

Avalon Preservation Association



26 April 2020

Dear APA Members and Friends,

While there are many issues that are on hold with Council due to Covid-19 disruptions, we'd like to keep you informed about APA activities over the last couple of months. Our APA Exec Committee has been very active via daily emails and Zoom meetings with Council's Community Liaison Officer and also with Pittwater Community Alliance and Ray Brownlee (NBC CEO). There have been some positive actions to come out of these meetings, despite present circumstances.

Avalon Place Plan

The presentation of the draft Avalon Place Plan to the Avalon Place Plan Community Reference Group was scheduled for the Group's meeting on 31/10/2019. This was put back to 23/1/2020. This was deferred again as NBC advised in March 2020 that they were finalising the draft Avalon Beach Place Plan (draft Place Plan) including reviewing technical and budgetary considerations with other business units across Council. NBC advise that unfortunately this has taken longer than they had initially anticipated however they feel it's important to get this work right.

NBC anticipated the draft Avalon Beach Place Plan (draft Place Plan) would be finalised and ready for distribution to the ACRG members in April 2020. This has been further delayed due to Covid issues.

We currently have no firm date, however when the draft is finalised, it will be provided to the Avalon Community Reference Group allowing approximately 4-6 weeks for community groups to present to their groups and collate comments before it goes to the NBC Council Meeting for approval for Public Exhibition and further community engagement.

Coastal Walkway

Council has advised that with current Covid restrictions, they are limited in how they deliver community consultation on this project, so for the safety of staff and the community, this project is temporarily on hold, while they develop alternative consultation strategies. Council is continuing with the design phase but delays in timing are "to be expected". However, Council has agreed in the past week, to pave the unstable and eroded dirt between the apartment driveways that extend from 3-9 Avalon Parade, (opp. South Av. headland carpark) effectively making a footpath to ensure access to Avalon Village is easier. This is a welcome improvement for pedestrians.



Bangalley Headland
Photo: Marita Macrae

Lorikeets feeding on
red blossoming gum.
Photo C Baker



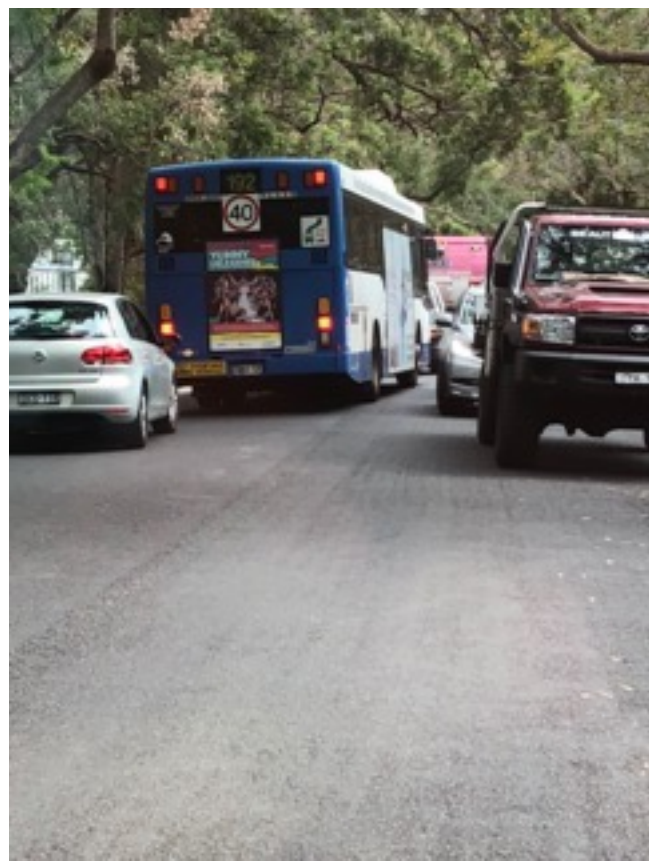
APA Meeting with Rob Stokes re Medium Density Housing & SEPP Seniors' Living

On 17 March, three APA representatives attended a meeting with Planning Minister and local Member Rob Stokes at his offices in Mona Vale to discuss the worrying increase in SEPP Senior's Living developments and Medium Density Housing potential changes in the Avalon area. The APA tabled an Avalon map showing the many existing Seniors Living developments in Avalon Beach area. The APA used the proposed DA at 25-27 North Avalon Rd to highlight the impact of these developments and the fact that the latest North Avalon Rd proposal has drawn 75 plus objections to Council . These are individual, well argued submissions, not form letters, and highlight the angst in the community about medium density developments in a low density area, thereby changing its character. We quoted this as an example of our frustration that, after considerable effort by APA with Council on future planning, including contributing to the LSPS (introduced by Rob Stokes for community involvement) we, and Council, are then rendered ineffective by:

- State Environment Planning Policies
- Private Certifiers
- Planning Panels
- Land & Environment Court
- Site Compatibility Certificates

Ultimate outcomes will depend on adoption of the seniors housing provisions to be included in the new NBC housing policy and Local Environment Plan now being worked on by Council and in which APA will have further participation. We expect development in our area to remain essentially low density although we are concerned by the impact of secondary dwellings (granny flats) & subdivisions on tree loss and on street parking. We are also concerned about a further large seniors' development at 3 Central Road.

