

Mission Bay Kohimarama Residents Association

Newsletter August 2016



Here is an update on some of the things going on in our area that we hope you find interesting.

Unitary Plan update

The Independent Hearing Panel (IHP) produced their recommended Unitary Plan recently. We are not very happy with their recommendations, as they contain the worst of the upzoning proposals we previously forced the Council to withdraw, and they have also removed any controls over development relating to quality. The result is that the Unitary Plan is simply a document for allowing a lot more land to be made available for development, but it does nothing to guide long term development in a way that would enhance our city.

[Read more...](#)

Bus network changes

You may recall the public consultation on new bus routes last December. We made a submission at the time ([click here](#)), suggesting that Mission Bay, Kohimarama and Orakei were losing most bus services from the inner part of our suburbs, ie between Tamaki Drive and Kepa Rd. We had also lost bus services from here to Newmarket. We are pleased to report that Auckland Transport did listen to our concerns, and have changed their proposed bus routes to provide better coverage.

[Read more...](#)

Mayoral candidates meeting

We held a very successful Mayoral Candidates' Meeting on Monday 8 August. The hall was overflowing with around 240 people attending, and they received an excellent overview of the candidates and their positions on a range of issues. Everyone seemed to enjoy the evening, saying that it was well-run, informative and fun.

Perhaps of most importance, all candidates committed to reduce Council internal costs and wastage, and all but one candidate committed to hold residential rates increases to less than 2.5%. David Hay was the one candidate who did not make that commitment.

[Read more...](#)

Talk Auckland

Somervell Church is hosting a 'Talk Auckland' event where a panel will discuss housing and transport issues facing Auckland. The discussion will be moderated by Tim Watkin (TV3), with panel members Shamubeel Eaqub (economist), Julie Anne Genter (Green Party spokesperson on Transport), David Seymour (Act MP for Epsom), and Don Stock (Mission Bay Kohimarama Residents Association).

7 pm Thursday 18 August

Somervell Presbyterian Church

497 Remuera Road

Maheke St road closure Tuesday 16 August

Please note that Maheke St will be closed for resurfacing from 7am to 7 pm this Tuesday,

16 August.

Meeting for candidates for Orakei Ward Councillor and Orakei Local Board

We are co-hosting a meeting for the Orakei Ward candidates with the Meadowbank/St Johns Residents Association. The meeting will be held at St Chads Church in Meadowbank on 14 September. You will have the chance to meet and hear from the candidates for Councillor and the Local Board.

We will advise further details later.

Free event for children at Ellerslie hosted by the YMCA

“The Wheels Disco” is on Friday the 9th of September at 5pm to 8pm. There will be music and lighting, and kids need to bring their scooter, rollers skates/blades. The event is free but there will be a sausage sizzle and shop for drinks and lollies etc.

[Click here for more information](#)

Unitary Plan

At the start of this year, we had taken the lead in complaining that large numbers of residents in all areas, but particularly the Eastern Suburbs, were being denied any say in proposals to make major zoning changes. The essence of our argument was that we had been engaged in a public consultation process for 3 years, and then at the last minute, Auckland Council was proposing to throw that out and introduce a massive number of changes without any right for the public to comment. Our arguments convinced the Council to withdraw their proposal,

Unfortunately the Independent Hearing Panel (IHP) has seen fit to take the Council’s withdrawn proposal, make it even more radical, and then state that because certain submitters, notably Housing NZ, had raised this issue, then we

would be denied even the right to appeal the decision.

In addition, the IHP has removed controls over demolition of pre-1944 buildings, removed minimum dwelling sizes, removed design reviews intended to stop poor quality, ugly or buildings inappropriate for the area being built.

We wrote an opinion piece for the NZ Herald published on 5 August which you can [read here](#).

Auckland 2040, who spoke at our meeting at the ASB stadium in February, issued the following [press release](#).

New bus network

Auckland Transport has published the final transport network routes and schedules after public consultation late 2015. You can find a range of material discussing the new routes and the changes [here](#), and a map of the new routes [here](#).

The changed routes will be introduced from mid 2017.

One key change, and one which is long overdue, is a simplified fare structure with the ability to transfer between services for the same price. This means that if you need to change buses or between a bus and a train to get where you are going, you will only pay one fare, based on your starting and finishing point, regardless of where you went in between.

