



Mission Bay Kohimarama Residents Association

Chair's Report 2016

The Mission Bay Kohimarama Resident's Association (MBKRA) exists to provide a voice for the residents of our two suburbs, particularly when dealing with the Auckland Council and other organisations that make decisions that impact our community. Individually, our voices are rarely heard and almost never achieve anything, but collectively we have more ability to influence the decisions that affect us.

Let me start by acknowledging the effort of our Committee over the past year. The Committee comprises:

- Don Stock (Chairman)
- Cherie Cook (Secretary)
- Brom Breetvelt (Treasurer)
- Lorna Stansfield
- Janne Breetvelt
- Kevin McCready
- Alan Minson
- Mike Padfield

They have done a great job. A very big thank you to them all.

I would also like to thank the Orakei Local Board for their outstanding support during the year. In particular Kit Parkinson who has been assigned to liaise with us, and Desley Simpson, the Local Board Chair. We wish to thank them for the substantial grants that they have made to us to support various projects we have undertaken.

This last year has been a major year for the Residents Association. We have been following the progress of the Proposed Unitary Plan as it goes through the public consultation period. We made submissions on a number of points, and presented to the Independent Hearing Panel (IHP) to argue against substantial increases to allowable heights for buildings on Tamaki Drive in the Mission Bay shopping centre. Our presentation appeared to be received favourably, with the Council agreeing at the time that increasing allowable heights to over 17m (4 stories) compared to the current 3 storey 10m limit was not appropriate, and proposing to reduce the heights to 12.5m. Unfortunately, the Council later rescinded their statement, and so we have to wait to see how the IHP will rule on this issue.

Late last year, the Council secretly proposed to radically change the zonings across much of Auckland. The Eastern Suburbs were particularly hard hit, with over 60% of properties being upzoned into a higher zone than had been proposed in the Unitary Plan that had been

publically notified. The changes would have had the long term effect of changing our suburbs from essentially a suburban character with 2 story homes and townhouses to a more intensive urban character based on 4 story apartments.

While this change is not necessarily bad, and we do recognise that we have to accommodate a lot more people in Auckland over the next several decades, we felt strongly that it was inappropriate to make such major changes without any form of public consultation. It seemed like a real slap in the face for democracy given we were still going through a comprehensive public consultation process on the original zoning proposals, but now the Council was proposing to throw that consultation away and ram through new zoning with no consultation.

We got together with the other Residents Associations in the area to hold a public meeting on the subject. We had a massive turnout of more than 700 people. This was the trigger to start a groundswell of opposition that culminated in the Mayor agreeing to hold a special Council debate. We presented at that Council debate, and ultimately our argument that this was an unfair process was accepted, with the full Council voting to withdraw their new zoning proposal.

That was not the end of the process, however, as other organisations, notably Housing NZ and Generation Zero took the Council's proposals, extended them further and submitted them to the IHP. We made a strong presentation to rebut these proposals at the IHP hearings. The final decision on zoning changes is now in the hands of the IHP, who are due to report back in July 2016.

I would like to emphasise that we are not against intensification. Many of our residents will welcome the opportunity to subdivide their properties, and we can probably all identify areas in our suburbs that would be ideal for more intense development. The issue we fought was simple: don't make radical changes to the character of our suburbs without allowing those impacted to have their say.

While the Unitary Plan process has been our major focus and has taken a huge effort, we have been active on a range of other smaller issues. We have been monitoring progress on the several projects in and around Madills Farm, where extensive stormwater facilities have been built. We continue to push the Council to reinstate the area properly, noting that there are several areas which have not been adequately compacted and have sunk to form potential bogs in winter.

We have made a submission on Auckland Transport's new public transport network. Their proposal serves to simplify the bus network in our suburbs somewhat, but also proposes to remove several bus routes, primarily those that go through the centre of our suburbs, leaving just those that travel down Kepa Road and Tamaki Drive. Ironically, the bus routes removed are the very ones that the Council used to justify upzoning under the Unitary Plan!

We supported the Orakei Local Board in enhancing the area at the foot of the steps to Bastion Point. We now have a nice landscaped area with some rather impressive mosaic artworks that provide a fine entrance. We recently held a public meeting to allow Heritage NZ to explain their project to strengthen and upgrade the Melanesian Mission buildings. We have supported the Mission Bay Business Association and Auckland Transport with their plans for improving the Mission Bay streetscape. We have commented on alcohol bylaws, the Glen Inness to Tamaki Drive cycleway, the Quay St cycleway, a proposal for bungee jumping at Selwyn Reserve, and are working with the Orakei Local Board to install security

cameras in Selwyn Reserve to improve security. We have supported individual residents reporting issues that needed attention. And we have submitted or commented on many other issues that have arisen

As always, we encourage our members to contact us and let us know what they think. We try to represent the community as best we can, but we do need people to tell us what they think. We now have around 340 members, most of whom are receiving regular emails updating them on matters of interest in this area. We have taken the decision to try to broaden our membership by emphasising the free Associate Member category, on the basis that the more members we have, the better connected we are to the community. This emphasis on the free membership category does mean that our income reduces somewhat, so anyone who wishes to upgrade their membership or make a donation is encouraged to do so, but we believe that having more members for slightly less income is a good tradeoff.

We are looking forward to the next year. We anticipate it will be a quieter year, as we do not see any big issues such as the Unitary Plan to get involved in. Most of the current committee are standing for re-election which will provide continuity, and we have a few new people putting up their hands to help. We look forward to welcoming them on board and working with them.

Don Stock

Chair
Mission Bay Kohimarama Residents Association