

**SOS**S A V E  
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S U B U R B S

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**SOS COMMITTEE**

The S O S Committee was elected at the inaugural Annual General Meeting held on March 19, at St Joseph's Hall, 47 Starhope St., Malvern. Around 200 delegates attended the meeting.

See inside for a full listing.

**STOP PRESS**

SOS will be holding a planning forum soon. You will have a chance to ask questions of the experts. Watch your local papers for details.

**HOW TO CONTACT SOS**

Our new postal address is -  
GPO Box 5042Y, Melbourne  
3001.

S O S is now on the net. Our  
address is  
[www.creativeaccess.com.au/sos](http://www.creativeaccess.com.au/sos)

RESIDENTS  
**Voice****President's Address**

Welcome to our first newsletter.

As your newly elected president I am committed to changing the planning system to safeguard our neighbourhood character and amenity.

Thousands of Melburnians are angry and dismayed at a planning system which permits developments that pay scant regard to the interests of local residents.

Your committee is in the process of developing a detailed policy platform. In the meantime, SOS believes that halting demolition by private stealth is an urgent priority. Currently a property owner can secretly obtain a demolition permit from a private building surveyor, sell the property with the permit,

and, as soon as the auctioneer's hammer falls, the wrecker's sledge hammer appears.

Once the building is demolished, the planning authority is faced with a fait accompli by the developer. Previously, developers could not obtain a permit to demolish a building without the approval of the local council. Today, many councils lack local controls to prevent demolition; they are hamstrung and under present law, cannot act until it's too late.

In recent weeks, the 1870s Italianate mansion 'Southdean' at 59 Irving Rd., Toorak was knocked down. A demolition permit had been issued by a private building surveyor even though the house had been recognised by the National Trust for its historical and architectural value and listed for interim protection by Stonnington Council.

If we can rein in ad-hoc demolition we will have taken a major step along the way to saving our suburbs. The committee is already working hard and we will be calling on you to lend a hand. We stress that

SOS is not a party-political group; town planning issues transcend party politics. If we are going to bring about change we must do it together.

Jack Hammond - President

**houses fall**

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# SOS Committee

as elected at our Inaugural Annual  
General Meeting

**President - Jack Hammond**, barrister and member of the Summerhill Estate Residents Assoc. (East Malvern)

**Vice-president - Alastair Mitchell**, insurance broker and resident of Beaumaris

**Vice-president - Kosta Argeres**, co-founder of Black Rock Association for Responsible Development.

**Secretary - Jeanette Bennett**,

Shopping Centre Manager

**Treasurer - Phillip Warren-Smith**, automotive technician and SOS municipal representative for Whitehorse

#### Committee members

**Dr. Miles Lewis** - Reader in Architecture, Melbourne University, president of the Town and Country Planning Association and co-founder of SOS.

**Michelle Quigley** - planning barrister, founder of Richmond Residents Against Inappropriate Development (RAID) and co-founder of SOS.

**Michael Bromby** - solicitor

**Ian Macrae** - film director and member of Save Victoria Hotel and Bayside Preservation Association

**Ann Reid** - secretary of the Toorak/South Yarra Group

**Peter Williamson** - management consultant and member of Save Surrey Hills

**Dianne Duck** - journalist and co-founder of SOS

## STOP PRESS

### Planning Forum April 28th

SOS will hold a planning forum at 8pm., April 28 at the Malvern Town Hall, Cnr High St and Glenferrie Rd., Malvern. The meeting will be chaired by president of SOS, Jack Hammond. The Minister for Planning, Robert Maclellan was invited to speak but has declined the invitation. His place will be taken by the Parliamentary Secretary(Planning), Leonie Burke, MLA. Other speakers will be the Shadow Minister for Planning Dometri Dollis, Democrat Senator Lym Allison, Cr. Brad Matheson, president of the Municipal Association of Victoria and Bernadette George, president of the Victorian division of the Royal Australian Planning Institute.

**Protest groups should bring banners and printed matter.**

## DISQUIET

### on the Western Front

Two new residents groups have joined the fight against inappropriate development. Around 250 Ballarat residents packed a local hall recently to support the formation of a local group - Caselli Connection, H.R. Caselli was a local architect who designed many of the city's renowned private and public buildings.

"I'm sure many people are aware of Ballarat's beautiful homes and streetscapes which bring in visitors by the thousands every year", said the co-founder of the group, Jacinta Ackroyd who accuses the State Government and council are allowing the destruction of Ballarat's heritage for multi-unit development. "When I open my front door I no longer see the charming old house and huge elm tree opposite. Soon I will be looking at four double-storey mock-Victorian townhouses crammed on one block", lamented Jacinta.

