

# Griffith/Narrabundah Community Association Inc.

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## NEWSLETTER Vol 28 September 2012

### What's making News?

#### 2012 ACT Legislative Assembly Elections

20 October 2012 is Election Day. Make sure your vote counts, because whoever we elect on that day will be governing the ACT until 2016.

The candidates for the Molonglo electorate have been invited by the Inner South Canberra Community Council (GNCA belongs to the ISCCC) to meet the public on 13 September 2012 at 7 pm in the Eastlake Football Club, (corner of located on the corner of Oxley and Eyre Streets, Griffith).

The meeting, we hope, will be moderated by Ross Solly from ABC 666 and will close at 9:30 pm with light refreshments.

***Meet the Candidates for Molonglo  
Eastlake Football Club  
7pm- 9:30pm 13 Sept 2012  
Come and ask your questions  
Refreshments will be available.***

Candidates will be given the opportunity to briefly explain what they consider are the most important issues for the inner south and why their policies are the best choice for voters. There will then be questions from those attending.

Some of the issues that might be raised include:

#### Planning

- What are your plans to maintain the Garden City concept in Canberra?
- Will you improve the parking management and the protection of trees and verges during construction?
- What are your thoughts about the current re-developments and *ad hoc* intensification in and around Griffith (Brumbies, Baptists' nursing home, 31 apartments opposite the shops in Stuart Street and homes that occupy the whole block)?

#### Transport

- What actions would you take to stop illegal parking on verges and in other places?
- How do you plan to address parking problems within the Parliamentary triangle?
- What are your plans to improve the ACTION bus services?

#### Rates

- Some residents have received rate increases of more than 30% this year. How can you say that this is a fairer system?

#### Utility Charges

- Connection fees for water, gas and electricity have skyrocketed. You pay through the nose before you flick a switch or turn a tap. Do you intend to do anything about this?

#### Come to our AGM

The Griffith Narrabundah Community Association's Annual General Meeting will be held on Wednesday 24 October at 7:30 pm at the Eastlake Football Club, (located on the corner of Oxley and Eyre Streets, Griffith). Mark that in your diary now. We will elect the 2013 Committee, review our 2012 program and discuss what our priorities will be in 2013.

One of our activities will be to celebrate Canberra's centenary and hopefully open Blaxland Park.

**Members who are interested in taking an active role in the Association are encouraged to nominate for the Committee.** As a committee member you can help the association advance its work in our suburbs, especially community facilities and open space. Nominations can either be sent in advance to the Secretary (Marguerite Castello PO Box 4127, Manuka 2603) or can be submitted at the AGM.

***Light refreshments and cash bar will be available after the AGM.***

## We are having a Street Party!

2013 is the Centenary of Canberra and the communities of Griffith and Narrabundah will celebrate with at “Street Party” to be held in May next year within the grounds of M16 in Blaxland Crescent, Griffith. Some initial planning is underway between GNCA and M16 artists, and a date (probably Saturday 18 May) will be confirmed once we meet with the Centenary Group within ACT government.

Initial ideas discussed have been themes around Griffith street names – explorers, and Narrabundah street names – indigenous names, explorers and pioneers; involvement of local community dance groups, poets, librarians, gardening groups, and local businesses; the concept of big shared tables where people bring and share food.

Please send any more ideas to [info@gnca.org.au](mailto:info@gnca.org.au)

## Blaxland Park

The ACT’s Place-Names Committee is supporting our proposal to call the area of open space, between the Griffith shops, the new Baptists’ Community facility and the building where M16 operates, Blaxland Park.

The site is zoned Urban Open Space but has no name other than its Block and Section Number. The GNCA proposed the name Blaxland Park because Blaxland Crescent is adjacent to the open space and because Geoffrey Blaxland, together with William Lawson and William Wentworth set off in 1813 to cross the Blue Mountains. Therefore 2013 will, as well as being the centenary of Canberra, be the bi-centenary of Blaxland’s exploration.



*Geoffrey Blaxland; Born June 17, 1778, died January 1, 1853 (partied too hard on New Year’s).*

## Main Planning Issues

### *The Brumbies*

In April 2012 Draft Variation 307 of the Territory Plan to re-zone Block 15 Section 42, Griffith (where the Brumbies clubhouse and the old bowling greens are) from Commercial CZ6 leisure and accommodation to RZ4 medium density residential was gazetted. However, along with the re-zoning the government introduced a Precinct Code for the site. Consequently:

- The trees on the perimeters of the site are protected, because of their importance from both heritage and environmental perspectives and there is to be no encroachment under the stands of trees on the perimeter of Block 15;
- The ‘green corridor’ in the vicinity of the original creek from Manuka to Mugga Way is maintained with a 35 metre buffer on either side of the creek;
- Any residential development not have more than one level of basement car-parking; and
- A comprehensive flood study for the site is undertaken.

