

Griffith/Narrabundah Community Association Inc.

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NEWSLETTER

May 2008

The Griffith/Narrabundah Community Association Inc. was formed in November 2000. The objects and purposes of the Association are “to protect the amenity and interests of the Griffith and Narrabundah communities, particularly in relation to community facilities and open space.”

You are invited to attend the AGM to get the latest updates on current key issues and express your views on future directions for our Association. There will also be an opportunity for you to join the Committee. So mark this in your diary now.

Some current issues for the GNCA

LIBRARY FACILITIES FOR INNER SOUTH

GNCA Policy: For the government to immediately re-establish a library service in South Canberra; as an interim measure in the Blaxland Centre, or some other suitable location, and in the long term establish a new library at suitable location in South Canberra.

GNCA Action: We have been pressing both the Greens and the ALP to re-establish a library service in South Canberra. We met with Caroline Le Couteur, the responsible Greens MLA for library matters, and advisers to the Chief Minister and the Treasurer. We also facilitated coverage of this issue in The Canberra Times, on the ABC and WIN News.

Current situation: In the 2009 Budget the Government announced that “*\$7.1 million over four years is being provided to enhance the ACT Library and Information Service collections and to provide a library shopfront and collection in inner-south Canberra which will deliver easily accessible services to residents.*”

Recent Developments: We have been told that a lease of 193m² in Giles Street at the Kingston Shops has been negotiated and that architects are working on the internal plans. We have been in contact with ACT Public Library and understand that the new facility will be a fully-functioning library with 15,000-20,000 items comprising all new collections as well as DVDs and CDs. There will be a story time inside the library as well. The GNCA is pleased that we will be getting a replacement library but are concerned about the parking facilities in Kingston, particularly for the elderly. We are in regular communication with ACT Public Library regarding parking and other issues relating to the library.

THE FUTURE OF THE FORMER O’CONNELL CENTRE

GNCA Policy: The Association strongly supports the redevelopment of the O’Connell Centre site as a nursing home that is consistent with the Griffith Neighbourhood Plan. Our principal concerns relate to the need to preserve existing open space, protect significant trees, provide adequate off-street parking and to ensure that the height of the building is in keeping with the neighbouring residential environment.

Recent Developments: The Government has offered the former O’Connell Centre site to the Baptist Community Services (BCS) for a nursing home. The proposed development will involve demolishing the existing buildings and constructing a new 160 bed residential aged care facility facing Stuart Street. The first step is to define precisely the footprint of the new complex so that it does not use designated open space. The Association has met with officers from the ACT Government and the architects for the Baptist Church on this issue. The present proposal involves a reduction in the gazetted public open space, which we believe is unnecessary and we have made representations on this issue. We are also pressing the BCS to display the current plans to the community before the Development Application is submitted.

REDEVELOPMENT OF THE BLAXLAND CENTRE (Former Griffith Library Building & Site)

GNCA Policy: The building and site must be retained for suitable community uses, including a Community Hall.

Current situation: The Government gave a commitment in 2006 that the building and site were to be retained as a community facility. So far it has not consulted with the community on its plans and no announcement has been made.

The building is effectively empty and GNCA will be pressing the government for more information.

NEIGHBOURHOOD HALL

In the May 2008 Budget the government provided ~\$1.2 million to build a Neighbourhood Hall next to the northern end of the Griffith shops. It is expected to be completed by mid-2010 and will contain:

- A main hall for the community to hold various activities and meetings during the day and/or night, including playgroups. It will also accommodate physical programs such as gymnastics, dance, aerobics or martial arts. A service kitchen and generous storage is co-located within this space.
- A large meeting room, opening onto the covered outdoor court, providing a flexible general purpose space for smaller groups.
- An office/small meeting room.

"Fine Dining in Griffith" Raffle

Congratulations to **Alice Buckley of O'Malley, Wayne Arthur of Red Hill and Frank Mestrov of Forrest**. They each won a \$100 voucher for dinner at one of these local restaurants.

AUBERGINE: A local favourite in Canberra, well known for its consistently high levels of food and service. Located in the boutique Griffith shops, Aubergine offers a relaxed, yet sophisticated dining experience.

Tel: 6260 8666 (<http://www.auberginerestaurant.com.au/>).

E.U. CAFÉ: Head chef Shane's culinary talent reflects his respect for tradition and excitement with the modern – he celebrates the tastes of Europe, but his dishes are not heavy or pretentious...and his food is more restaurant quality than café quality – without the price tag.

Tel: 6295 6915 (<http://www.eucafe.com.au/>)

RUBICON: Nestling just south of the Parliamentary Triangle within the Griffith shops is a cosy retreat for those who love good food and great wine. Candlelit tables gently illuminate a dining experience rated one of the best in Canberra.

Tel: 6295 9919 (<http://rubiconrestaurant.com/home>)

A big thank you to these restaurants for sponsoring the GNCA raffle.

To join the Griffith/Narrabundah Community Association or renew your membership for 2009-2010, please complete the form below and mail it to PO Box 4127, Manuka ACT 2603

PLEASE PRINT

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

Full Address:\$5 to become financial member

.....Post Code:.....Tel:.....

Signature:Date:Email:.....

Members will be on our email circulation list for news and general information.

When paying by electronic funds transfer, please ensure your name is included on the EFT payment form.
Bank: Westpac Manuka Branch; BSB 032 722; Account 134058
Name: Griffith/Narrabundah Community Association

Local community issues that will impact on you and your family

Proposed Re-Development of Brumbies Facilities

The Brumbies have submitted a planning study in preparation for an application to government to vary the Territory Plan. We understand this will involve changing the zoning of Block 17 (Griffith Oval No.1) from Urban Open Space to Restricted Access Recreation, and changing the zoning of Block 15 (the site of the Brumbies headquarters and a former bowling club) from Leisure and Accommodation to Medium Density Residential. The GNCA is committed to the preservation of community facilities and open space and is opposing any rezoning of Block 17 from Urban Open Space.

We have made our views known with the ACT Planning and Land Authority, and have nominated Griffith Oval No 1 to be added to the ACT Heritage Register.

Proposed Aged Care Facility for Baptist Community Services (former O'Connell Centre)

The proposed development will involve the demolition of the existing buildings and construction of a new 160 bed residential aged care facility facing Stuart Street.

The plans are still being developed and we have urged the BCS to consult with the GNCA and the wider community before these are submitted as a formal Development Application.

Throsby Park and French-Australian Preschool

We are not opposed to the French-Australian Preschool relocating to Griffith. However, the current proposal is unsatisfactory because it encroaches on land designated as Public Open Space and does not adequately address the changed traffic and car parking situations that are likely arise if the current proposal goes ahead.

We have made our views known to the Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services.

'Old' Canberra South Community Council

The GNCA is participating in the Steering Committee to establish a Canberra South Community Council. This Council would play a major role in facilitating community discussion on all matters affecting the 'Old South' community, particularly planning and development proposals. It would be similar to Councils established in other regions of Canberra, such as Belconnen and Western Creek.

See the website www.gnca.org.au for copies of our correspondence and further details.