

Southbank Residents Group Inc.

Minutes of Annual General Meeting

Held in the Assembly Hall, Boyd, 207 City Rd, Southbank

On Tuesday 18th November 2014 commencing at 6.12pm

Minutes

The ordinary business of the annual general meeting was as follows—

- (a) Meeting opened by Tony Penna at 6.12pm
- (b) Register the attendance at the meeting
 - (i) Register of attendance at meeting
 - (ii) Apologies
 - i. Dan O'keeffe
 - ii. Edward & Hazel Brentnall
 - iii. Martin Foley MP
 - (iii) In attendance
 - i. Tony Penna - President SRG
 - ii. Mike Vallis - Treasurer SRG
- (c) Guest Speaker – Ian Penrose – previous River Keeper of Yarra River Keepers Association
- (d) Motion: Confirm minutes of the previous annual general meeting held Monday 31 October 2013 as a true and correct record of that meeting.
 - Moved: Arji Fry Seconded: Peter Renner
 - Carried: Unanimously
- (e) Receive and consider the annual report of the President on the activities of the Association during the preceding financial year (Page 3 - 8)

President Tony Penna discussed the content of his Presidents report for the prior 12 months.
- (f) Motion: Receive and confirm the financial statements of the Association for the preceding financial year submitted by the Committee in accordance with Part 7 of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (Appendix B).
 - Moved: Michael Smolders Seconded: Peter Harkin

Carried: Unanimously

(g) Confirm or vary the amounts of the annual subscription fee

(i) SRG membership fees will remain unchanged for 2014/15

Peter Renner requested confirmation of the respective fees. Fees were confirmed as being \$10 Individual, \$20 Friend of SRG, \$350 Building upto 350 lots, \$500 Building over 350 lots.

(h) Election of the office bearers of the Committee

President Tony Penna calls for nominations and steps down.

Tony Penna nominated himself for President.

Mike Vallis nominated himself for Treasurer.

New office bearers appointed unopposed.

President Tony Penna calls for interest in the committee.

Peter Harkin and Brian Read volunteer their services as required.

Tony Penna welcomes the new committee members and urges more participation from individual members.

(i) General business

Peter Renner (OC Chair Freshwater Place) comments favourably and congratulates Tony Penna on his tireless commitment and effort.

Tony Penna thanks Peter Renner for his kind words and elaborates on the time commitment he makes, being around 2.5 days a week, and that it is has been a challenging yet rewarding experience. Tony Penna also remarked that it would appear his relationship with some Councillors and probably the Lord Mayor is rocky at times, but that he makes no apology for that as he is only trying to represent the interests of the residents of Southbank and at times that may come at the expense of a relationship.

(j) Meeting closed at 7.37pm

President's Annual Report 2013/14 – Southbank Residents Group

As this being my first year as a member of SRG, but moreover as an office holder on the committee, I can certainly say it has been an interesting, and rewarding experience.

We were off to a good start with a full committee, but unfortunately not long into the term two members, Andrea Johnson (Secretary) and Dharmendra (Dave) Poobalasingam (Vice-President) had to withdraw. This left Mike Vallis (Treasurer) and myself to soldier-on as best we could.

Overall, despite this setback, it did take almost six months to get my head around the processes of Council, meetings and who is who. I still have yet to completely understand the positions and agendas of all the Councillors, but that is probably always going to be a work in progress.

Having said this, it has been a very busy year with some wins and some losses.

- 1) Numerous submissions and questions to Council were made regarding various aspects of Southbank, the municipality and planning. Nearly all submissions were accompanied with a verbal submission at the respective meeting, normally Future Melbourne Committee meetings.
 - a. Submission - C208 Amendment (Developer Contributions)
 - b. Open Question – Commencement of final stage of Boyd development
 - c. Submission – 8 -10 Riverside Quay
 - d. Submission – Draft Housing Strategy
 - e. Submission – Planning Permit 101-111 Sturt St
 - f. Submission – Planning Scheme Amendment C247 433 – 455 Collins St
 - g. Submission – Planning Permit 248 – 250 Sturt St
 - h. Open Question – Fairness and Transparency – Upmarket Application
 - i. Submission – Notice of Motion – Capital City Zone Rights
 - j. Submission – Planning Permit 68-70 Dorcas St

