

TRANSCRIPT

GOLD COAST COMMUNITY GROUP MEETING

At Albert Waterways Community Centre

26 October 2017, 6.30pm – 8.30pm

Lois Levy (GECKO):

[FIRST FEW WORDS MISSED]

... legislative reform, so that we have more accountability, transparency and equity and ethics in our council. And the council one asks them to reform themselves, which may happen. We also have a pro forma letter at the back, that you can use to write to the Minister for Local Government, asking for legislative reform. There is a couple of buckets that will be coming around at a later date, to collect some money from you folk. It costs money to hire the hall, to do all the printing, and all the other millions of things that we seem to have to do for public meetings. Okay, so it's the dissatisfaction with the actions of the mayor and most of his councillors, that's been building since the election in 2012. And it covers many, many issues, which the community no longer believe they have any voice, or proper representation. Gecko in particular is particularly concerned about the constant assault on public open space, and the take over for commercial purposes. For some reason our mayor seems to think that our parks and open spaces are land banks for his developer mates. The failure of the councillors to remove themselves from chamber when they declare a conflict of interest, due to developer donations and they stay there, and they say they can deal with this. Well, I don't think that is ethically correct, even if it's legally okay. We are also concerned about the extraordinary relaxation of conditions in development application approvals for high rise developments, so a lot of you will be suffering from that. There is no consideration with the excessive height, density, lack of parking, lack of communal space and reduced setbacks. No consideration at all, for the physical, social and environmental infrastructure and community amenity, and how it can cope with all these additional people. We are very concerned about the secrecy of meetings that happen and decisions are made, and then just rubber stamped when the public meetings on. The hidden reports, going back to 2012, when right to information was the only way you could get hold of them. And, we have got at least 5 reports that have huge amounts redacted out of them so that you can't read the important bits about risk, financial risk and physical risk. And I don't think that's acceptable, particularly in regard to the cruise terminal. We have an undue influence of the development industry, with the mayors technical advisory committee consisting of developers, architects, planners, who have the first say on what should happen with our city plan, before you and I even get a look in. And it's usually pretty well tied up by the time we do. So, you can help tonight by being aware of all these things. Talking to your friends, acquaintances, workmates. You can write to both the Premier and the Minister for Local Government, and the Deputy Premier. You can write to the councillors themselves. You can write to the Information Commission and the Queensland Audit Commission with your concerns and complaints. Obviously, the more people that write, the more notice they'll take and the quicker we'll get some action. So, on the Gecko table there is also some sheets there with all those addresses, if you feel that you can send an email along to those folks. And they will all be on our website, so that you can check it out there if you don't happen to get one of those sheets of paper. We will, from now on, be running an ongoing letter writing

campaign, so that we literally get thousands of letters going to government, whichever government happens to win the election, and get some reform in our councils, so that we have honesty, accountability, transparency and ethical behaviour. Thank you.

Now, I would like to call upon Bernard Rowley from the Main Beach Association.

Bernard Rowley:

Our recent issues have been associated with the Spit and the light rail to the Spit. The mayor's public consultation on light rail, through the Main Beach to the Spit, was only advised to councillors the day before commencement. So, not even the councillors knew it was on. A complaint to the Minister for Local Government, was referred back to the council's CEO, who absolved the mayor. Caesar judges Caesar! Luckily, agitation has resulted in the state government deciding to appoint an independent adjudicator. Next item is the proposed cruise ship terminal, is to be built on Phillip Park. There is no state government approval for this use of public land, yet up to \$3 million of rate payer's money is being spent on evaluation studies. Surely this is arrogant use of rate payer's funds. The building height study report of the council, contains recommendations on new building heights on the Gold Coast. The suggested heights on the spit were on page 222 of the redacted part of the report, the hidden part of the report. This was displayed on the Four Corners program. The mayor said that he had not seen the page before and suggested it was produced by Sun Land. It's a council document, a developer in fact, he says produced the page. Unbelievable. Let us all work together, to attract a truly worthy, honest, independent council and mayor.

Lois Levy:

Thank you, Bernard, and thank you for keeping to your two minutes.

Sally Spain from Wildlife Preservation Society.

Sally Spain:

So, we are obviously asking for two miracles in our own time tonight. Truth in council and keeping me to 2 minutes. Right, okay. I have to tell you that the Wildlife Preservation Society, now called Wildlife Queensland, part of the state-wide organisation, does face a very grave situation. I've been in that institution for 40 years, since I was a youngster. There were luminaries like Judith Wright and our own Dr David Flay, starting this magnificent organisation. We have never had such an intractable situation and the history of the Gold Coast has been shocking in terms of its use of the wildlife and the biodiversity, which we are gifted in the most extraordinary fashion here. Because, we are part of the Maclean Macpherson Climate Overlap, so we have a marvellous diversity which any tourist city would love to have, but we seem to keep on smashing ours. We are very troubled about Springbrook, the World Heritage Area. See it is yet another place which development can take, we are extremely concerned about the plight of the Koalas, going for local extinction. Guess what? Tourist comes to see Koalas. Not a second casino. Didn't anybody tell the mayor and the council? We are extremely concerned that the last piece of littoral rainforest at Main Beach is supposed to be being taken. That was the place called Paradise, that the original Elston was named. There was littoral rainforest there, beautiful to walk to the beach amongst. There is a remnant of that here. It is also under threat. The situation is incredibly parlous, and we want a change in the council attitude. We do signal, that if there is a feeling from this meeting that an administrator should be called in, then we would like an expression of interest in that, because this council is impossible to work with, in terms of its duty of sustainability. In 1992, many of the councillors probably don't even know this, there was an inter-

governmental agreement, and federal, state and local councillors signed, to the responsibility to sustainability. How can we have sustainability, when we have no environment advisory committee - that went after the corrupt 2004 election. We have the RSPCA saying there has never been such attrition. We have headlines in the Gold Coast Bulletin today about the plight of the Koalas. We do not have a state of the environment report, which our own state of the environment report tells us, some years ago in the 1990s, what a valuable city we have and how we must preserve it. We see no sign of that. We have the Green levy not being spent. We have a casino versus Koalas. We have Four Corners shame; the shame is not the Four Corners program went out. But that we had to be focused upon in that fashion. We have a Moreton Bay marine park with Xcat (?) races, intergovernmental agreements on Bird Migration and Xcat races and no possibility of excluding the Moreton Bay marine park, because our councillors don't even know how valuable the area is. We don't have spotty catchers on site. We have redacted reports, which people can't see. We are not allowed to wear black swan badges, [Inaudible] made out of paper in council. Nor hold signs. We have media being locked out by the mayor. We have separation of powers absolutely ignored. And council officers under threat if they don't come up with the right thing. We have no court cases on behalf of the community and the environment. The community have to fund these. And finally, the Wildlife Society is forced to defend Black Swan Lake. This is a public asset. It is not something that is poorly developed, which we have to fight against. It is actually our very own, and it was given away in the most extraordinary fashion, and we say Neil Parseron, they shall not pass. That is enough. Please think about an administrator, thank you so much.

