

SOS Members Planning Update – 4 October 2014

(1) The latest from SOS:

SOS Candidates' Survey for Election 2014:

We are about to send out a Candidates' Survey on planning issues. Each party and independent candidate will be asked to complete the comprehensive survey online via SurveyMonkey, which will do most of the analysis of the responses for us. The results will be publicised a few weeks before the election.

Community groups are invited to publicly support the survey and share the detailed results. The more groups that support the survey, the more likely the candidates and the media are to respond.

For more information, contact President Ian Wood 0424 104 274 or Vice-President Ann Birrell 0419 550 538

Newsletter #31: members will have recently received a copy by post but the online version will also be available shortly on our revamped website – www.sos.asn.au

STOP PRESS – VCAT fee hike cuts appeals

Help with Rescode for Residents at VCAT

Beware s89 appeals!

Avoid Dual Occupancy by Stealth – and more.....

(2) Reminder - RACV Board Election - Last-minute call for RACV members to vote before this Tuesday 7th

Trent McCarthy and Amanda Stone are standing for the RACV Board Election as a voice for sustainable, integrated transport planning in Victoria. Amanda is an educator, former mayor and current Yarra councillor. Trent is a communications specialist and Darebin councillor. Together, they intend to advocate for the many RACV members who want increased transport spending on cycling infrastructure, public transport, and other more sustainable modes of transport, as well as safer roads for all users. They do not support the expensive, unsustainable East West Link.

This election is important because the RACV is a key supporter of the East West Link. RACV is also Victoria's largest membership organisation, with over two million members. Around 1.4 million members are entitled to vote in the annual RACV Board election, but less than 10% usually do.

With your support, Amanda and Trent hope to send a powerful message to the Government and the Opposition to ditch the economically irresponsible and environmentally destructive East West toll road and instead to invest in better public transport and cycling infrastructure, and thus safer and less congested roads for all.

(3) Reminder - The Great Population Debate, 5.30 – 7pm, October 13, Deakin Edge, Fed.Square

Population growth, like climate change, exacerbates most things about planning, especially traffic congestion, unemployment, the need for extra housing & infrastructure, and sustainability generally. Can we cope? Come and hear **Kelvin Thomson (MHR Wills) vs Lord Mayor Robert Doyle**. For more information contact Mary Drost at Planning Backlash, 0401 834

899 drostmary@gmail.com

(4) Rally – The Future of Public Transport in Victoria, Thurs 16 Oct. 12:45/1 pm start, Parliament steps

This is the last day of the term of the 57th Victorian Parliament before the November election, so our elected parliamentary representatives will be asked to declare their hand on the future of public transport and the East West Link Toll Road. The rally will launch a "**Charter on Public Transport**" with a list of demands, including that the East West Link project be abandoned. The PT Charter will be available on the SOS website shortly. Speakers will include the Mayors of Yarra and Moreland, ALP and Greens MPs and the president of the Public Transport Users Association, as well as representatives of community groups.

For more information contact Julianne Bell, Secretary, Protectors of Public Lands VIC. Mobile: 0408 022 408 jbelle5@bigpond.com

(5) East-West Link Updates: From campaigner Andrew Herington:

*(a) Oct. 3: Planning Minister Guy has sneakily gazetted additions to the project area including large parts of Royal Park, Essendon Community Gardens, * areas at Dights Falls and extra land at various interchanges and adjacent roads.*

He has also revoked 15 of the Performance Requirements he approved in June, further distancing himself from the independent Assessment Committee's recommendations.

He has made further unspecified changes in relation to open space but the actual changes are being kept secret.

Requests for details to the Linking Melbourne Authority were rejected because "people will be briefed in the coming weeks.

* See article by Clay Lucas, 2 October 2014: <http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/gardeners-near-tullamarine-freeway-uprooted-then-rebooted-amid-east-west-link-confusion-20141002-10pfah.html>

(b) Courts again find against the Government:

Moreland and Yarra Councils had another Court win on Sept.24 in their case against the Planning Minister's idiosyncratic application of the Major Transport Projects Facilitation Act. They've won discovery of all the documents considered or in the possession of the Minister in making his decision, backdated to October 2013. They've also won most of the costs.

<http://www.yarracity.vic.gov.au/hot-topics/supreme-court-supports-councils-document-request/>

Meanwhile, both major political parties are continuing to try and out-do each other with misleading and sometimes empty promises: <http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/victoria-state-election-2014/liberal-public-transport-campaign-questioned-by-ptua-labor-20141002-10pgsn.html>

Analysis by the PTUA of Liberal Party claims about public transport shows that only 1 out of 8 statements is correct:

<http://www.ptua.org.au/2014/10/02/myrailline-ptua-assessment/>

PTUA is now analysing Labour's claims – watch this space!

More roads are not the answer to traffic congestion – history shows time and again that new freeways eventually attract more traffic, leading to worse traffic problems, more air pollution, greater dependence on cars and down-grading of public transport. This is well-illustrated by the Downs-Thompson Paradox which explains that instead, building rail links in parallel with freeways can attract commuters back to rail, lower rail costs/head and permanently free up arterial roads for those who need to use them - trucks, commercial vehicles and multi-destination vehicles.

See: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Downs-Thomson_paradox

(6) High-rise apartment design standards “coming”:

State architect Geoffrey London's office has worked up a draft set of minimum design standards for high-rise apartment buildings but London has just resigned, with these long-awaited rules remaining incomplete.

At a Deakin Edge forum on 4 August run by the Inner Melbourne Planning Alliance, London stated that he was 'now a believer' in mandatory design rules for apartments to ensure minimum amenity standards for what is the single fastest-growing housing type in Melbourne.

However, Minister Guy continues to approve unprecedented numbers of new tower applications with no sign yet of the introduction of any new design rules for apartments..... maybe just a few weeks before the election??

<http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/strict-design-standards-needed-now-for-melbourne-highrises-architects-20140727-zxf1n.html>

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