



MINUTES

Meeting 20/11/07

**Sub Group minutes – Streetscape,
environment and maintenance**

Attendees:

Yvette Kelly, Wendy Butler, Deidre Pellizer, Tanja Heil, Roger Wyndham, Ian Boyle, Robert McFarlane, Jonathan Sherren, Olivia Riddington, Kate Incerti, John Coates, Eva Parkin, Jeff Baker, Mike McIntosh, Katrina Gorjanicyn

Apologies:

Councillor Karen Sait, Mark Spatz

Introduction & Welcome

Katrina welcomed the subgroup.

Katrina introduced herself and stated that she would be chairing the subgroup meeting on Streetscape/aesthetics, environment and maintenance.

Katrina acknowledged and thanked Taskforce members for attending and for their contributions to date.

Katrina stated that Cr Karen Sait had another commitment; Cr Sait asked Katrina to thank and recognise on her behalf the effort the Taskforce has invested in this consultation process.

Katrina introduced Mike McIntosh – Manager Economic Development & Tourism – and thanked him for overseeing the Taskforce.

Katrina stated that Mike would take the minutes.

Katrina asked subgroup members present to briefly introduce themselves and to state if they represented a particular group or Council.

Update on Taskforce (Katrina)

Katrina told the subgroup that she started her role on 17th September 2007.

The Action Plan (circulated 01/10/07) encapsulates actions to improve Fitzroy Street proposed by Taskforce in July & April meetings; the Action Plan was put together by Katrina & Mike.

The first Taskforce Newsletter was circulated October 2007; it provided an update on some of the Taskforce's key actions; the next Newsletter is due Nov/Dec.

The Community Identity subgroup is progressing a proposal to introduce a quality busking competition in or near Fitzroy Street; currently this is planned for the end of summer/early autumn 2008 but will reviewed by the Community Identity subgroup.

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The Fitzroy Street Dining Guide is in draft.

The *Diversity* – December issue has come out; it features the Taskforce and Fitzroy Street.

The CoPP Communications Branch working on a 'Summer Campaign' to promote safety, respect, trade and fun over summer in the CoPP.

Katrina attended the subgroup that she attended the launch of 'Equal Service: Business to Business' – a project which involved a group of high profile business coming together with the State Government & the Council for Homeless People to produce information leaflets and a video on respectful trading between homeless people and business; Katrina to provide information and links to this in next Newsletter

The State Government Victoria, Mental Health & Drugs Division of DHS, has published Victorian amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS) and related drugs strategy 2007-2010 Discussion Paper; Katrina to provide link to this Discussion Paper in the next Taskforce Newsletter.

Improving Fitzroy Street continues to be a high priority for Council.

Katrina is due to present a Councillor Briefing on the Taskforce on 26/11/07; a Report on the Taskforce is due to be presented to Council in April 2008.

Purpose of subgroup meeting (Katrina)

The purpose of the subgroup meeting is to comment on and evaluate the Taskforce Action Plan – focusing on Streetscape/aesthetics, environment and maintenance – and to determine which actions have progressed and which actions need to be developed further.

The format of the meeting is to work chronologically through the Streetscape section of the Action Plan; Council staff overseeing key actions to provide a brief overview and update of each action to be followed by group discussion.

Katrina stated that the Taskforce was set up with a clear aim to bring together sections of the Fitzroy Street community to work collaboratively; Katrina requested that the group be mindful of this aim while discussing the actions.

Katrina requested the subgroup members direct questions to her as the Chair to ensure that everyone speak in turn and in order to progress efficiently and in a way that is respectful of everyone's viewpoint.

Katrina requested that subgroup members keep questions and comments relevant to the specific actions contained in the Streetscape section of the Action Plan.

Item – Streetscape Master Plan

Tanja Heil (Place Manager Activity Centres) updated the group on the progress to date of the master plan for the precinct.