Another worrying development is that the NSW Govt is proposing to remove the requirement to advertise DAs in local papers. The Pittwater Community Alliance and APA will be asking NBC at an upcoming meeting with Council to advise how it will proactively advise residents of new DAs.



Photos: Angophora growing beside laneway at 3 Central. Concerns it will be removed in new development. Central Road - Difficult conditions for passing vehicles & buses, being made more difficult by SEPP Seniors' multiple dwelling developments (another DA submitted recently for 3 Central Rd) - more cars & buses navigating road, more parking issues. Photos Ros Marsh & C Baker

Pittwater Community Alliance (PCA) Meet with Ray Brownlee re Covid on 9 April

APA President, Peter Mayman attended the Zoom meeting on behalf of APA and noted the following re the Covid situation (keep in mind this response is for week of 9/4 and situation and responses are in constant change):

This meeting was focussed on Council's response to Covid-19.

- Manly and Dee Why are classed as hotspots and beaches are closed. Palm Beach was closed for 2 days due to overcrowding.
- There are 145 cases in NBC area, third highest council area but low per capita viz, Waverley has 60,000 and we have 250,000 people.
- Council and police checking all backpackers premises weekly, max 2 residents per room but most have left (approx 43 at Avalon Backpackers).
- Library home delivery service service, 5 books at a time. Then they pick up. Books are sterilised on return.
- 1250 full time staff at NBC-all continue to be employed.
- Will not be a rate increase, plus hardship provisions in place.
- Capital works cut from \$110m to \$80m
- Extra maintenance jobs being given to local tradies plus extra maintenance crews.
- Childcare centres -NBC budget \$3.1m. Was no government support but as a result of submissions by NBC, all council centres will now be supported.

- As a result of downturn in DAs [and allied issues] 250 staff are being moved to strategic planning.

Another PCA Zoom meeting was held with Louise Kerr of NBC re Planning on 29 April 2020. Update to follow.

Art Space North

The DA Planning meeting to approve change of use for the Avalon Golf Course Clubhouse - lower level, was successful and the use is permitted with some conditions. Some of the conditions relate to: providing an enclosure for waste facilities to be stored, planting native species, undertaking a Building Code of Australia Assessment Report (Fire), revising design of windows and doors and to undertake an archival photographic record of the property. All of the conditions have either already been met or will be met by completion of the project. The tender for the works closed on 7 April and an evaluation will commence over the next couple of weeks. There will be 2 individual artist studios, and a communal teaching space. No specific craft/art equipment is to be supplied and NBC have specifically ruled out the possibility of replacing the Community Ceramics Studio that was demolished when the Avalon Recreation Centre was rebuilt.

Almost 3 years on from the Administrator's' commitment of \$1 Million for a Creative Art Space in Avalon or Newport, this is not the vision we imagined.

Proposed Catalpa Reserve Pathway

Council is looking to formalise a path through Catalpa Reserve. It is anticipated Community Engagement will commence around July. Council is not proposing lights along the path but will canvas views during the community engagement process.



Proposed Subdivision of Land in Avalon

A worrying trend seems to be emerging regarding new residents/land owners/ developers pushing for subdivisions of blocks of land across Avalon. There are several that have DAs submitted of late: 27 Kevin Ave (Land & Environment Court hearing date is 4 Dec 20), 25 Kevin Ave, 16 Paradise Ave (approved), 100 Cabarita Road (approved for 10 blocks!), plus several others. APA is fundamentally opposed to subdivision of land in this area as it opens the blocks up to more tree felling, changes the character of our suburb by increasing housing density & sets a poor precedent. Please write to Council with your thoughts and object to proposed DAs if you feel strongly, by emailing Council.

Netball Courts

Unfortunately, the Council's procurement of tenders for this project was unsuccessful, with the tenders coming in well above Council's

budget. This project will now go back out to tender. However Council has signed a contract for lights to be installed on site and they are currently working on the Review of Environment Factors regarding the proposed bridge on site. Despite delays, Council

anticipates a September 2020 completion date.



