

NOTES FOR A PRESENTATION TO THE CITY OF NEDLANDS  
STEERING COMMITTEE ON PRECINCT 18

Martyn Webb

1 May 2008

Your Worship the Mayor and Councillors.

During our recess and before we tonight resume our regular meetings, full council passed a resolution confirming the steering committee's recommendation that the Design Guidelines be abandoned. This represents a major step forward.

As the relevant council resolution was in two parts I will remind the committee of its significance by reading it out.

The April 8 resolution read as follows:

Council agrees to:

- a) The Concept as contained in the Concept Draft Built Form Design Guidelines (Precinct 18) dated December 2007 being abandoned as a result of extensive community consultation and feedback received.
- b) The Dalkeith Redevelopment Area Steering Committee continuing to progress a new plan for the Dalkeith Redevelopment Areas based on the feedback received and a new vision for the precinct.

The passage of this resolution placed a completely new complexion on the proceedings of this committee and, in my opinion amounts to a clear instruction as to how it should proceed.

Let me remind everybody, and especially the public who have so faithfully attended this committee's meeting in keeping their trust on behalf of the hundreds of people who wrote submissions opposing any development within precinct 18 other than with

regard to the existing shopping areas, that this resolution amounts to an instruction to this committee to do two things:

1. *Progress* (meaning develop) *a new plan*. This certainly does not mean rescue the old one. This is now abandoned lock stock and barrel.
2. And, to make this possible. Progress or develop a *new vision for the precinct*.

Mulling over the last steering committee meeting I reached the inescapable conclusion that not only were we being asked to engage ourselves in a thinly disguised rescue operation, but by the form which the agendas took, being deprived, no matter unintentionally, of the steering committee's responsibility to draw up a new vision.

Frankly, Your Worship, I cannot see, in the light of full council's resolution of the 8<sup>th</sup> April last, how we can proceed with tonight's resumed regular meeting without responding to that resolution by:

First, coming up with a new vision and then;

Second, asking the Administration to respond by having them use their professional skills to advise this committee as to the most appropriate development controls.

If we proceed now this evening without taking this on board what council resolved we are operating not only contrary to the wording of the resolution, but contrary to the very spirit of precinct plan where vision statements, understandable by the general public and their representatives on council and draw up by them are then translated into development controls by professionals for comment and ratification by a planning authority.

What we are being asked to do tonight is to put an empty cart before a lame horse.

Councillor Hipkins at an earlier meeting suggested that we divide the problem into two parts: one containing the two shopping areas; the other the existing residential areas.

For her part, Councillor James put before council, which referred it back to this committee a proposal that the existing residential

areas, proposed by the administration to be reclassified as Urban Residential and Urban General, be given no allowable development over and above what is there now.

As the administration has already put forward that this be done by removing Circe Circle and Alexander Road from the precinct, Councillor James's motion refers almost entirely to Waratah Avenue.

Councillor James' opposition of those hundreds of people who opposed changing residential densities.

Thus, the new vision which the committee is required to come up with regard to the area already exists and was put before the steering committee having been drawn up on the basis of the people's the submissions.

What we need to do is to change its status from merely advisory to a firm recommendations to council that it be formally accepted as the People's Vision for Dalkeith.

This leaves the shopping areas.

These not only received the least opposition, but were also the subject of a range positive ideas as to how, especially the Village area, they could be improved.

There was, for example, mixed reception, rather than opposition to appropriate multi-retail, upper story commercial and residential development appropriate to the area. On the other hand there was almost complete agreement that the hall site should be remain as a community asset for community use; but not necessarily in its present form.

What is needed, therefore, is not an evening spent on discussing the minutiae of the administration's proposed shopping area development controls, but arriving at visions for two remarkable shopping areas. This we have not done and we ought to do.

I will conclude by referring to a conversation I had today with a very experienced person in the management of parliamentary committees. Puzzled, as I have been from the beginning, by the way in which this committee has been operating with only the

slightest relaxation standing orders, I asked of him the extent to which parliamentary committees were controlled by standing orders. His reply was brief and to the point. "To get the most out of a committee you have to give them their head subject only to the chairman's ruling".

I thought that a splendid idea