The Brumbies are now preparing a Development Application to redevelop the site. We have urged them to consult with the community on what is being proposed but to date they have not been prepared to commit to any community consultation.

### *DV 306 – Residential Development*

Draft Variation to the Territory Plan No. 306 is a very important document because the changes to the regulations for residential developments will affect all Canberrans and will determine what sort of Canberra we will be living in, in the future. The GNCA made submissions to ACTPLA on the original version of DV 306 and to the Legislative Assembly’s Standing Committee on Planning. We also appeared before that Committee on 11 July 2012.

Our main recommendations were:

1. The whole document be re-written so that it is more user friendly;
2. The plot ratios, setbacks and heights allowed in DV 306 be revised so that single dwellings do not take up the whole block. The current

50% plot ratio limit has proved ineffective because of the way it is defined and administered.

3. Neighbourhood Plans be restored or Precinct Codes be actively developed throughout Canberra's inner south so that the main characteristics of the Garden City are maintained;
4. The policy of encouraging building bulk be abandoned – we need space for gardens on residential blocks; and
5. That government agencies cooperate to ensure that **street trees and verges** are protected properly during construction and re-development – at present chaos reigns on verges (see below).



1. How to properly protect the trees and verges



3. How not to protect trees and verges

### **Trees and verges**

We have identified three key issues relating to the management of trees and verges during development or re-development.

### **Plot Ratios**

The existing rules for single dwellings in residential zone RZ1 are inadequate because they fail to prevent houses covering more than 50% of a block. This has resulted in buildings that are inconsistent with the objectives for the zone and the Strategic Directions in the Territory Plan.

We recommended that the Gross Floor Area be defined, as the entire area within the polygon joining the external vertices of the built structure, plus the area of any upper floor. This definition would result in counting internal courtyards as part of the GFA. The Minister will await the report of the Planning Committee on DV 306 before considering our proposal.



2. How not to protect the trees and verges

1. The current situation discriminates against builders that do the right thing and install proper verge and tree protection fences. Some developers get away with unsatisfactory verge management and in some cases none at all.
2. For code track knockdown rebuilds the Territory and Municipal Services Directorate (TAMS) may not even know that any re-development is taking place. If TAMS is responsible for street trees and verges, then they should be involved in *all* developments that affect their responsibilities.
3. The different responsibilities of the TAMS and ESD Directorates makes it difficult for developers and the community, who prefer a one stop shop.

We have written to the government pointing out the problems that are illustrated in Figures 1-3.

Figure 1 shows how the trees and verges should be protected. Figure 2 shows what happens where a developer uses the so-called protection to build sheds on the verge and inside the driplines. Figure 3 shows a typical situation where the tree is given token protection but the verge is being attacked.

It should not be difficult for the government to fix the problem. All that has to be done is for it not to allow any building work to start until the trees and verges are properly protected. Unfortunately this seems to be a problem.

### ***Draft ACT Planning Strategy***

As we mentioned in the April 2012 Newsletter, a new Draft ACT Planning Strategy was launched by the Government in 2011. The Strategy aims to cope with the additional 65,000 new dwellings expected in the ACT between now and 2030. However, our analysis indicated that there is no compelling evidence that Canberra’s projected population growth and future needs cannot be met under the current planning regime. We are not in favour of urban intensification extending to all areas within one kilometre of local and group centres (including of course the Griffith shops and Manuka) and along all major transport corridors, such as Adelaide and Wentworth Avenue. We made our submission (see our website) in

February 2012. Since then the Government has failed to clarify its future intentions - this is of considerable concern, given the importance of this issue.

### ***Transport for Canberra***

GNCA submitted comments on the ***Draft Transport for Canberra*** (see our website). The main emphasis in the plan is to improve the frequency of bus services on major routes and encourage much more “active travel” (*i.e.* cycling and walking). Improvement of public transport is being closely linked with urban intensification and especially the much denser development along major routes.

Recently, there has been more action on the transport issue. An estimate of \$12.8 million has been provided for the cost of three major bus stops between Curtin and Civic on the Adelaide Avenue. This will be the price to pay for development along a main transit way rather than at town centres – a cost benefit study is being undertaken by the government.

There has also been public consultation on the Light Rail or Rapid Bus Transit options to Gungahlin. It is not clear whether a decision will be made on this before the election.

### **Thank you to our Fine Dining Raffle sponsors**

We would like to thank the four local businesses, **Aubergine, Rubicon, ShopRite and Café Societea**. They provided generous support to our association by donating meals, wine and a high tea for the winners of our 2012 raffle.

## **Griffith/Narrabundah Community Association Inc., PO Box 4127, Manuka ACT 2603 Membership Application / Renewal Form**

**PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Membership Fee / Donation: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Full Address: \_\_\_\_\_ (\$10 is the minimum for Financial Membership)

\_\_\_\_\_ Post Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_