

Damper Creek Doings

October 2019

The newsletter of
FRIENDS OF DAMPER CREEK RESERVE
INC
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Editorial:

We were entertained and informed at our September meeting by Anna Mezzetti **Sustainability Education Officer** of the City of Monash's sustainability team. Anna's presentation was wide ranging and included the "Green Shoots" programme, "Bush Kinder", "Skink Link" and "Gardens for Wildlife".

It is heartening to hear the extent of Monash's work to promote the environment and the commitment of the members of the sustainability team. As proud as we are of the achievements at Damper Creek and other nearby reserves it is important to realise that the City of Monash maintains a wide range of reserves, playgrounds and sportsgrounds and these play a vital role in helping to offset the vegetation loss on private properties. Hopefully, with improved community education as provided by enthusiasts such as Anna, property owners will realise the value of vegetation around their houses and the trend towards fewer trees (and vegetation in general) will be reversed.

Volunteer weeding

We will discuss this item at our October meeting. Please come along with your ideas.

Council Motion to Declare a “Climate Emergency”

In the shadow of national and global events to express the frustration of large sectors of the populace, the City of Monash's Environmental Advisory Committee put forward a motion to declare a “Climate Emergency” at the August Council meeting. With our ears ringing from Greta Thunberg's *cri de Coeur* we were treated to an economically based backlash from several councillors and the original motion was carried over in modified form to the September meeting of the Council. The September meeting considered this modified motion as well as (what seemed to me to be) a counter motion put forward by Cr Stuart James.

As with the August meeting the visitor's gallery was packed and overflowed into the adjoining seating space. The City of Monash “friends” groups were well represented and there was a strong attendance from the Friends of Damper Creek Reserve. Where there are critical motions put to the Council, attendance from interest groups such as ours is critically important. Thanks to all our members who attended.

Of the two motions put to the meeting (refer to Council agenda items 6.3 and 6.5) only the first (from Stuart James) and the least aggressive was carried. Debate was furious and spirited and there was evidence of significant political manoeuvring prior to the meeting.

The resolution is lengthy and can be summarised as follows:

The resolution “Directs the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to provide a report and recommendations to Council by no later than February 2020 outlining how Council can become carbon neutral and achieve zero-net emission by 2025, 2030, 2040 and any other target the CEO wishes to include as an option.”

This resolution is significant and though it lacks the obvious emotional content of the original motion submitted by Cr Fergeus it does commit the Council to firm decisions on reducing emissions within a relatively short timeframe.

Full details can be found on the Council's website, go to:

[About Us/Council & Councillors/Agendas & Minutes](#)

where you will find all relevant documents including a video of the entire council meeting.

We cannot consider the issue “done and dusted” and close attention must be paid to the February meeting of the Council to ensure that the recommendations are received and acted upon.

28b Park Road VCAT hearing

Many will remember the three VCAT hearings held in 2006/2007 in regard to a proposed inappropriate development at 28 Park Road (abutting Damper Creek Reserve) that sought the removal of a single dwelling and the entire garden to be

replaced initially with two two-story tandem units, later changed with VCAT approval to two two-story terrace (side by side) units.

The VCAT decision in this case reduced the bulk of the units, especially in relation to the upstairs main bedroom of 28b, and the deletion of rear decks that would overlook Damper Creek Reserve.

VCAT achieved an outcome that was effective for all parties (neighbours, FoDCR and the developer). The decision reduced the bulk of the units, with less overlooking and importantly, respected the interface with Damper Creek Reserve by preserving the backyards with an order to plant out and maintain the gardens with indigenous stock.

The current owner of 28B recently applied to Council to increase the bulk of the property, especially the upstairs main bedroom including a deck, effectively seeking to reverse the VCAT decision of 2007. The owner has now applied to VCAT to appeal Council's decision not to approve the upstairs extension.

A number of FoDCR members and FoDCR itself have now submitted their '*Statement of Grounds*' (reasons for objections) and these are to be considered at VCAT (see date below)

As with the original VCAT hearings in 2006/2007 it is vital that FoDCR members show solidarity once again and make it clear that community sentiment (especially in regard to Creek Abuttal properties) that they strongly oppose developments of increased bulk, overlooking and visual intrusion, and to maintain a significant buffer of well vegetated backyards at the interface.

Members of FODCR are urged to attend the VCAT hearing.

9- 11am, 6 December 2019, VCAT, 55 King Street Melbourne

Meet at Mount Waverley station to arrive at the above address in time for commencement of the hearing - train time to be advised.

FoDCR would be pleased to hear from you at secretary.dampercreek@gmail.com and to keep you informed.

Aussie Backyard Bird Count



Aussie Backyard Bird Count

Get outside and count the birds that live near you – whether that's in your garden, the local park, or even your suburb activity centre. By recording the birds you've seen within a 20 minute period, you will help BirdLife Australia develop an understanding of local birds, whilst getting to know the wildlife on your doorstep!

21-27 Oct

Download the app here on [Google Play](#) or [iTunes](#)

For more information click [here](#)

You can register your participation and observations on aussiebirdcount.org.au

Call out for Volunteer Garden Guides

"The Monash Council's Sustainability Team are starting up a new volunteer Garden Guide program as part of our successful Monash Gardens for Wildlife initiative and we are on the lookout for keen volunteers who would like to be involved. Garden Guides volunteer to visit residents' gardens and provide some advice and support

on how to create a wildlife friendly garden. You don't need a horticulture qualification, just some experience of indigenous gardens and a desire to share your interest in gardening with others who are looking for some help.

Please email us at sustainabilityteam@monash.vic.gov.au to express your interest or with any questions."

Diary Date reminder : Guest Speaker: Wednesday 27 November 2019 - Campbell Miles, "**An Expeditionary Cruise to Alaska, British Columbia and Haida Gwaii in September 2018**" As it is the last meeting for the year, FoDCR will enjoy a "party atmosphere" on this evening, and members are invited to bring along a small plate to share. Thank you

Diary Date reminders

Wednesday 23 October 2019

General Meeting

7-30pm at Alvie hall

Sunday 27 October 2019

Working bee 10.00am to 12-30

Weeding and clean up – meet Alice street bridge

Wednesday 27 November 2019

7-30pm at Alvie hall

Guest Speaker Campbell Miles

Sunday, 1st December 2019

Annual BBQ commencing at 12 noon

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