## Brighton

### residents stand up

On the same evening a public meeting held at the Brighton Town Hall attracted a capacity crowd of 800. The meeting was organised by the newly formed Residents for Urban Protection. The group aims to protect the area's character against unsympathetic development.

"We are concerned about our vanishing gardens, trees and heritage properties and we resent being overlooked, overshadowed and generally overwhelmed", said the group's founder, Kristen Stegley who is also a member of SOS.

**Brighton Residents for Urban Protection - 9596 1111**

**Caselli Connection: Ballarat Citizens for Thoughtful Planning - 0353323036 or 0353314964**



# Profile of Municipal rep & Veteran community activist

## Municipal Representatives

Ruth Clemens was not seeking a quiet life when she moved to Richmond in 1989. You don't choose an inner city address for that. But she didn't anticipate she would be spending the next nine years fighting to protect her neighbourhood.

It all began with the linking of the South-Eastern and Mulgrave freeways which dramatically increased traffic on the streets of Richmond. "And we started suffering the adverse effects of noise and air pollution", she said. "Suddenly we found that we couldn't talk to our neighbours in the street without shouting".

What followed has been nearly a decade of involvement with municipal committees concerned with traffic management and environmental matters. More recently, Ruth has served as research co-ordinator with RACOE, the Richmond Action Coalition on Freeways and as RACOF's representative on People Against City Link.

And now she is appalled by the impact inappropriate, market-driven, higher density development is having upon Melbourne's suburbs. "In Richmond we are already concerned about the City Link - about the Burnley vent stack and further congestion of our streets by drivers avoiding tolls - and now we have high density development being imposed upon us under the guise that it is medium density", said Ruth adding that Richmond has always been a medium density suburb.

Ruth can now add to her other commitments an active membership of the newly formed RAID, Richmond Residents Against Inappropriate Development and she is also one of 505's municipal representatives for Yarra.

She fears that families are being turned away from living in Richmond because house prices have been forced up to a level that only developers can afford. "As a result our community is changing because apartments often attract a transient population with no long term commitment to the suburb", she said.

Check the list for a contact for Ruth and other 505 municipal reps. for Yarra. Groups in Yarra are:

**Richmond Residents Against Inappropriate Development (RAID)** - 9428 0282

**Burnley/Murphy St. Residents' Action Group** - 9428 8772

**Bridge Rd. Project Group** - 9429 4818

**Abbotsford Convent Coalition St Helliers** - 9419 8494

**North Carlton Assoc** - 9347 3940

**3068 Neighbourhood Group (Nth. Fitzroy/Clifton Hill)** -9482 3106

**Fitzroy Residents Association** - 9419 1428

**Khartoum St (Richmond) Group** - 9425 9070

**Municipal** representatives are the link between the committee and members. We need **volunteers** for Moreland, Manningham and others for Hobsons Bay, Port Phillip, Glen Eira, Nilumbik and Mornington Peninsula Shire. Contacts for municipal representatives and known groups are available on request. Please let us know about your group so we can add it to the growing list.

### **Banyule**

Chris Siciliano, 9434 2023  
Sandy Hamlet, 9435 3180  
Jane Crone, 9457 1675

### **Bass Coast Shire**

Carola Adolf, Phylax 03 5678 2286

### **Bayside**

Val Ross, 9589 0895  
Sara Kent, 9589 4790  
Sean Matthews, 9598 7163  
Jocelyn Lee, 9596 6835  
Cheryl May, 9596 1823

### **Boroondara**

Fred Douglas, 9857 8646  
Luba Copland, 98891869  
Keryn Christos, 9817 3755  
Lorri Buttner, 9836 6394  
Gillian Simonson, 9813 2186

### **City of Melbourne**

Margot Sharman, 9418 3999  
Sandra Rowell, 9329 7826

### **Darebin**

Paul Scopelliti, 9416 9872  
David Redfern, 9489 5686

### **Glen Eira**

Cheryl Forge, 9576 0099

### **Hobsons Bay**

David Moore, 9397 5773

### **Kington**

Robert Titchener, 9580 0102  
Ella Hayes, 9583 9789  
Derek Wilson, 9583 2839  
Marjo Haverfield, 9580 6271