Lois Levy:

It was nice to see one miracle come to pass.

Okay, I'd like to call on Val Shooter from Black Swan Lake. Could I just say, if we are running out of seats, there are a few here in the front and there are more in that cupboard there if we need them.

Val Shooter:

Black Swan Lake, Bundall, was man-made about 35 years ago, so the soil could be used for the race track, for the Turf Club. It filled with fresh water, native vegetation flourished, wildlife returned, and resumed the role of the wetlands held for centuries. But it was public space, but it would be worth millions if filled in. In 2014, without legal authority, the Turf Club tried to dump truck loads of fill on top of nesting swans, but was stopped. The Turf Club chairman is general manager of an earthmoving business, Coastal Tipper Hire. So, we have no doubt which company would have got the contract to fill in the lake. In May 2015, public outrage saw the previous council vote according to public opinion to preserve and monitor the lake, it's wildlife and forest. 2 successive tests and reports by worldwide accredited testing laboratories confirmed that the water quality was well within Australian standards, and had improved with the more consistent monitoring that the council did then. The last of these reports, dated August 2016, was then handed to the mayor and councillors. But straight after last years' council elections, an unpublicised motion to fill in the lake, took everyone by surprise. Newly elected Vision 7 councillor Gary Bowden, didn't refer to a professional report that we had. The council and the mayor have never revealed what report they used, but it's likely that councillor Bowden quoted from an amateur observation of the Spotted Catcher, commissioned by the turf club in 2014. This catcher said he saw dead and dying birds around the lake, but this has been completely refuted by Wildlife Rescuer Roley Goonan, from Wildbird Rescues Gold Coast. Who says he has never had a bird death due to toxicity at Black Swan Lake. The lake was also designed to be part of a flood mitigation system, in the

Bundall area. With interconnecting pipes to other excavated sites. These pipes were shown on the old Gold Coast City Council website, but they disappeared from the website sometime last year, when they were replaced by a new website, full of pictures and pretty colours, and none of the previous details of flood mitigation. The mayor and all the councillors were then made aware of the flood mitigation aspect of Black Swan Lake, in an email last year. The mayor and some councillors tried to make the lake sound ugly, by called it a Burrow Pit. If Black Swan Lake is a burrow pit, then so are all the canals and man-made lakes on the Gold Coast. After misleading amateur information from the spotter catcher and the mayors' aggressive insistence that councillors call Black Swan Lake a burrow pit, the council then voted to give our public space to Gold Coast Turf Club to fill in the lake and destroy it. There is a pump on site to drain the lake, and sewerage pipes lurking along the canal bank. Seeing the council is so secretive about anything connected with the lake, we are highly suspicious of it. We do know that if the area were turned into real estate, it would be worth many millions of dollars and perhaps one of the mayors' pet casinos might suddenly appear there. A couple of months back, we found nutrients discharging into the lake. We had the water analysed professionally and the report concluded that although there is nutrient runoff, the lake copes well with it. So, better monitoring by the council is needed. We didn't give the mayor and a handful of councillors a mandate to destroy our lake, it's forest and wildlife. It's on public record that Tom Tate and Gary Bowden promised at pre-election rallies to protect and work with the community to conserve that area. But they haven't. We have a petition on change.org and we filmed a save our lake petition, with 10,000 signatures from Australian and overseas, being handed to the Deputy Mayor, who is on the board of the Turf Club. But the Turf Club has not acknowledged receiving it. We are running out of time. The Turf Club doesn't need the extra parking, it gets handouts from the council. They have been given extra funding to build an entry under the race track, so that people can park under there, in the middle of the race track. We hold events at the lake and seeing we are hosting next years' Commonwealth Games, we are in contact with the Queens Royal Swan Marker. It's sad to have to admit, that people from overseas appreciate the lake and its wildlife more than our elected representatives, and the local Turf Club. We are tired of seeing the Gold Coast bulldozed by developers, who couldn't care less about the environment, or us. We want our little patch of bush. We need Black Swan Lake, it's wildlife and wetland forest. We demand what is rightfully ours. We want our public space returned to us, in perpetuity.

Lois Levy:

Thanks Val.

I'd like to introduce now John Burns. John is an independent activist, he describes himself as and a prolific letter writer to various people in the government and the council, and also to the newspapers. Thank you, John.

John Burns:

Okay, can you hear me? Right, I'd like to talk about the mayoral technical advisory group. The city plan we now have is as a result of the council, developers and development consultants working together. A press released in 2013 stated that this specialist group was to be disbanded when the current city plan came into being. Which happened in 2016. A further council document has changed this, to after amendment one. This unelected group, which will have a major input into the amendments 1A and 1B of the city plan that is now out for public consultation. From the preamble of the proposed amendments, further change will be ongoing. There are 26 letters in the alphabet, so will this mean the committee will be disbanded after amendment 1Z? The

217 revamped mayoral committee, MTAC it is called, will still exist and has met once a month since February this year. The last meeting of the year is 15th November, next month. The current MTAC committee is now headed by chair of the city planning committee, the deputy mayor and the mayor. All of whom are also on the city planning committee. This MTAC committee have also have 8 unelected members, most of whom are members of the urban development institute of Australia, Gold Coast and Logan branch. These 8 members and the <inaudible> increased city development and consulting with council on behalf of developers. Members of the UDI consumer bodies are the go-to people for developers and the building fraternity, when they want to get developments through council. One of the unelected has been on the committee since 2013 and is from a company that has represented ASF casino consortium. A direct line to the mayor. By council agreement, no minutes are kept of these meetings. Notes and recommendations are supposed to be kept. With no minutes and no apparent agenda kept of these meetings, and no meeting time or place to be found, meeting recommendations don't show up in the council meeting records. Are the 8 unelected paid an attendance fee, or are they on contract? From which budget are they paid, where are the individual payments shown? Who else from council staff is invited to attend the select closed meetings, or other council meetings have record of attendees and submissions made and voted upon. Where are the MTAC records kept? How are the various proposed changes introduced into the planning department of the council? There appear to be no current terms of reference for this revamped or extended committee, only the 2013 terms. The 2015 city plan passed in 2016, is now being shredded by the recommendations of this unelected, select developer lobby group. This chosen MTAC group are enshrining side steps to the city plan and a measurable financial gain for the development industry. So, who do we knowingly vote into office? The mayor and his self-interest developed lobby, to trash the new city plan? Or a controlled and manipulated, supposedly independent council that is now led by the mayor, with development lobby input. Did I hear one and the same? In the public interest for the greater good, are used by councillors and council to justify questionable decisions made. Corruption of due process and deception also come to mind. Can anyone see a conflict of interest, questionable morals, ethics and a complete lack of transparency, integrity in this cosy arrangement? Thank you.

