A Voluntary Carbon Credit Scheme in the West – we have had a look at this and it is still on the drawing board
- Nature Play – creation of outside natural play places for children
- Sea Week – September 2015
- Noise from the Ramsgate Hotel – these discussions are looking like a noise reduction strategy

- The Blue Groper project at Port Noarlunga, working with the Friends of Gulf St Vincent and the Onkaparinga Council
- Attending and being active as members to the Conservation Council SA and the Friends of Gulf St Vincent
- Supporting the Environmental Defenders Office SA (who have been defunded by the Federal Government)

Tonight, as part of our General Meeting, we will ask Andrea Rankin, our social media adviser, to launch our new logo designed by two members Lara and Jason and our new updated you beaut website created by Andrea and her friend Jen with great assistance from Anne Wheaton and wonderful photos by Fernando Gonçalves.

We are on Facebook and that is continually being updated with relevant information.

Our membership seems to ebb and flow depending on the issues that we are working on. A strategy to encourage existing financial members to renew and a drive for new members is presently taking place and we encourage you all to keep your membership up to date. Most organisations are facing similar issues because of the amount of information that is accessible on the internet. It is a fine balance of letting people know what is happening and at the same time keeping our membership informed and involved.

I want to thank the 15 members of the Executive Committee who work hard at keeping the issues confronting the community activated and addressed.

We meet every second month between General Meetings and we most often have long agendas and spirited discussion because we don't always agree or see things the same way, but to their credit the hands go up to take on the work.

I would like to give a special mention to Val Wales who has been on the Executive for many years and found it difficult to juggle family issues and differing views about the final WACRA position on the Coast Park. We know that Val will always be a staunch supporter for protecting the environment and social justice issues, and we look forward to an ongoing working relationship.

Thanks also to a retiring member, Chrissie Schultz, who has been a great contributor, events organiser, money collector, and makes the best pavlovas in the world.

And finally a huge thank you to you the members who make WACRA the organisation that it is.

Jim Douglas