

MINUTES OF THE GUNGAHLIN COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING
8 OCTOBER 2003

1. The President, Barry Dee, opened the meeting at 7.40 pm.
2. **Attendance:** Those present are registered on the attendance sheet (10 members + Anne McGrath of the Land Development Authority and guest speaker Simon Corbell)
3. The **minutes of the September meeting** were accepted (moved: Renee Olsen; seconded: Jon Reynolds).
4. **Business arising from the minutes:**
 - A query about the meaning of the reference to Tidbinbilla in Item 8, ‘Science and Education’ section. Barry Dee pointed out that many of the points in this item are simply suggestions that have been received in relation to rebuilding after the January bushfires: suggestions on which public feedback is being sought. More details on the rebuilding proposals are available in the library.
5. The President **tabled two documents** that had been received in the past month:
 - Draft Variation Plan for Jamison Centre
 - ACTION annual report for 2002–03.
6. **Finances:** In the absence of the Treasurer, Barry Dee tabled two recent bank statement, which show that
 - Gungahlin Community Council account has \$3245.82 and
 - Gungahlin Community Council Hall account has \$4955.88.Several cheques are to be banked (*Gunsmoke* payments) and there is an outstanding bill for printing the last issue of *Gunsmoke*.

The Council has not yet received last year’s grant (\$4000) from the ACT Government. Barry Dee and Roma Hosking are to attend a meeting on 16 October to discuss community council grants, after an earlier meeting between Mr Dee and the relevant officer from the Chief Minister’s Office. Proposed changes to the grants scheme include (a) earlier payment and (b) the contract being replaced by a deed of grant, which would include reference to indemnity for the Government. This last suggestion is of concern to community councils and will be discussed at the meeting.
7. Jon Reynolds reported on **two appeals before the Administrative Appeals Tribunal**, both relating to parking provisions at new developments:
 - No AT 0339: 18 parking places will now be provided for the 20 dwellings at the boarding house (a win).
 - No AT 0354: This is currently before the tribunal; the Gungahlin Community Council has argued that insufficient parking is planned for a 28-unit development in Otway Terrace.
8. Christine Coulthard (Neighbourhood Watch) expressed concern about the lack of a 24-hour, seven days a week **police presence in Gungahlin**, referring to the 30% rise in crime statistics. The area is covered from 7am until 11 pm, with one vehicle on duty; the station is staffed only between 10 am and 6 pm. Points raised in discussion included:
 - The police themselves would like a stronger presence.
 - Some ad hoc staffing increases occur when officers are available, with attempts to place those officers who are familiar with the area.
 - Sending police to the Solomon Islands as part of the peace-keeping force is having an impact on police availability, despite the fact that this force is separately funded.
 - It would be useful to see crime statistics graphically, showing trends over time.

9. **MOTION:** Gungahlin Community Council supports the idea of an article by Christine Coulthard, for the next *Gunsmoke*, outlining Neighbourhood Watch activities and summarising Gungahlin crime statistics. (Moved: Jon Reynolds; seconded: Lloyd Walker; carried without dissent)

10. **Guest speaker: Simon Corbell, ACT Minister for Health, Minister for Planning**
Barry Dee welcomed and introduced Mr Corbell, mentioning that the Gungahlin Community Council has some concerns over how the building of new stores in the town centre will proceed, and the impact this will have on traffic and on parking.

Mr Corbell outlined plans for three major developments in the town centre, with all three aiming to be open before the end of 2004:

—Big W, with associated specialty stores and residential space, plus an underground carpark with travelator access to the street: The deed of agreement is being worked on. At 8000 square metres, the Big W store will be larger than the usual (6000 sq m) stores, with corresponding extra parking underneath.

—Coles supermarket, also with specialty retail and residential space: The development application is due next month.

—Aldi supermarket, with parking in the centre of the development: The sale has been executed, a high quality design proposal has been submitted and development approval is expected by the end of the month. Leasing of some of its space as medical suites is already well advanced.

The residential developments will mostly front onto the town common, providing passive surveillance for people using this space.

The development will provide jobs during the construction phase, and about 500 full and part-time jobs on completion.

Parking during the construction period: Details are not available yet; these will be worked out in conjunction with the developers. While the location may vary from time to time, the intention is to maintain the current number of parking spaces until the new parking infrastructure is completed. Construction traffic and construction worker parking will be kept away from customer parking areas. Woolworths is looking at whether at least a part of its new underground carpark can be opened before the rest of its site is completed.