Lois Levy:

Thank you, John, that was really well-put.

Okay, I'd like to call upon Graham Bradley from the Protect Evandale Parklands. These are the parklands that surround the council chambers.

Graham Bradley:

Good evening everyone, and I am also going to read my little speech, so I can pack more words in 120 seconds. I am here representing PEP - Preserve Evandale Parklands. This is a 17-hectare block of land on Bundall Rd, in Bundall. On the corner of Crombie Avenue, where the arts centre is and where the council chambers are. This site was purchased by the then city council in the 1960s for the purpose of being developed as an arts and civic centre. This is important, it was purchased out of rate payers' money to be used by everyone. It is a public asset. Since that time, the site has been a venue for important outdoor cultural and community events. Including the Australia Day celebrations, the Greek Festival, the Multi-Cultural Festival and a range of other family recreational and sporting activities. It is a much-needed source of clean energy, clean air I beg your pardon. And a source of community connections. In short, this centrally located public space is, and should remain a, or perhaps be, the major cultural and

community heartland of this city. However, in 2014 the councils Cultural Precinct Master Plan proposed enabling private partners to develop large portions of this land. Instead of a green open space, enjoyed 24-7 by everyone in the community, council proposed the construction of 4 high rise apartment blocks, 2 commercial office towers, a multi-storey car park, a hotel, etc. So, our group, PEP - Preserve Evandale Parkland - was formed at that time to oppose the loss of this parkland. And we continue to say no to the loss of our parkland. We have met council representatives on a number of occasions. In February this year we thought we had a bit of a win when we met Mayor Tate and he assured us that no development, other than the planned art gallery building and related infrastructure would take place on this site, while he was mayor. He encouraged us to work with the Friends of the Botanical Gardens, to come up with a plan for further enhancing and beautifying this park. And we have since done just that. We want to, we want the park to be a showcase for Australian natives and a world class natural gateway to the cultural precinct. But recently we have learnt of a disturbing development - the Gold Coast City Plan major update, released just a couple of weeks ago, makes it clear that private development of the Evandale Parklands is still very much on the agenda. Two aspects of this update particularly concern us. Specifically, the council has resolved to increase the permissible housing density on Evandale by a further 50% and as a result, to alter the classification of the above ground carparks on this site, effectively meaning that no public notification is needed for them to go ahead, and no rights of appeal exist. In our view, these are bad decisions. Council has decided to sell off an asset that is owned by all of us. This decision is not in the community interests, and it has not been made in an open, transparent or democratic way. What can you do? You can come and visit us. We have a little table over there. Come talk to us, sign our petitions, leave your email address if you support us, and learn from us how you can make a written submission to the council, opposing the privatisation of this Gold Coast Parkland. Can I finish with a quotation, someone once said: "A great city needs great parks. Unless they are set aside in the city's youth, they are hard to retrofit after development has taken place, and once established they need to be jealously protected. As the city grows, those green open spaces are more precious than ever". That someone was Malcolm Turnbull, and if he was here tonight I would hope that he would join with us in condemning the actions of the Gold Coast City Council.

Lois Levy:

Well, I am sure everybody here certainly joins with that.

Now, the Save Our Broadwater Group were unable to provide a speaker tonight. So, I will be reading a speech put together by Allan Rickhart, who is the Vice-President, I think. Okay, so this is from Save our Broadwater. We are presently working with the appointed state government officers, charged with the responsibility to create a Spit Management Plan. However, we are here tonight because there are real community concerns about the close relations between our present council and the real estate development industry, as a result of development contributions to election campaigns. Some say the donations are not necessarily to gain favours, however I note that when Save Our Broadwater requested meetings with the mayor and deputy mayor to discuss the Spit Management Plan, we were told no. Also, yet some in the development industry say so-and-so is a good councillor, as I only have to pick up the phone and they will be there. Also, why does a hard nose developer contribute money to the campaign for someone they may not yet of met. Let's not kid ourselves. They have not interviewed each candidate, to see who would do a job for our city. The present state government is presenting legislation banning developers contributes to local government election campaigns. Such legislation already exists in NSW and I urge our state representatives

to support our legislation. They may argue that donations from other sources should also be banned from local and state elections. That may be so, however we must start somewhere. With respect to councillors declaring a material person, or pecuniary interest in matters before council, I can speak with some experience. Alan Rickhard was of course a councillor with the Gold Coast City Council for many years, so he has lots of experience in this area. He was a councillor from 1988-2004, and each time an item in which I had a business interest or an incorporated not-for-profit association I was a member of, came before council, I declared an interest and left the room during the discussion and voting on that matter. All councillors did that and it was not an issue. There was no ganging up. The items were dealt with in public, within the records and the records were publicly available. After each election, councillors were briefed by the CJC, which is now the CCC, as to their obligations and these were carried out. It seems that this has been removed from legislation and its reintroduction can only give the public more confidence that favours are not being bought. This can only improve the public image of our city, as the recent media revelations are an embarrassment to us all. Surely the Gold Coast can do better than that.

Alan is followed by Barry Robinson, from Friends of Currumbin. So, Barry would you like to come up?

Barry Robinson:

Thank you, Lois. A sliding microphone is the least of our problems. Friends of Currumbin have been around for about 40 years, and our major concern is the prioritisation of the way the rate payers' funds are spent on the Gold Coast. We are the major eco-nature tourism lobby group on the Gold Coast. The ocean way has been our number 1 project. Many years ago, it is, I can use the word many now, the Gold Coast City Council engineers won a national prize of outdoor infrastructure, for the design of the ocean way from the spit to Coolangatta. And everyone was quite excited about it. Small sections have been completed. Other sections are obstructed by the, the local councillor who is subjected to the vested interests. Well the vested interests of some of the important people who live along the beach front. The ocean way is designed on public land, it's not meant to offend anyone. Some of us could go right back to Noosa and the objections to when that beautiful pathway was built along the front there. It's the same sort of thing here. The idea of looking at a woman pushing a pram along a footpath on the beachfront, offends some people deeply. We are better than that, I am sure. The other project we have launched very recently, is the Green to the Gold walk. Which will start at the Green Mountains and finish at Tugun Beach. It's a 3 day walk involving B&Bs, shaped like the ones in Tasmania, and we desperately need support for that. These sorts of projects get people out, they get them off the busy streets and walking at our most beautiful aspect. And that is our beachfront, or our parklands at the back of the Gold Coast. I just hope that, as one of the guys said before, a great city deserves great parklands. Well a great city, deserves great walkways too. Melbourne and Sydney have built miles of it, while we have been sitting around here waiting for vacillating councillors to be influenced by goodness knows who, to either obstruct or get on with these projects. This is all about our quality of life, and what we leave to future generations should be our major priority. Not a dump. The light rail has been a great boom, but if it's going to be traded off with a Faustian contract to build 8 storey buildings from Southport to Coolangatta, then we are being done. Thank you very much.

