

Save Our Suburbs Inc. – 24 February 2020

Dear SOS Member,

This is an update about the winding up of Save Our Suburbs.

In late 2017 the SOS committee foreshadowed to members that the association would probably need to wind up once current projects were complete. We also ceased charging membership fees while allowing current membership to continue. Our last project was a legal report on common flaws in the operation and integrity of the planning permit system done in conjunction with the legal NGO, Environmental Justice Australia (EJA).

The increasing erosion of representative democracy and the decreasing influence of communities over the planning system have been exacerbated by the gradual weakening of planning and enforcement controls and third-party rights, together with increasing time and age constraints on residents and activists. This has unfortunately been taking a toll on many community groups and SOS has been no exception.

In addition, the SOS committee originally included many planning professionals which enabled more effective lobbying of politicians and planning bureaucrats, but this has not been the case for some years now.

Since the association has become inactive, the committee has begun the process of winding up under the Incorporated Associations Reform Act 2012. A final Financial Statement will be lodged with Consumer Affairs once remaining assets have been distributed under the Act and the SOS Rules. This involves donating to active incorporated community groups with similar aims which have been members of SOS. Several other groups that SOS has been a member of or actively involved with are also included, such as the Inner Melbourne Planning Alliance Inc.

SOS archives from the last two decades have been offered to the State Library.

For those wanting SOS signs, there is further information at: <https://sos.asn.au/vic/get-a-sign-oppose-inappropriate-development>

SOS Website

The SOS website should ideally remain publicly accessible for planning advice but has been hacked several times in the last few years. Consequently, in several months we hope to be able to automatically redirect online inquiries to a permanently archived version of our site on the National Library archive system.

A final update to members in May will have further details about website access and the EJA report.

Regards,

Ian Wood
President
Save Our Suburbs Inc. (Vic)