- 2) Numerous forums, training and briefings were attended and participated in.
 - a. Arts Strategy Forum
 - b. Beyond a Safe City – Social Innovation Forum (2 days)
 - c. Public Briefing - Residential Zone Changes
 - d. Public Talk – The future of walking in Melbourne
 - e. Central City Freight Forum – Getting it to your door
 - f. CoM Training – Recruiting and retaining volunteers
 - g. CoM Training – Inducting and orientating volunteers
 - h. CoM Training – Managing volunteers
 - i. Public Briefing - Community Grants
 - j. IMPA Public Forum – City in Crisis

- k. Public Briefing – Peoples Panel
- l. Workshop - 10 Year Financial Plan
- m. CoM Training – Creating an effective board
- n. CoM Training – Weaving your web – online essentials
- o. 2 Schools Now pre-election forum
- p. CoM Training – Media secrets for community groups
- q. MTF Transport Forum
- r. Numerous Peoples Panel Observor Sessions
- s. CoM Training – Understanding your associations rules
- t. Melbourne bicycle forum

I am also normally in attendance at every Future Melbourne Committee meeting (two Tuesday evenings a month) and every Council meeting (held on the last Tuesday evening of the month).

- 3) SRG is a member of and/or active supporter of a number of other community organizations which often require attendance at, and participation in, other committees. Generally attendance is quarterly but sometimes adhoc meetings can make it more frequent. It is rare that I have missed any meetings as I believe in their importance with the link to SRG. Such organizations include:
- a. CoRBA (Coalition of Resident and Business Associations)
 - b. IMPA (Inner Melbourne Planning Association)
 - c. 2 Schools Now
 - d. Fishermens Bend Network
 - e. Mens Shed
 - f. Yarra Riverkeepers Association
 - g. Yarra River Business Association
- 4) Lobbying and meeting with the Minister for Planning, Matthew Guy, on issues regarding Southbank. The Minister was and is very difficult to meet with. I only had one opportunity and during that meeting I raised the issue of general planning of Southbank and in particular internal apartment design, height controls, open space and building separation. I also raised lack of access to schools for families.

The minister was acutely aware of the schooling problem and said he has been in talks with the Minister for Education to try to find the solution. Regarding design standards, the minister advised he had made changes which forbid bedrooms using borrowed light, however I explained to the Minister that I can show him examples of apartments where the ‘study’ (which used borrowed light) was larger than the master bedroom and coincidentally also had built-in robes. These properties might be sold as one bedroom plus study but once they hit the rental market they are advertised as two

bedrooms.

While the Minister listened, and responded where he felt he had a response, I left the meeting feeling the Minister didn't have much regard for the planning issues.

- 5) I frequently met with Councilors to discuss issues with Southbank and to formulate ways in which I can get our needs onto Councils agenda. In particular I would like to thank the guidance and support of Cr's Ong, Leppert, Oke and Watts.
- 6) SRG was engaged by numerous media outlets covering radio and print media. I have developed a close rapport with The Age journalists and Southbank Local News. SRG have made numerous comments on planning issues regarding Southbank and have been quoted numerous times from our submissions to Council. I try my best complete the SRG column each month having only missed one month. Feedback received from the community is that they enjoy and look forward to reading my columns. I would also like to thank Sean Rogash and Sean Car, editors from Southbank Local News, for their attention to the needs of Southbank and working with SRG. These guys do a great job telling the Southbank story from month to month.
- 7) Community and member engagement has been sporadic yet strong. With only two committee members it has been challenging to find time to engage with our member base and the community as a whole. Yet the engagement we have undertaken has had positive results with lots of encouragement and good feedback. Most of our engagement has been at the Southbank Farmers market where Mike and I have religiously braved the elements to setup a small stand with the SRG banners and talk to market visitors about Southbank. We only had one members meetings in the last 12 months and that was to discuss the outcome of the community survey on what the members thought were the pressing issues that SRG should be focusing its attention on. Communication has generally been through social media, namely facebook, with significant interaction and discussion generated on numerous posts. With a limited committee I found this was the easiest method to keep people informed.
- 8) Our biggest community event was the 'Meet the Candidates' QandA forum and the feedback received and media coverage would indicate this was a big success. I would once again like to thank all the candidates for their efforts to attend and listen to the pressing issues concerning the residents of Southbank.
- 9) Despite the time limitations on two committee members, I have managed to attend four OC committee/AGM meetings to spruik the benefits of SRG. Representative membership has almost doubled in the last 12 months with the addition of three new

OC's. Our individual membership base has held steady with a number of new members replacing members who didn't renew. Most new members came from our presence at Southbank Farmers market.

