

# GRIFFITH/NARRABUNDAH COMMUNITY ACTION GROUP

PO Box 4127 MANUKA ACT 2603

## NEWSLETTER

Volume 3

20 January 2001

**We hope everyone had a wonderful and relaxing Christmas and New Year.**

### OUR NUMBERS ARE GROWING

The membership of the Griffith/Narrabundah Community Action Group is now close to **300**. You may have noticed a small table set up at the Griffith shops every Saturday morning. A few dedicated members have helped to increase our numbers by approx. 20 every weekend. Please stop by and have a chat and if you know of others in the area who wish to join our group, please encourage them to visit us at the shops.

**It is now time for more action.**

### UPDATE ON COMMITTEE ACTIONS

Some of the key actions the Committee has taken:

- **Submission to the Chief Minister.** We have invited Gary Humphries to attend a public meeting to explain why our community land and open space has been singled out for residential development despite the fact that such areas are well below the norm for other Canberra suburbs and despite overwhelming opposition to the proposed development. The Chief Minister has referred the matter to Brendan Smyth who has only recently replied and accepted the invitation. **We will be arranging a large public meeting/rally/save our park protest in the near future and would like your opinions (refer Members Meeting, page 2).**
- We have also requested the Chief Minister to change the consultants' (SKCM) brief to allow full consideration of the community's concerns and additional time for submissions. As a result, the consultation process now includes a workshop process and an additional public forum. Our request for a change to the consultant's brief has been ignored. **We will continue to pressure the ACT Government to change the brief to include consideration of a true community option.**

- **Submission to Consultants, SKCM.**

We sent a detailed submission to Smith Kostyrko Cohen and Middleton (SKCM) expressing our objection to the medium-density townhousing options and their lack of serious consideration for an option that represents the community's views that the site should be retained for community facilities and open space. Their response has been to invite a selected number of people, including representatives from the GNCAG, to a workshop to try to determine an agreed position for the future land use of Griffith Section 78.

**We will continue to insist on an option that reflects the goals of our organisation.**

- **PACTT, the Canberra-wide umbrella group of residents associations.** We have continued to be involved in meetings and actions with PACTT (Planning the ACT Together) regarding inappropriate infill.

**We are represented on a PACTT Working Group to ensure that inappropriate infill remains an election issue.**

### THE CURRENT SITUATION

Following the impasse resulting from the community's dislike of the residential development options put forward by the Consultants on the 28<sup>th</sup> November, they sought our involvement in a workshop designed to seek 'a way ahead'.

- **The SKCM workshop process**

Our Executive Committee reluctantly accepted SKCM's invitation to the 16 January workshop (they said they would to hold it whether we attended or not). Our objections to the undemocratic process were clearly stated to SKCM. **We believe that the process should be public and all members of the community should be invited.** SKCM only invited selected representatives from the community who had made 2nd stage submissions. This approach does not recognise that the **majority** of community views are opposed to development. The workshop process appears to be designed to pit individual residents against each other. We suspect that the process will give undue weight to minority views that are in favour of residential development.

## THE NEXT STEP

### MEMBERS MEETING

**Please attend the GNCAG Members Meeting from 6.00 pm to 8.00 pm on Tuesday 30 January at the O'Connell Centre Hall.**

The purpose of this meeting is to get members' views and suggestions for our upcoming big protest to the ACT Government. We would also like to give members a more detailed review of the process to date and discuss the implications of the consultant's likely proposals and the avenues open to us to prevent residential development on the site.

**We can win.** In the past (1976, 1985, 1993) there have been other proposals to develop the site and these have been defeated by community opposition. There is an ACT Election coming up and all Molonglo MLAs are marginal! **We can defeat development again with everyone's support.**

#### WE NEED YOUR SUGGESTIONS.

Please come to the Members Meeting on 30 January with suggestions for the type of protest event we should be organising. A 'Picnic in the Park'? A protest rally? A large public meeting? A sausage sizzle? Etc. When should this event be? **This is our community's big opportunity to protest the proposed residential development and to get Canberra-wide publicity for our cause.**

We will be inviting politicians to the protest event to give their positions on the development of Section 78, particularly the Chief Minister, to explain why our land is being singled out for development despite the community's opposition to it.

The **Members Meeting** is also an opportunity for us to get together and share ideas about what else our group should be doing to stop the Government from selling off our land for residential development.

#### WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT

We are under pressure in the workshop process to compromise our goals. Please support us in our efforts not to. We also need volunteers to help us organise the protest event. Many people have stated that they are prepared to help. The 'Protest Rally' will be the opportunity for all to help.

## OUR GOALS

A reminder to all our members that our goals preclude any action by the Government that would permit residential development on the site.

1. *The retention of our community facilities for now and the future.*
2. *The preservation of our community open space.*
3. *The retention of our library service.*
4. *Opposition to any development that is inconsistent with our other goals, including that which would involve varying the Territory Plan in order to re-zone the land.*

## OTHER ACTIONS YOU CAN TAKE

- Please talk to your neighbours and your friends and ask them to join us.
- Please keep writing to your elected representatives telling them that you oppose residential development on the site.
- Please contact your office bearers and give them your suggestions.
- Please send copies of your submissions to The Secretary so that we are kept informed of members views.
- Please keep writing Letters to the Editor.
- Please keep writing to the consultants SKCM at the address below. They have said that they are still accepting submissions.
- **PLEASE ATTEND THE GNCAG MEMBERS MEETING at 6.00 pm on 30 JANUARY at the O'CONNELL CENTRE.**

## CONTACT INFORMATION

#### • Office bearers

President:	Margaret Fanning	6295 0997
Vice-President:	Trish Bootes	6295 9663
Vice-President:	David Palmer	6295 9759
Secretary:	Iain Macinnis	6295 8610
Treasurer:	Frank Mestrov	6295 1152

#### • SKCM

PO Box 3506  
Weston Creek ACT 2611

#### • Politicians

ACT Legislative Assembly  
GPO Box 1020  
Canberra ACT 2601

An excellent quote from one of our members:

**The fault is great in man or woman  
Who steals a goose from off a common  
But what can plead the man's excuse  
Who steals a common from a goose!**

*(The Tinkler Magazine, February 1821)*