Lois:

Thank you very much Barry.

Now we have got Don Gordon, who is from the Greenmount area and I am sure he is going to be very eloquent in telling us about a development down that way.

Don Gordon:

Testing. I am not a member of any particular group. I live in Lindor Apartments, 136 Marine Parade, Coolangatta. I represent those residents. There are 8 in our building. Our building has 9 stories, and 16 carparks. Council has approved a 27-storey hotel, on a 1,740 square meter block, next door to our apartments. The town plan for this area of Coolangatta is 10 stories, they have approved 194 units on this small site, with parking for only 155 cars. The building has not setbacks from Marine Parade, Boundary or Hills Streets. The building is within 1m of our eastern boundary. It has a 3-storey podium level. The amenity of our home has been destroyed by this bad council decision. How would you like to have a 27-storey hotel, built within 1m of your boundary, with approved amplified music from 7am to 12 midnight? The local councillor, Gail O'Neill, has supported this Komune application from day one. She did not listen to her local residents, stating that Coolangatta needed a 5-star hotel. This building does not comply, in any space, in any shape with the town plan. We are Lyndora have had to appeal this Komune approval in the Planning and Environment Court. That appeal is ongoing and will be heard maybe in February next year. This rally is a little too late for us, but I hope in the future, the council will listen to the people and approve developments in line with the town plan. We have commenced a Facebook page, Save Greenmount Beach, to promote this bad council decision. If the Komune approval is not reversed, you will not be able to park anywhere near Greenmount Beach for a swim or a surf. The flier that I have left here tonight promotes our Facebook page. Tell your friends, we plan to have a similar rally such as this, on Greenmount Beach in the near future. Thank you.

Lois Levy:

Thank you very much Don. Unfortunately, what is happening down there at Greenmount, is also happening all over the city and Gecko in particular has written a letter, with the assistance of Phillip, who will be speaking next to the Minister for Planning, asking that they do something about this situation of these excessive relaxations, and the response we got is that we should take it to the council. So, we have. We have sent it to the CEO of the council and I guess eventually we might get an answer.

So, now I would like to call upon Phillip Follent, from the Tugun Progress Association. Tugun is, Phillip is also a former state government architect and architect with Gold Coast City Council. He has a great deal of experience in planning matters and I am sure what he has to say will be of interest to you.

Phillip Follent:

Thank you, Lois. Good evening everyone. Now the Gold Coast is an absolutely magnificent place to call home. We are really fortunate to have great natural settings from the coast, right through to the Hinterland. The cities evolution from a string of coastal towns and villages, and rural townships has been pretty patchy. But decisions have been made and with a fair bit of luck, has created a place that we are all keen to live in. None of us are wanting to leave. It's also attractive to others who want to make it home. It's also attractive to the development industry, which sees opportunities which are far beyond serving the real needs of those people who need apartments. We need to remind council and the development industry, that it is a privilege to shape a city and neighbourhoods. And that development is not an end in itself. The Tugun Progress Associations experience at the Southern End of the Coast and also its observations

across the city, is that the person of the city plan and its interpretation, have been suppressed under that broken record mantra of 'that have a go spirit', which is being interpreted as do what you want, just promise jobs. Now, the purpose of the city plan is to set the rules, so there is clarity and reassurance for developers and citizens, that the city will be developed in an orderly fashion, where liveability will be preserved and enhanced. Now the city does deserve really quality development, not mediocre product that falls out the back end of an opportunistic process designed simply to perpetuate development for developments sake. Now, currently we see developments in Bilinga and Coolangatta, like Komune, which exceed density and/or height or both. And contravene other provisions of the city plan, such that density trumps all. And the long-term impact on the amenity, urban quality and the landscaping of the city are absolutely compromised. The loss of plot ratio in the city plan could have constrained the bulk of high density developments, means that a speculative market has been fuelled by developers, never intending to build. But rather to add value to land for approval for future development, and then to sell on the land with that approval. That is actually far more profitable an activity, than the risky world of building buildings. But it offers no jobs. Changes in the planning assessment will mean that community will have no official say on most of the development applications in this city. So, now is the time to make certain that all councillors are reminded that residents want to be well informed about proposed developments, early in the process, when community input can be a useful contribution. The new city plan has dispensed with local area plans, on the basis of reducing red tape and repetitive rules. It was these plans that were to protect the special character and amenity of an area. Tugun petitioned through the previous active councillor, a very proactive councillor Chris Robbins, for a character study, which is now to go to the state as part of the round of major amendments to the city plan. Now these character studies will be essential if the nuances of place and amenity, that characterise a neighbourhood, are to be retained. Finally, now is the time to, in fact that is something that all residents can petition for with their local councillors. Right now, I think it's very timely to remind all councillors that they serve you. If they focus on being voted syphons for the mayor, they don't deserve to serve you and your community and should be on unrelenting notice now, until the next election.

Lois Levy:

Our next speaker is Monique Robinson, who may take just a couple of minutes to get up here. She has got a wonderful companion with her, as you can see. She will be talking about some parking issues, up her way in the mid-north area.

Monique Robinson:

Thank you. My name is Monique Robinson and I live in Labrador. It has been brought to my notice in our area, we are in light of the Commonwealth Games coming by, our street, the street that I live in, is going to have a 2-hour limit parking. Now I live in a complex of 26 units, and so we won't be able to allow to have a permit. So, then I wonder where are my support workers going to park? Where are the few residents in there that have vehicles, where are they going to park? Where are the hospital people going to park? Already we have a problem here and it just doesn't make sense. I have listened to all of you talk about the council tonight, and it doesn't seem to me that the council is doing a very good job. And I want to listen, I want to pay more interest to what is going on in my suburb. And how it's affecting me, I don't have a house, I live in low-social economic. But it's my home. And it is going to affect my life, and the people in my street. So, please support. We've got a petition going on here tonight, so if you could support us and think about that. Think about those people who have to go to the hospital

to work, how is that going to happen? It's not going to work. So, thank you. By the way, I did it in under 2 minutes.

Lois Levy:

Yes, I understand in a lot of these areas where the 2 hours have been introduced that there is supposed to be a residents' sticker for some people. But for some reason, Monique is not eligible for such a sticker. And no doubt other people aren't either. So, lots and lots of issues all over the city. And we don't seem to be getting any joy from our councillors.

Now, I would like to call on Rachel Sestique from Miami. She is going to talk to you about a development on a golf course.