The planning strategy for the Gungahlin town centre does not rely on major office developments, but the Government would take up any opportunities for this as they arose. The centre will grow as the district grows, and will attract people from other parts of Canberra as it grows (20% of shoppers are already from outside Gungahlin).

Mr Corbell summarised by saying that the developments will change the town centre considerably, leading to more activity, a stronger central focus for the region, and more jobs.

11. **Anne McGrath described the Land Development Authority's approach:**
LDA has consultants working with the developers to ensure good communication on development time frames; efficient communication with the Government, Marketplace tenants and leaseholders; and regular communication with the community, including a quarterly newsletter to all Gungahlin residents, with the first of these due in late October.

12. **Questions and discussion** on the town centre developments:

Q: Will there be jobs other than the retail-based ones:

A: Each of the developments will include commercial / professional space for lease as well as the stores, and the Government will develop ACTTAB headquarters across from the Raiders Club. More competitive rents and a larger 'mass' of retail and commercial space should attract a wider range of businesses to the centre.

Q: Will the centre have a government health centre?

A: This is not planned at the moment, but some facilities already exist, e.g. a baby health centre at Ngunnawal. Family support services will be provided in the child care centre which is due to open next month. (NB Gungahlin is classified as an outer metropolitan area and attracts a Commonwealth Government subsidy for health services.)

Q: Why is it taking so long to install traffic lights near the Raiders Club? Are similar delays likely in the larger developments in the town centre?

A: Mr Corbell undertook to find out the reason for the delay on the traffic lights.

Q: Is there a 'big picture / long term' plan for the ACT in relation to new developments, such as location of government offices and new space for retail and business expansion? Is planning coordinated for things like the new airport development, the new Defence headquarters and the new ACT prison

A: Commonwealth Government department heads are free to choose locations for their departments, and the Commonwealth Government does not seem interested in a coordinated strategy. Mr Corbell will raise this issue with the new Minister responsible for Territories.

Q: Will the new child care centre be government-run or private, and will there be support here for community-based enterprises?

A: The centre is being built by the ACT Government, and its management put out to tender—both community-based and commercial groups can tender. There will be 100 child care places and meetings rooms available at nominal rates to community groups.

Q: What are the plans for improving broadband communications access in Gungahlin?

A: The Government has approved a site (near the fire station) for Telstra to build a new exchange, which will service all existing and planned new suburbs. Telstra is looking to provide broadband access to most of Gungahlin; although with current technology ADSL could only be provided within a 3.5 kilometre radius from the exchange.

Q: What are the plans for the nature and size of the common community area in the town centre?

A: The details for this are not yet worked out. There will be an interactive / consultative planning process from late November to establish community expectations and to develop plans for 'the best place in Canberra'. Bus facilities will be an integral part of the community space, but bus traffic will not be a problem (the bus layover site will be near Crinigan Circle). The three large developers will be making a financial contribution to the community space, but key design requirements will come from the LDA and the community. Lessons learned from other Canberra areas will be taken into account, e.g. licensing arrangements for outdoor cafes, security cameras, quality of landscaping and outdoor furniture, public art.

Concern was expressed that all age groups be catered for, including elderly people and those with disabilities

Q: What proposals or plans are there for aged-care facilities in Gungahlin?

A: A site has been identified in Nicholls (cnr Gungahlin Drive and Kelleway Street) for an aged care facility; this will probably include provision for both independent living and hostel-type accommodation. The boarding house has potential for older people. There have been three approaches to the LDA in the last six weeks about aged care facilities near the town centre. There are 12 sites in Yerrabi for aged persons' housing.

Q: How will the 'town common' based layout of the shopping centre work, given the extremes of weather than Canberra can experience?

A: Extensive consultation 7-8 years ago led to the current grid design, with a community desire for more of a 'country town' feel than a 'big box' shopping centre. Gungahlin town centre will have a mix of both, with activity on the street as well as inside. Verandas and awnings on both sides of the street will provide shelter.

Q: Is a cinema planned for Gungahlin?

A: There has been some interest, but it might not happen for about 15 years.

Q: Will there be more 'disabled' parking spaces?

A: Standards for numbers of these parking spaces will be followed, and time limits for them will continue to be as specified in the road regulations.

13. Barry Dee thanked Simon Corbell and Anne McGrath, and closed the meeting at 9.20 pm.