Young Norfolk Island Pine in Des Creagh Reserve and banksias with fencing Av Beach Reserve. Photos Roger Sayers and Maritia Macrae

Encroachment on Riverview Road/Shore Brace

APA and local residents have been most disappointed and frustrated by the continued lack of action from Council re this matter. On 22 November 2019 a Determination was made at the NBC Council Meeting to remediate the area and remove the unlawful structures, but to date there has been no action whatsoever. The NBC meeting had resulted in the entire 3 part recommendation of Director Transport and Assets, being adopted, together with additional orders determined on the night. Council now says there are “several complicated matters that will take time to resolve”. Despite continued enquires, we are still unsure as to the nature of these “complicated matters”. The Orders and Determination were quite straight forward. APA is determined that this matter is not forgotten, and encourage the community to keep up the pressure and ensure that the remediation is completed in line with Council Orders made on 22/11/19.



Mountain Bikers

The Council have been looking at alternative locations for a mountain bike park for younger riders. Currently the site proposed is the northern end of the Avalon Public School playing fields on Cnr Old Barrenjoey Road & The Crescent (across the road from Avalon Public School). This is currently a landscaped green space, and also a constantly used community sports area. It is well utilised for training by local soccer clubs, NRL football teams, before-school kids' athletic & sports groups, fishing (casting) groups, dog walking and offers a grassed partly-

shaded space for families to picnic, play ball games & walk dogs etc. The APA is asking members to give Council ideas for alternative sites. There will be a community engagement process adopted for this proposal which will commence in June with the aim to have input into the design from youth and for NBC to build in the next financial

year. Please email NBC with your thoughts prior to a final decision being made.
Photo above : Area proposed for Mountain Bike park - northern end of Av Public School fields. Photo C Baker

Chainsaws Continue to Echo Across Pittwater Area

Continuing concern from residents over the number of canopy trees being felled in Avalon & local area. Pirate tree loppers are roaming around knocking on doors asking if anyone wants a tree cut down. A big Grey Ironbark was cut down illegally in Grandview Drive last week. A frantic call from a neighbour to the NBC resulted in a visit from a Tree Preservation officer, (TPO) too late to save the tree. These crooks have no identification on their trucks, so record the registration number if you need to report them. If you want to query any tree lopping, ring the main NBC number 1300434 434. The switchboard has a list of approved tree removals and can alert the TPO.

Also many Council signs appearing advising of eminent removal of large trees. Of particular concern are 3 majestic Norfolk Island Pines on public land outside 35 Marine Parade, Avalon and another at 157 Plateau Road. Although the NI Pines are not native to our area, they are a significant part of our Avalon history and add character to the streets and will be a loss of habitat for birds and animals. They are iconic trees and make up part of a whole grove in that north Av section and add to the character of suburb. Whenever a photo is taken looking North, for promotion of Avalon, or a painting done, it invariably features the NI Pines at North Av. Now there will be 3 fewer. It seems that trees are now so secondary to any built structures, that they are almost irrelevant and sadly very little thought goes into their removal.

If you feel strongly about particular trees and their proposed removal, please let Council know. They may give greater thought in future to tree removals if they understand how much the trees mean to residents & the character of our suburb. Sometimes removal is unavoidable due to safety concerns, but often it is a push for better views or leaves creating mess. We'd also like to advocate for better tree protection laws and tougher removal laws re DAs, and a repeal of the 10:50 laws for this area. APA has asked NBC to ramp up its regulation/inspection of tree removals and completed developments, with a condition of approval, to plant replacement trees to ensure compliance. The PCA will also reiterate that request at its next meeting with Council.