Rachel Sestique:

So, my name is Rachel and I am one of a group of people in Miami that have been trying to bring attention to a development in Miami Island private open space. And the media gives a lot of attention to all the issues to do with public open space, it's really hard to get attention for this. I know, because I spent 6 hours on the phone to a bulletin journalist, talking to them about secrecy, development plans, bullying and a perfect written PR release from the developer was published in the Bulletin the next day. With nothing that I had to say. So, they are coming for our private open space, but you don't know about it, because they are not, you know there are other stories in the media. Our private open space is really important in our urban environments. It's important habitats and it's protected in the 2003 city plan, which this development is being assessed under. The 2003 city plan, is a superseded city plan, and this developer had approval given to them this year to apply under this superseded plan. In the application, they say this is because they started planning it many, many years ago. However, in the minutes of the pre-lodgement meeting, dated 9th December 2016, there is a little bit at the bottom that says 'post meeting - subsequent to the pre-lodgement meeting, senior council officer Weremu Charrington contacted Pru Fitzgerald of RPS, they are the people who put the development applications together and advised, it may be worthwhile lodging a request for the development to be assessed under the councils superseded planning scheme, the basis for this request is that: the assessment of an application of this nature is untested, and there have been applications with similar conflicts with the former superseded planning scheme, that have gone through on appeal and have been approved. And council feel this could assist'. So, my question is. Is it council officers job to help developers get developments across the line, that won't pass 2016 town plan. This development is 3 high-rise 6 storey buildings, with 177 residential retirement units. A massive carpark and a commercial building that is going to tower over small, low density residences in Miami. Miami's characterised in a low intensity setting. There is no need for it. Pauline Young refuses to consult with us. We have been emailing her for 18 months. I did run into her at a meeting with the golf club, that I wasn't invited to, that I gate crashed. And I saw her there having a beer. It's here say, I can't really put it in writing. But she won't talk to us. I wrote her my 5th letter, but this time I cc'd every single other city councillor in, and she relied. And she said, this is important for jobs, so the last guy that spoke, you know. And that it's a need for the community, but that she spoke to many, many people who support this. And no one who doesn't support it. We've door knocked the entire neighbourhood. I haven't met one person who supports this. So, I am going to finish that with, unlike Don and the Greenmount issue, which I follow on Facebook because I have been really upset to hear about your situation. We've got 24 more hours before submissions close, so we have brochures and we can hand them

out. And if you can submit an objection it will help, and if this goes through, this will be as they said untested. If it goes through it's going to set a precedent for every single one of you to have your private open space built out. So, hopefully yes, thank you.

Lois Levy:

Thank you, Rachel. You might be interested to know that a previous council under the 2003 planning scheme had a policy, which was then incorporated into the planning scheme that golf courses were not to be considered land banks for developers. And the entire council at the time, supported that and have continued right through - until we got this council. So, if this goes ahead at Burleigh Heads, and other proposals for private golf courses, we may see them all, well not all of them of course, but a majority of them considered land banks for developers and we will lose that really important private open space, that we need for the lungs of the city, as well as the habitat for our wildlife and the visual amenity.

So, I'd like to now introduce to you Lynn Ogden. Lynn Ogden is a stalwart campaigner of several decades, and she is with Nerang Community Association.

Lynn Ogden:

In my effort to, good evening ladies and gentlemen. In my effort to keep to 2 minutes, I actually cut a whole page, so this will be interesting. I'd like to give just a little vignette of what's being happening at Nerang over the last two council terms and it's upsetting for us, because we love the area. Tonight, I am representing the Nerang Community Association. The NCA is a 24-year old, broad based, a-political community association, with an interest not just in town planning, but youth and community, environment and heritage, roads, traffic and transport in the 4211 post code. We umbrella a successful annual Christmas event, as well as we have restored two significant heritage buildings in Riverside Parklands. The NCA is prepared to stand up for Nerang, just like everyone here tonight who are doing it for the wider Gold Coast. The NCA is passionate about fostering a sense of community for our area, and have a full understanding of the importance of getting town planning right. I concur completely with what everyone has said tonight and especially Phillip Fon. Planning affects people. When it goes wrong, it can have the most terrifying effect on residents' well-being, mental and physical - and these are the things we forget. It has an effect on their lifestyles, their amenity, it can impede property values and consequently affect family's futures. It had an impact on traffic safety and the natural environment, and the creatures that live there. It can cause a feeling of hopelessness and despair, and I've seen it working in the town planning area in our town. We suspect that many of you are feeling the effects of bad planning decisions of the city councillors right now. And it isn't rocket science that good development provides just as many jobs as bad development. It's a no brainer. Get it right, leave a legacy and sound building blocks for the future. Through sheer necessity of standing up for our community, we have taken matters to the Planning Court, right to the Supreme Court. So, we know how the legal system works. We know the costs, we know the focus and the hard work required to win these matters. We could be putting that money back into our community and that is what hurts. The NCA is not against development, we just want to see development that fits with the planning scheme intent. That does not erode those valuable features that attracted residents to this area in the first place. Our association, like many of you, have felt abandoned by council. We have felt the full force of council turning its back on our community, when it comes to planning matters. Not only does council turn its back, it uses our money to fight us, the rate payers. Our last two court issues had the Gold Coast City Council side with the developer against our community group, who were representing residents. If we had lost

these matters, brought under the previous legislation - the *Sustainable Planning Act* - the NCA could have found itself liable not just for the developer's legal costs, but that of council. The council turned against us. I mean, it's incredible. It is courageous, some may say silly, to take on a council and the developer together. But these days, we must. We did, and it needs to continue. In our view, council turning its back on its own planning scheme and the residents of the Gold Coast, is unconscionable, it's scurrilous behaviour. It's fair to say, and it's our view, the council planning process is now corrupted and the planning scheme more or less abandoned. That is despite so many good council officers striving every day to achieve good planning outcomes. The community want a real say in planning of their neighbourhoods. They want consultation in real terms, and that's gone out the window. And outcomes in line with their aspirations. Anything less is just not acceptable, and we must not accept it. The planets aligned for us at Nerang, because we are division 5. We got councillor Peter Young. Thank you.

Lois Levy:

So, don't you think they are really brave that they actually take it to the court stage? Because that is quite a job to do that, and a very expensive little exercise as well. Now, I've got a statement here from a number of organisations that deal with Koala's, that I have been asked to read out. The Gold Coast is losing its Koala's at an alarming rate. Wildlife Rescuers in the Currumbin Wildlife Hospital are swamped with sick and injured Koalas. Currumbin Wildlife Hospital has taken in over 500 from the Gold Coast in the last year alone. That is more than 1 a day. In the northern end of the Gold Coast, development is taking place at an incredible speed. In Coomera alone, hundreds of hectares of Koala habitat have been lost in just a couple of years. Large scale developments are happening monthly, where large areas of habitat are cleared and often every last tree is removed from the site. Across the Gold Coast, Koalas are frequently found up lamp posts, in drains and holes, or found wandering disoriented or emaciated, injured or sick. Others are stuck on development sites, completely cut off from habitat, with bulldozers moving in on their last refuge. This is particularly common in the northern areas of the Gold Coast, but is very pronounced in Coomera, Pimpama and Parkwood. We have a council that admits that it's approving developments, that result in an immediate or imminent threat, such as vehicle strike when crossing the road to leave the site, or distress or malnutrition, caused by an inability to find suitable food and safe shelter. Reports are going to council, that when presented to the public, are very heavily redacted, that is large sections blacked out. In some cases, such as a report into the Parkwood Koala's, almost every word of the report was blacked out. Planning is failing to take into account the effect of cumulative impact of development. Habitat is being lost, without an overall arching plan to provide for corridors or safe movement of Koalas. Koalas are then forced onto roads and backyards, with dogs, as they travel large distances in search of mates or suitable food sources. Tallebudgera Connection Road has seen 12 Koala fatalities this year alone. Smith Street and Foxwell Road have seen many fatalities as well. The City Koala Plan acknowledges that Koala's on the Gold Coast are experiencing population decline, and remain under threat due to habitat loss and insufficient resourcing for veterinary and rescue services, as well we other factors. Many Koala populations have experienced such a degree of population loss, or have become so isolated, that they are no longer viable in the long term. Populations large enough and with enough habitat to sustain them, are disappearing across our city. We need to safeguard and protect significant pieces of Koala habitat. Areas need to be preserved as Koala conservation areas, with links to the urban area. This needs to be done through funds raised through the open space preservation levy. Instead, funds from this levy are used to prop up other actions by the city. In fact, we haven't had a

single piece of conservation land, or indeed recreation land, brought by council from this levy since 2012. We also need an urgent management plan for the many koalas that are stuck in small parcels of habitat, that are now also approved for development. The Koala Plan for the city needs to move forward beyond words, and translate into real action, in terms of the development assessment process, development conditions and compliance and the protection and building of Koala conservation areas and adequate corridors. The situation is urgent, and current plans and actions are not enough. We cannot let this continue any longer, or Koala's on the Gold Coast face real danger of local extinction. Now, we have an icon for the Commonwealth Games, which is a blue Koala. Warrabee has unfortunately become a joke, and we say he is blue because he is so depressed about his own relatives, who are trying to survive in the little patches that are left. So, our next speaker is Councillor Peter Young. Peter has long experience as a councillor and is now councillor for division 5. Thank you, Peter.

Councillor Peter Young:

Thanks Lois and thank you everyone for the lovely welcome, and I am just so encouraged by the incredible capacity of our community. As evident from the people who have stood before us tonight. Most of you are involved in this ongoing fight and it's just both sick making, to think there are so many problems across the city, that we have to have a meeting of this nature. But, it's also heart-warming to know that there is a genuine endeavour, and that is what is required. Today, I finished and submitted my submissions to the parliamentary committee that is dealing with 2 proposed changes to legislation that are affecting local governments, throughout Queensland. And I submitted them just in time, a minute before 2. And, I'm, with that process. That process is very, very important. And it might seem quite difficult for us all to engage in, but it's a legal process. It's very important for us to secure the right kind of changes and reforms in our state legislation, so that we don't encounter the sorts of things that have occurred quite evidently in Ipswich. Or quite evidently in the Redlands. Or quite evidently in Logan City. And also to us, quite evidently on the Gold Coast. Which has drawn out the need for the government to appoint the CCC to undertake a significant investigation of the 2016 election and then provide responses and recommendations to the government. And it's our obligation to ensure the government, whatever colour that may be, that it fulfils that outcome. That is pursues those legislative reforms. And I note with some concern, very late yesterday afternoon, councillors received a notification from the Local Government Association of Queensland, which has sought for and been granted a one week extension for local governments to make submissions to the Parliamentary Committee. All the rest of us who go to work, trying to raise kids, pay mortgages and deal with life, and make submission in our time after work, had to have our submissions in today. But the Local Government Association of Queensland has secured another week for those people who are involved in nothing but, local government, to make their submissions. Things are seriously out of balance. It is important for us to be engaged and part of the process of change. And you are. I just wanted to address a couple of things that people mentioned tonight. I went to a meeting of the mayors technical advisory committee last year, and I was looked at with some discontent you might say, from some of the developers there. And subsequent to that meeting, well in fact at the meeting firstly. A question was asked about the ability for developers to submit applications and would they be assessed and would they get approvals if they are put in under the superseded planning scheme, a factor that was mentioned in regard to the Burleigh Golf Course issue. Councillor Caldwell, who is the chairman of the committee, looked at all of the planners in the room and he said you will approve all of these applications that come through. This is the mantra and the mindset and the ethos of the Gold Coast City Council at this point in time. Subsequent to the meeting, councillors including myself,

received advice that we were no longer to attend the MTAC meetings. That we weren't welcome, and we weren't invited. That position was later clarified, in fact that direction had come from the Mayor's chief of staff. He had instructed the head of the development department in the council, that we weren't welcomed at those meetings. That has been modified, because they are in fact a committee that is report to council. Although it's been noted there are no minutes of any of their meetings or deliberations. I want to correct, or address the issue of Chevron Island, which was mentioned and the, what's occurred there. We've seen in the last 12 months or so, quite a number of significantly large buildings which are achieving densities 5 times what is set down in the town plan. 5 times. And up to 47 stories. Now, those will possibly go ahead, maybe not - depends on whether they can get finance, or whatever. But, they are adding, or potentially loading onto the infrastructure in that local area, massive impacts, such as congestion on the roads, or lack of abundant or appropriate open space. In regards to the Komune development, I just want to correct Mr Gordon, who has emailed me in the past. I voted against that development sir, and I am proud to say I voted against it. If you check the report, you will see that is the case. And a comment was made about the CST and the studies and the money we have paid on that, the cruise ship terminal. By the end of this financial year the sum will be, I understand, \$12.5 million worth of studies, undertaken at your expense. Now, in the past, I've actually provided some support for a feasibility study. I've said okay, fair's fair. Let's deal with this, let's get some proper evidence as to whether this thing is viable or not. And I've seen the report, which you haven't because it's been heavily redacted and in my opinion, it is absolutely, certainly never going to be viable. It is just a joke and a bad joke, and we really need to be increasing our pressure on our local government representatives and our state representatives, to understand that this is a continual waste of time and energy and we should be putting our energy and time and money into identifying how we can actually capitalise on the cruise ship industry in a positive way in this tourism city, rather than floating around with weird ideas about cruise ship terminal out into the ocean. Now, I'll mention court cases because there are very few incidents in the past, where community groups have fought successfully against the council's decision to approve something. And one I had last year, well earlier this year, was in Pacific Pines. Vodafone wanted to put up a big telecommunications tower, right next to people houses. The local people, I alerted them to that, they put in a lot of submissions, we fought it. Council refused it, Vodafone appealed it and the people then determined to pursue the appeal. But just before we got to that, when we had the refused, right, the council refused it. I asked a Senior Planner, that is his title, Senior Planner. I asked what happens from here, because it's been some years since I've had involvement with an appeal. And he said, I don't know, I have never done a refusal before. We have never had one. So, anyway, those people bravely took on Vodafone in the court and they won, and they got virtually all of their money back. So, success is possible and now the legislation has been changed, and local people can't be necessarily held to account in the sense of, in terms of costs. In court cases in the past, you could be held liable to have to pay the other parties legal costs. So, it's really quite a scary endeavour and that part of the legislation has recently been changed. There is so much going on, we've heard from various groups about the stuff going on around the city. Right at the moment, the city council has a review process for the town plan. You may know that is underway. People have commented about that. So, just for example, one of the things I wouldn't have been able to tell you just a few weeks ago, because all of these things are done confidentially, is that the new town plan envisages changing the standard of service in our parks and the standard of service of our roads. Now, if you know Chevron Island, have you ever driven across Chevron Island? It's pretty concentrated bit of road, pretty congested bit of road. It's very difficult to get from one side of the road to the other. That's classified as a standard of service D. Currently,