- 10) Social media seems to have been a big success over the past 12 months with a doubling of our Facebook followers to 120. At times contentious issues regarding Southbank pushed social media into meltdown (that is of course relative to the significance of Southbank) with tweets and posts referencing Southbank and/or SRG coming from a variety of spectrums including numerous Councillors and State politicians, media outlets and community activists. I can certainly say Southbank and SRG was pushed, pulled and shared when controversial decisions didn't go in our favour and this was noted by Councillors! A valuable tool that should not be underestimated with its power for SRG.
- 11) In my opinion our biggest loss would have been the rejection of the Up Market application for the weekly market on the forecourt of ACCA. Although this is still not finalized, it was a disappointment to hear the poor excuses from Councillors who, in my opinion, were rejecting it purely on political grounds. Councillor Pinder-Mortimer was the most surprising since she is deputy chair of the arts portfolio yet she had not read the Arts Precinct Blueprint and advising me she was only a 'part-time Councillor and as such didn't have time to read everything'. There were 500+ individual letters of support from residents, including the support of Council officers, yet there were only around 50 objection proforma letters with some very interesting points such as food smells wafting onto balconies and potential urination on fences. The proponent fought hard for this with our support.

On the other hand, the biggest win would have been the Ministers rejection of the CBUS planning scheme amendment application which would have cast a 25m wide shadow onto the south bank of the Yarra and put the public open space at Queensbridge Square and the forecourt of Crown into shadow at their most used time of the day. There was a lot of work and strategy required to get this result and in particular I would like to send a big thank you to David Collis from the Greens for his support. However from what I have heard, the consequence was potentially the relationship with the Lord Mayor. Cr Ong was not very happy and asked why I had to make this a political issue of which I responded that the Lord Mayor made it political the moment Council didn't reject the application.

What I have noticed though, is that regardless of our position on any submission, is that SRG is considered a significant voice and is listened to. Often SRG will be the first pint of call for consultation with the community on a range of matters. This is

heartening to know that the efforts of SRG in the past has put us in such high regard.

- 12) I have made considerable effort to 'modernise' the organisation during the last 12 months. Some notable changes additions are:
- a. Establishing a local 039 number through Skype which can be used on all organisation stationary. This alleviates the need to reprint stationary or educate the community of a new contact number should the president change. More importantly the ex President won't continue to get calls to their private number once they have left office.
 - b. Implementing MailChimp program to manage our membership database and to streamline and assist with email communication (this is still a work in progress, but you should have seen some of the results of this in recent emails).
 - c. Updating and streamlining the user experience on the website. There is still a lot of work required with this, but I feel the changes that have been made have assisted the committee greatly with the administration of signups etc...
 - d. Phasing out srgi2000@gmail.com email address and replacing it with our registered domain, southbankresidents.com.au, then setting up info@, president@, treasurer@ and secretary@southbankresidents.com.au email addresses.
 - e. Establishing a cloud storage repository for all SRG files which also allows all committee members to access these files and does away with the need for cumbersome hard storage in an office somewhere.
- 13) I began discussions with stakeholders on establishing an 'Southbank Owners Corporation Network' as a means of OC Chairs to collaborate on issues affecting their building and to exchange ideas on what works and what doesn't for other OC's. This is still in its infancy and will need a lot more work to get it off the ground. But overall a very positive reception to the concept, thereby allowing SRG to value-add to its membership fee.
- 14) Financially the organisation is well positioned with minimal costs. It was deemed necessary to continue to preserve and be prudent with the organizations funds as there may be a need in the future where SRG may need to engage a consultant to produce a report on an issue affecting Southbank. Consultant reports can sometimes cost many thousands of dollars.

Overall, as you can probably see, I have been involved as much as I can. While I have not been able to attend all events I have tried to prioritise those which are important and relevant to

Southbank. I would estimate I probably expend in excess of two full days representing SRG/Southbank.

I would like to thank those members who have provided the organisation support throughout the year in varying capacities, in particular Brian Read for keeping me abreast of media items that he knows may be of interest and also Peter Harkin for his architectural knowledge on planning applications. I hope SRG can continue to work with both of you in the coming year.

Lastly I would like to thank the Treasurer, Mike Vallis for his commitment and support despite the trying times when my schedule was tight or I insisted we (I) could attend everything. Your assistance has been a great help with admin duties that would have detracted from my focus.

Regards,
Tony Penna
President SRG 2013/14