Council have agreed to fund the project (\$50K)

Project will commence with vision workshops in late January, seeking the views of the community

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Estimated date of completion is June 2008

Master Plan is to be developed to compliment the existing 'Foreshore Connections' works proposed for 2008/2009 which will include \$3.5M worth of capital works in the precinct.

Action

- Council to circulate project brief and appoint consultant to progress Master Plan (Dec 2007)

Item – Improve the soft landscape conditions

Jeff Baker (Gardens Officer) advised the group on the planting conditions within Fitzroy Street.

Jeff stated that planting is problematic due to pedestrians trampling over gardens combined with existing growth of large trees and root competition within garden beds.

Mulching will occur on the north side of the street with new planting proposed for May/June 2008

Action

- Follow up replanting of the tram stops and suggested timing of this.
- Follow up options for hanging baskets or other interim landscaping methods to improve the 'look' of the street
- Explore option to paint existing poles in the street

Item – Consistent signage in the precinct

Taskforce members provided further clarification on the scope and detail of this action. It was largely in relation to auditing existing signage within the street, removing the redundant signage and installing improved parking signage and real-time parking signage.

Action

- Follow up requirements to audit the existing signage in the precinct (including costs, timing and likely action)

Item – Installation of pedestrian way-finding signage

Tanja Heil advised that council was in the process of installing pedestrian way finding signage within the precinct similar in scale to that recently installed in Clarendon Street. The taskforce was advised that this signage was scheduled to be installed in January 2008.

Action

- To keep the taskforce informed when installed

Item – Review Speed limits

The taskforce was advised that no review had taken place to date.

Roger Wyndham suggested the master plan could explore additional traffic calming techniques to limit speeding within the precinct.

Action

- Council to follow up with Traffic and Parking Unit to explore what options are available to review speed limits and report back to the taskforce

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Item – Minimise noise from late night entertainment venues

John Coates (Local Laws) explained to the taskforce the current council process around dealing with noise issues. This included encouraging the effected parties to talk to each other first to see if they can work it out, then seek assistance from Council if talking doesn't work. If council processes are not applied to, then council's last option is to seek legal action.

Jonathan Sherren (Cushion Lounge) complained about buskers being the cause of many noise complaints that traders often get blamed for. The management of busking was a concern of many on the taskforce.

Action

- Council to advise taskforce on busking permit process

Item – Manage the negative impacts of tourism

Mike McIntosh (Economic Development & Tourism) advised the taskforce of the proposed 'what's on in St Kilda' promotional flyer currently being developed to be circulated within local backpackers and key tourism businesses in the precinct. The flyer aims to educate visitors on the local tourism product as well as spread a message to enjoy St Kilda responsibly.

The taskforce was also advised of a summer media campaign that the council is currently organising which encourages respectful visitation to St Kilda and surrounds.

Kate Inceri suggested the flyer include information regarding 'travellers aid'.

Action

- Flyer to include additional information requested from the taskforce.
- Keep the taskforce informed of progress

Item – Explore the effect of large events on the precinct

Deidre Pellizer (Coordinator Arts and Festivals) provided the taskforce with a brief overview of the St Kilda Festival and councils wider event programs.

Jonathan Sherren suggested the council should utilise our parks and open space more regularly.

Robert McFarlane suggested that 90% of residents in the precinct hate the St Kilda festival.

Jonathan Sherren suggested that 90% of businesses love it.

Deidre explained that council is always seeking to explore how the community can work together to influence its future management.

Robert McFarlane raised a concern relating to people driving to the event. This was supported by Roger Wyndham who advised that traffic and parking was a problem and there is a need to lock down the centre as occurs during the Grand Prix.

Wendy Butler expressed her hate for the festival.

Ian Boyle suggested the festival was not for families.

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Deidre welcomed feedback via council's website, the taskforce, the Fitzroy Street Traders Association and the Licensees Accord.

Kate Incerti raised concerns of pedestrians leaving the event and their impact on nearby residences. There was a call for improved security and support to ensure visitors left the site and neighbourhood in a respectful manner.