### **Maribyrnong**

Alan Ross, 9318 5833  
Jack Harrison, 9317 7843  
John Preston, 9214 6690

### **Mareeindah**

Anne Kaufman, 9879 5228  
Rosalind Savio, 9725 1467

### **Moonee Valley**

Rick Clemens, 9337 5647  
Michael Gill, 9379 9624  
Diane Adey, 9379 4513

### **Mornington Peninsula**

Meg Breidahl, 9787 3033

### **Nilumbik**

Sigmund Jorgensen, 9439 7712

### **Port Phillip**

Philip Shaw, 9699 6371  
Nan Yeates, 9531 4606

### **Stonnington**

Tom Moloney, 9510 3546  
Dianne Duck, 9576 1492

### **Whitehorse**

David Scotte, 9878 8714  
Phillip Warren-Smith, 9898 6107  
John Hodgetts, 9890 6966

### **Yarra**

Jo Kinross, 9419 8494  
Ruth Clemens, 9428 0282  
Kate Austin, 9419 2272



# Developer Watch

We need your help to keep us in touch. Keep an eye on the developers. Let us know what is happening in your council and send in items of interest from the local press.

We would like to know about your AAT experiences, good and bad. Send us a copy of your AAT decisions.

We are also seeking to compile a photographic record of changes in our neighbourhoods. Ideally, we require a sequence of Before and After shots: the house, trees and garden that once occupied a block, the cleared block and the replacement development.

# Development food for Theatre

A new approach to development is coming from a combined community theatre project by Deakin University's School of Visual, Media and Performing Arts and Theatreworks, 14 Acland St., St Kilda.

During the weekend of May 9 and 10, performers will address the issues and tensions arising from the changing physical identity of St Kilda. Stories, information and urban legends are currently being gathered for this purpose.

A key aspect of the weekend will be a life-sized board game called 'Developer of the Century' in which community representatives will be invited to participate.

Call Paul at Theatreworks 9534 4879 for details.

# MEDIA Watch

Herald-Sun, March 27...

"I get very concerned when I see some of the prime real estate in Melbourne secured by developers ... and building developments which could only be described as ... highly undesirable" - Jeff Kennett.

Southern Cross, March 25...

"Councils must stop 'passing the buck'. 'At the end of the day they are the responsible authority' - Leonie Burke, Prahran MLA and Parliamentary Secretary to the Planning Minister

The current outcry over medium density housing is more than a simple 'not-in-my-backyard' response says former Liberal planning minister Alan Hunt. "In many areas the protest is justified ... people resent the character of the area being changed and they are entitled to do that".

"Part of what makes Melbourne truly marvellous is its space and its amenity and its privacy. Melburnians know what they've got and they do not want to lose it", said Bernadette George, the president of the Victorian division of the Royal Australian Planning Institute. Ms George suggested that the attendance of over 1000 people at the SOS meeting, Hawthorn Town Hall in February has signalled a new willingness by the government to hear residents' grievances.

Hear, hear for Ms George.

Diamond Valley News, March 18...

The Nilumbik Shire CEO, Barry Rochford said that the attitude of groups such as SOS was one of the biggest threats to Victoria he had ever experienced accusing us of supporting the urban sprawl instead of urban consolidation.

SOS Banyule representatives and members of the North East Banyule Residents Group, Chris Siciliano and Sandy Hamlet were quick to return the blast. Here is part of the letter they wrote to the paper in response:

"As the North East Banyule reps for SOS, we would like to comment on Barry Rochford's ill informed comments as to the purpose of SOS.

"This is not about a short sighted minority of Melburnians saying 'No' to development, neither is this a politically motivated group and 'No' Barry, SOS is not supporting the urban sprawl. They are people like us and our neighbours who are sick to death of seeing neighbourhood character disappear in the name of medium density housing. Tell us, Barry, does it have to be development all over Melbourne at any cost?...."

# Demolition FACTS The

SOS has obtained some interesting information about demolition permits. In Stonnington between March 1997 - March 1998. A total of 249 demolition permits were issued. 27 were issued by Stonnington

29 - Glen Eira, 2 - Banyule, 3 - Moonee Valley, 3 - Frankston, 13 - Boroondara, 6 - Moreland and 166 by private building surveyors. In Boroondara, a total of 240 were issued between January and December last year: 84 by Boroondara and 156 by others. In Bayside during the same period, 223 permits were issued by private certification and 42 by Bayside council.

# Membership Drive

Copy the provided form and sign up other members. If we all do it our strength - and lobbying power - will increase tenfold.

We all know that some developers are gold-diggers. Planners have long recognised their prospecting skills. They have a term for it. Where we grumble that new developments 'borrow' existing neighbourhood character and amenity, planners are more straight-forward. They call it AMENITY MINING.

# VOICE

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