across the city we have a target of standard of service C, so it's a bit better than Chevron Island. So, when we plan and when we try to capture money from developers to build roads and so forth, we aim for that level C. The new town plan, that is out for public consultation now, says the level that we'll achieve is level D across the city. so, that's the ambition and vision of the current council, is to degrade our quality of life, to devalue our quality of life, so that we are all stuck in traffic and waiting for the red lights to turn green. But nobody knows about this stuff. But the councils already voted on these things, and so we then have to look at the councillors who are meant to be representing us and not representing the council, or representing people with vested interests. And at this point in time, I'm ashamed to say it, but I think that the predominant flavour of this council is very much to support development and to ignore or to belittle the complexities and complications that come from that. Such as increased traffic congestion, or our other assets just not functioning properly. We have so much spin doctoring from this council, that it is just, it makes me weep. We heard today about the hundreds of hectares of habitat loss for Koalas. We know that's a fact and yet, all of this year, you will see from council, will tell us the amount of protected vegetated cover in the city is increasing. Now, that is really not the truth and I can't tell you anything more than that, because it's all confidential. But, in some time in the future that confidential information will be made available to you, and you will see that in fact our habitat hasn't increased in size, it has decreased and it's the best quality habitat that is decreasing at the fastest rate. The spin doctoring goes to the extent where, I have seen a photograph here tonight of Curlews, which are quite a special bird. There was a photograph of Curlews in the draft city report, we will say that. About the environment. And there was a certain sensitivity about having a picture of those birds, because they are so special. So, it was deleted. The level of, this is by council, the machinations, the manipulations of things that they want you to see, or allow you to see, or allow you to hear, is very sad. And negative. It's a very negative place, in the council. But, what's, what I'm accused of being of course, is negative. You're all accused of being negative. The people that represent these groups, and the groups themselves, are accused in council of being negative. Your anti the city. You are not here for the city. This is all about growth and jobs and development, and you people should be ashamed of yourselves, because you are anti the city. And it's a really tough road that you've all got, that we've all got. Because I don't think any of us here wants to be negative about the city. I love this place. And I'm sure you do too. And that's why we risk our livelihood and we submit ourselves to that negative message, and the bullying and the intimidation. But, if we're all committed to change, we can overcome. In 2005 the CMC undertook a big investigation of the 2004 elections, and found that on the Gold Coast they had been corrupted. At the time the promise was made in writing by councillors, to developers that if they put \$10,000 each into the kitty, the hands would go up at the right time and they would secure approvals. Now, we don't have that level of stupidity so evident these days. But, there are still concerns. And your indicative of that concern across the city. We've got to recognise that some of the people involved then, are still involved now. So, I recall that the first meeting of the group of people who concocted this sludge fund and provided money to certain candidates, and indeed chose those candidates. The first meeting was held at Tom Tate's Islander Hotel in 2003. And one of the chief principal people involved, who managed the trust fund, was Tom Tate's friend, Tony Hickey. And these names will be known to many of you, who are watching with sad interest, what is going on in the city council now. But the thing I have to say to you is, those people sought for domination in 2004 and they didn't get it. And they sought for it in 2008 and Tom Tate lost. But eventually in 2012, they secured it. They fought and fought, and they persisted, and they endured, they were committed. And eventually they got the prize. Now, I think that we've got the capacity to reclaim that and I think it's important that we make a very sincere effort to engage other

people that we know, for them to understand what it is that concerns you. That this isn't just some negativity, that this is a genuine concern about our city. It's development. It's growth. It's future. It's children. It's environment. I won't be cast aside by the <inaudible - too much clapping>. I will not be subordinated to bullying and intimidation. I will fight, and I am committed to that fight and I want you to join me in that committed fight for the next few years. Thank you. I will just say this. We have two very important strategic opportunities that are about to hit us. Opportunities in our favour. One of those is the state government election. This is an opportunity to put these issues on the public agenda. So, go to meetings. Get commitment from, question the candidates, you know there are some amongst us who believe for example, that the cruise ship terminal on the spit is a done, that it's just not happening. Or that buildings of more than 3 stories are just not happening. I can tell you, I am very confident that the, there is confidence among the council for example, that the LNP will secure government and that all of these plans will just get rolled out. And the first things that we will see approved are cruise ship terminals and tall buildings. So, the state election is a very, very important strategic opportunity for us to try and get the message out, to get people to understand and to get the state government, and those candidates for state government, to commit to change. To make sure they are going to pursue change in the local government legislation. And the second thing is the Commonwealth Games. I mean, I've fought hard to secure the Commonwealth Games. I think it's a fantastic opportunity for our city and so, it concerns me to even be suggesting this to you. But, as was mentioned before, we've got a blue Koala as our mascot. And we are seeing a decimation, a slaughter of our Koalas and other wildlife. So, wouldn't it be the worst thing out for the Commonwealth Games to be associated with the slaughter of those animals? Or the destruction of Black Swan Lake. Or the diminution of a whole bunch of other beautiful, valuable, treasured places in the city. Let's use these opportunities for our good, so that in the years to come we can look back at this time and say man, we were down and out. Gee look at all the troubles that we had across the city. But, we overcame. We stayed committed and we kept the pressure on, and we won.

Lois Levy:

Thank you very much Peter for all of that really valuable information, and the call to arms, which I'm sure all of us will heed. We'd like to sort of finish up now with Darren Crawford, from Save Our Spit. I'm sure this is an organisation that all of you know about. They've been extraordinarily effective in opposing, what is it, what did you tell me the other day, 13 cruise terminal proposals. And we are going to be successful with the current, latest, idiotic proposal as well. So, Darren is going to sort of wrap it up and bring some conclusions and some actions for you, and then we will give you a chance to ask some questions. We'd like you to write them down if possible and then we will come and collect them, and we can read them out. I think it's quicker. Otherwise we tend to get people who like to make long rambling statements. Okay, so thank Darren, would you like to come up?