Action

- Feedback channels will be communicated back to the taskforce
- Taskforce representatives to establish key issues of concern from their respective groups they represent and feed this back through relevant channels

Item – Install public urban art in the precinct

Wendy Butler suggested the idea that the City of Melbourne use to populate vacant shops with art when not tenanted.

Tanja Heil explained that the City of Geelong also adopt a similar model.

Deidre Pellizer explained to the taskforce that the council, as part of its Creative Cities Strategy is exploring this model and that there may be an opportunity to implement a similar program in Fitzroy Street.

Action

- Taskforce to be advised on the status of the creative cities strategy and the urban art in vacant shops idea with a view to exploring how the taskforce may play a role in delivering this initiative

Item – Waste Management/Empty Street Bins on demand

Damien Burgess (Manager Infrastructure Services) provided the taskforce with some background context of Council's cleaning contract for the street, including frequency of service.

Roger Wyndham was concerned about the grease accumulation on the street and suggested new treatments should be considered as part of the master plan.

Damien Burgess suggested that coming into Christmas was a peak time for cleaning in the street. Other issues that also compounded to the cleaning problem include street posters and the overflow of waste in litter bins.

Olivia Riddington asked whether recycle bins could be incorporated into the street. It was explained that this is difficult to monitor and any 'rogue' waste would contaminate an entire recycle truck.

Roger Wyndham suggested that take-away containers provided a huge problem for the street. The taskforce asked whether take-away food premises could be made aware of the problem and be made more accountable in addressing the issue.

Roger Wyndham also suggested the need for more bins on the street. The taskforce discussed that pizza boxes provided the biggest challenge as one box would block an empty bin.

Robert McFarlane suggested the need for additional wheelie bins on weekends.

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Ian Boyle suggested the problem largely existed between the hours of 10pm and 10am.

Wendy Butler asked whether we could have bigger bins. Taskforce raised the issue that bigger bins may look unsightly in the street.

Action

- Taskforce to explore new ways to manage litter within the precinct
- Taskforce to consider whether additional cleaning service be provided in the street over and above Council's standard service and how might this be resourced

Item – Establish a program to improve shop front presentation

No progress has been made on this action to date. It was agreed that further work between the traders association and council's economic development unit needed to be done to scope the project further.

Action

- Arrange meeting between traders association representatives and economic development unit to scope out project

Item – Conduct a lighting audit of the precinct

Tanja Heil spoke about a recent lighting conducted for the Fitzroy Street precinct. The audit will be used to influence decisions within the master plan.

Action

- Copies will be made available to all taskforce members for their review

Item – Install a new public toilet within the precinct

The installation of a new public toilet will be considered as part of the master planning process. The design and detail will be conducted in this financial year with the build and construct process occurring later in 2008.

Action

- Taskforce to be kept informed of progress of installation

Concluding remarks

Katrina Gorjanicyn thanked the taskforce for their contribution for the evening and asked if all present were happy to sign off on agreed topics discussed. The taskforce was unanimous in its support for the topics discussed and

Where to from here?

Katrina Gorjanicyn asked the taskforce where they would like to see the taskforce heading. This included discussion around representation and legitimate entitlement to be a part of the taskforce. The view expressed by Katrina was to perhaps move the taskforce to include a more formal governance structure to ensure adequate representation of key stakeholders within the precinct. Katrina stated that she would raise this issue with Councillors at a Council Briefing on 26/11/07.

Katrina asked the subgroup members to consider whether they wanted to keep meeting as subgroups; the subgroup decided unanimously that they would like to meet late March/early April 2008, by which stage the Fitzroy Street Masterplan will be underway.

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The taskforce also agreed that the existing methods of communication were appropriate. In particular, it would be useful to make the newsletter more broadly available to the wider community.

Katrina asked the subgroup to consider what further responsibility the Taskforce might take on board for delivery of actions – ie. how do we share responsibility between residents, traders, community groups and Council?

Close of meeting.