Magnificent angophora on Argyle Street, Bilgola. Photo C Baker



Bushcare Program & Avalon Golf Course Regeneration

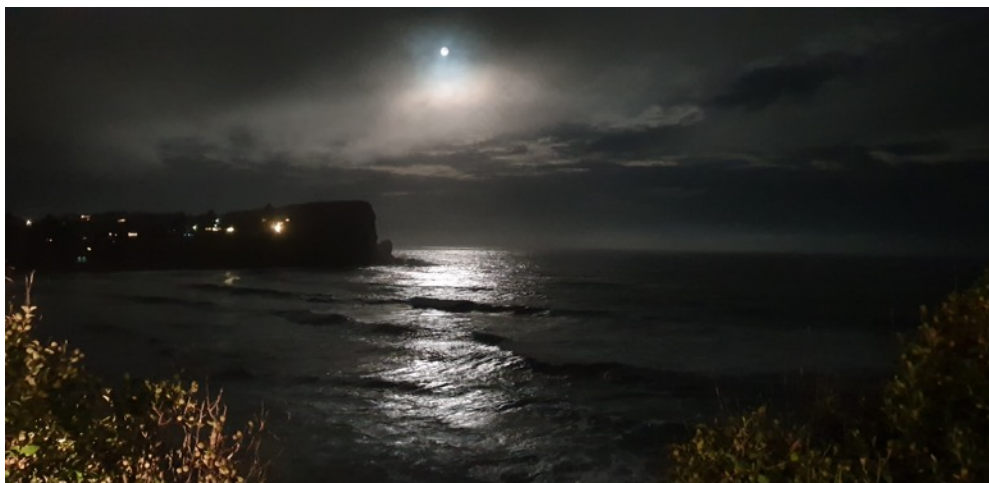
NBC's Michael Kneipp (Environmental Volunteers Coordinator) has sent out a notice that "Council has determined, due to the ongoing risk associated with Coronavirus (COVID-19), to continue with our precautionary approach and extend the suspension of all Bushcare volunteer programs, with another review in four weeks. The primary factor in this decision continues to be your health and welfare as a volunteer and that of your supervisors. We look forward to having the Bushcare program up and running as soon as it is safe and practical, and will continue to update, including in the next four weeks if things change'.

We expect bush regeneration contract work on Avalon Golf Course, funded by the \$10000 grant from the Communities Environment Program grant from the Federal Government, will now start later in the year, once bushcare activities resume. The golf course bushcare group works there on the second Wednesday afternoon of each month. Contact Geoff Searl for more information and to get a reminder: gcsearl@bigpond.com Mob: 0439 292 566.

There are many other bushcare sites around Avalon, and we are always looking for more volunteers, so please email or fb us if you'd like to be involved. Bangalley Head Landcare group has a Facebook page you might enjoy. It also publicises the bushcare group that works near the Whale Beach Road entrance. The Landcare group sent a submission to NBC regarding several management issues in the reserve. eg the very poor state of the Marine Pde entrance and general lack of weed control by contractors to NBC. Staff agreed to meet members and others concerned about the state of this significant Wildlife Protection Area and walk there to have a look at the problems. Unfortunately the virus has caused postponement of the walk. Contact us if you're interested in this reserve and its maintenance. 0439 409 202. Pittwater Natural Heritage Association will lead a guided walk on the headland on Sunday August 30.

APA is in the process of following up with NBC as to what has become of the Urban Tree Canopy policy and new APA requested tree plantings in Avalon.

Moonlight Over Avalon Beach. Photo Marita Macrae



Maintenance Issues Around Avalon

There are ongoing issues particularly around Woolworths laneway, re non up-keep of sanitary conditions and lack of access, also problems with commercial bins in Patterson Land and rats, footpath safety issues, Simmonds Lane requests for gutter/roadway improvements & also requests by shops to make area more attractive. Councillor McTaggart has raised issues also and these are being added to a long list. Some positive outcomes in Av of late: Banksias in reserve west of Av Surf club have had wooden protective fences installed as requested and more are expected. Soap dispensers in the beach change rooms were installed at our request. Pool surrounds - latest advice is that council staff are "aiming to do more topping in the winter months" and are investigating new products. We are in ongoing contact (via Trish Chaney) on the other matters we raise from time to time.

Manly Daily Demise

Sadly, due to Covid-19 and lack of advertising revenue, the Manly Daily has now been put on hold (currently in online form only) for an undetermined period of time and there is uncertainty as to whether it will come back into circulation in its physical paper form. We are concerned that once a local paper goes under, the indications are that a large part of local government business goes unscrutinised and entirely unreported. We hope this will not be the case here and that The Manly Daily returns to us in a more journalistically robust & relevant form after the Covid crisis is over & other publications such as Pittwater Life, Peninsula Living and Pittwater Online News take up the slack in the meantime. It is so important for journalists to provide balance and public scrutiny of Council projects and decisions, in addition to all the other essential local information the paper has provided us since 1906!

- Just a little snippet about Careel Bay from a paper Geoff Searl has tucked away in his trove of local historical treasures:

‘Of the many miniature bays that cling round the shores of Broken Bay none has so much peaceful grandeur and natural beauty to reveal as Careel Bay. Its waters of beautiful blue are snugly protected by ponderous heights, whose facings shoot forth vegetation of gaunt, green growth. The fisherman here plies his calling with profit to himself and pleasure to his market. Pleasure boats too, float on the placid waters of Careel’.

Australian Town and Country Journal, January 1891 page 34

Careel Bay photo: Roger Sayers