Darren Crawford:

Thank you, Lois, a hard one to follow - thanks Pete. First of all, I'd like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land in which we meet. The Yugambeh Nation, and their elders past and present. Steve sends his apologies, he would have loved to have been here tonight. However, we do have families and we do have lives outside of what we do here. You wouldn't know it sometimes, but yes, we do. I'd like to thank you all for attending. I'd also like to thank all of the community groups for the hard work that you have put in to be here tonight. Thank you very much. I'd also like to thank Lois and her team - they're awesome. Many people wouldn't realise this, but Lois is the glue that

holds this whole community together. Thank you, Lois. I'd also like to thank Councillor Peter Young, for what he does inside, it must be bloody hard - thank you mate. So, I'm one of these negative ones that Peter was talking about. I'm one of those ones that apparently, I am an unemployed hippie surfer, does nothing all day - just surfs. I have no right to be complaining about development. I have no right to be claiming any issues about what is happening with my home, where I was born. Rather interesting. When all I seek, and most of you seek, is sustainable development, right? I went to school with a guy called jobs and growth; he wasn't that smart. Economic, development, economic sustainable development, environmentally sustainable development. And of course, socially sustainable development. Which is what we've all spoken about here tonight. I've never seen a time in this city, where so many issues are up at once. These guys have got us fighting in every part of this city. From the Tweed all the way up to where are we now, Pimpama. Has anyone driven past Pimpama lately? Have a look on that side and see just what's gone. Because it's gone. It won't be coming back either. Because of these so many different issues that we are fighting, it's become apparent that it's coming out of one area. So, tonight I'm going to call on you to do something about it. It's apparent that the mayor's office in particular, some operatives in the state and federal governments have turned back time. And we are indeed under the control of the white shoe brigade again. They're back, they are just calling themselves different names and do different things. And yeah, they were this bad were they. This time around however they seem to be a pretty special group of people, not in a good way. So, on behalf of all of your community groups here, I would like to know if you would support moving a vote of no confidence in the leadership of the Gold Coast City Council? All I's in favour? Excellent. Not a lot of no's. Second. And again, to that end. And Rowan you might be able to help out with this, because we've spoke about it previously. Because you could actually do something about this, and if you want to win some seats down here, which we need you to do, you better get moving. Because all these people need you. And your people to get moving. To that end, in the next couple of days, you will receive a letter that you can customise. And then on send, and part of that letter is a demand that the state minister for Local Government, Mr Mark Furner, and the Auditor General immediately investigate the financial operations of the Gold Coast City Council. All those in favour? Not a lot of no's. This is a good thing. You'll receive these through your groups in the next couple of days. Please. As Peter said, together we can do this. We need to be calm. We need to be rationale. However, we need to be heard and these people are not listening. So, please get onto your social media, write letters, demand that your councillor be upfront, honest and accountable to what you need them to do for you. Thank you very much for coming tonight. We hope that you've enjoyed it. We hope that you've learnt something and please, shoot us your questions. Thank you.

Lois Levy:

Okay. We've got a couple of questions, which I think Dom is going to bring up. But in the meantime, I'd like to say the Miami situation - objections close tomorrow, so if you'd like to get onto the Facebook - Miami 4220 - or the People United Gold Coast. The objection form will be up there and you can assist that particular group, with this particular deadline. So, we'll have a little look at what questions are coming forward. Okay, so somebody has asked what is happening with Bruce Bishop Park. Is there anyone from Save Surfers Paradise here, who can respond to that? No one? Okay, well I don't know about you, but I read in the paper today that the mayor is intending to sell it.

Darren Crawford:

Bruce Bishop Park is an interesting one. I can say this - it's always been the end game for a certain individual and that is all I will say.

Lois Levy:

Somebody else would like to know if the local media are here. Are there any representatives of the media here tonight? We've got one over there. So, isn't that extraordinary. We've got 17 community groups, representing people from one end of the Coast to the other, with genuine concerns about what's going on in our city and the media couldn't be bothered coming along. What does that say, I wonder?

Darren Crawford:

This one's for Peter. Is the \$12.5 million spent by the GCCC on CST studies on the public record, and if so where?

Peter:

The \$12.5 will be at the end of this financial year, subject to one more decision but the bulk of that will be public record.

Darren Crawford:

And also on public record at the same time, at no cost to the rate payer. That is a fair whack.

Lois Levy:

There is a couple of questions that could get us into trouble, apparently. So, we are considering what to do with them.

Darren Crawford:

Should we look to getting an administrator appointed? Hopefully, well yeah okay. Raise hands, what do we reckon? Okay, so hopefully a vote of no confidence. The minister gets involved, we have an investigation, we can move on from there. Would you agree? This is going to depend on you guys getting those letters out and in. But I know it's more work that we have to do, but what's the alternative? You have a question down the front there sir? No, you cool? Any other questions from the floor?

Mona Hecke (from the floor)

Hi, my name is Mona Hecke. I stood at the council elections last year for division 10, which is Broadbeach, in this area. We also have a lot of concerns. We don't actually have a community group for our area, for the 4218 postcode. That encompasses Broadbeach, Mermaid, Sorrento, and right out to the flood plain now. Which is also a major concern because they are starting to send trucks into that area. Could you say the impact on the houses, which are currently aren't affected by floods and rains, but certainly will be in the future time. So, it's a really big concern, out into Carrara area as well. I'd just like to ask if there is anyone here in that postcode would like to be part of a community group, then please come and see us afterwards, because we'd like to do something in our area as well, to keep the momentum going. We have the problems that are happening in Coolangatta, with the density. In Broadbeach with 1m setbacks and 3 story podiums. They are happening at Nullapine, the potential development and the value of property in the Broadbeach area as well. I think it's a really important part of the Gold Coast that needs to be addressed. So, if anybody would like to be part of that group, that would be a really good area for some of us.

Darren:

Thank you, Mona. Are you going to stand again, next election? Are all the community groups here, all the people you see around you. They all work together and that is part of why we are here tonight. Because if we don't stand together, then we are going to fall,

right. we do have a question here which I probably should have asked earlier. Are there any bogies in here? Are there any representatives from the Mayor or other councillors here this evening, and if so just wink. Left already? Did he get my bit in - I hope so! I hope he listened to Peter.

Lois Levy:

Well ladies and gentlemen, you've heard tonight from many people who represent a lot of other people. And you can see that there are issues from one end of our city to the other. But I'd like to say to you, thank you for so much for all the fantastic work you are doing. You are really doing a great job. I know it's hard work, because I've been doing it for the last 30 odd years. And I know it's worthwhile because you make some fantastic friends, and things really do happen, and you do get successes. We will witness one, we will get our council to be more accountable, more ethical and more transparent. Maybe it won't be this council. Maybe something might happen, and we get a new council. Who knows. But I do know, if we work together and if we spread the word, that we will be successful and we will get the council that we deserve and the future of our city that we all work for. Thank you very much. Now please go and visit the tables around, and sign the petitions and things, if you haven't already done so.

[ENDS]