The proposed new routes last year were somewhat contentious for our area, primarily because they deleted all off-peak services for routes that serviced the inner parts of Mission Bay, Kohimarama and Orakei. By “inner” we mean the parts of the suburbs between Tamaki Drive and Kepa Rd/Kohimarama Rd. The route from St Heliers to Newmarket was also removed at all times.

In response to our submission on these issues, changes have been made. A new route has been created to run from Mission Bay shops to Newmarket via Kohi Rd, Kepa Rd, Coates Ave, Shore Rd, Victoria Ave and Remuera Rd. A new loop service has been introduced to run from Glendowie to Mission Bay, linking Kupe St, Eastridge, Mission Bay shops, St Heliers shops and Glendowie. This services much of the inner suburb areas previously deleted, and while it does not go directly to Britomart, there are convenient transfer points at multiple locations on Kepa Rd and Tamaki Drive to high frequency services to Britomart.

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Each candidate had 4 minutes to introduce themselves and make an opening statement. They then answered a series of pre-prepared questions, and finally took questions from the floor. The pre-prepared questions are shown below.

The candidates performed really well, with generally clear concise answers to the questions, and they kept to the allotted time. The audience were appreciative and respectful, and asked a number of questions. Perhaps the most common theme coming through was that all candidates agreed that there was too much waste and inefficiency inside Council, and they each committed to combat this if elected. Most also committed to hold rates increases to 2.5% or less each year.

This was a great opportunity to meet the candidates and to understand their positions. Personally, I feel that the evening allowed me to understand the candidates' positions and help me decide who to vote for, which after all, was the purpose of the meeting.

We plan to hold a follow-up meeting in about a year's time to allow the successful candidate, the Mayor, to explain their progress on the commitments they made at this meeting.

Pre-prepared questions asked:

1. Tamaki Drive is a defining part of life in the Eastern Bays, providing not only an arterial route to the city, but also a recreational playground and a scenic drive. It is already under pressure from competing uses by cars, cyclists, runners, walkers and special events. It suffers from periodic flooding and a lack of maintenance of the seawall, and yet it must cope with a large increase in population over years to come and rising sea levels from climate change. Do you commit to maintaining and developing Tamaki Drive to manage these major challenges?
2. Rates have been rising rapidly over recent years. The previous Mayor promised that rate increases would be limited to 2.5%, but then ignored this promise. Will you support an initial zero percent rates rise next year with no reduction in services, as a way to drive efficiency and effectiveness? If not, what commitments do you make to reining rates in?
3. The creation of the Super City was supposed to bring greater efficiencies and lower costs to Auckland. Instead, Council employee and consultant head count and costs are well above what it was before and rising, overheads are blowing out, and we see the Council getting involved in many areas that are inappropriate, such as event promotion. If the Council were to focus on overhead reduction and operational efficiency, then there would be much less pressure on rates. What do you intend to

- do to reduce Council overheads and improve efficiency?
4. The current Council reduced the Uniform Annual General Charge, forcing rates in our area to rise substantially. Will you support setting the UAGC to the maximum allowed in law (30%) in order to reduce the injustice in the current settings?
 5. If a private individual can't afford to renovate their house, they either borrow more money, sell assets, reduce their living costs or defer the project. The Council, by comparison has ruled out all of these options, instead opting simply to take advantage of their monopoly position to raise more money from rates and other levies. What is your attitude towards funding long term intergenerational infrastructure development by raising debt, and/or by selling assets such as the port or airport?
 6. The recommended Unitary Plan has made massive changes to the zoning relative to the publicly consulted document. This will impact our suburbs for many decades to come despite residents having had no input to the latest changes. Would you support a Plan Change to allow for community input on those elements of the Unitary Plan which are adopted with no public consultation?
 7. Auckland's vision has been is to become the world's most liveable city. Do you support this vision? The Unitary Plan has no measures to guide future development in a positive direction, and instead leaves all aspects of design, quality and aesthetics to the developers. We have seen how this can result in the loss of character buildings and the construction of ugly buildings unsympathetic to their environment. What will you do to encourage attractive, high quality developments consistent with the goal of being the most liveable city?

We hope this newsletter has been useful for you. Let us know if you have any suggestions, issues to raise or comments.

Best regards

Don Stock

Chair

Mission Bay Kohimarama Residents Association

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