

Your local voice



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31 March 2017

Office of Deputy Chief Minister Berry
Legislative Assembly
Canberra ACT 2601

Presentation by the Housing Renewal Taskforce

Dear Minister Berry

The Weston Creek Community Council (WCCC) on behalf of the community of Weston Creek is writing to express their concern about the lack of consultation about the sites in Chapman, Holder and Wright which have been chosen for public housing developments. This lack of consultation is not only recent but has been over the last 5 months. Twice the Taskforce has been scheduled to present at one of our monthly public meetings but have withdrawn. In addition I have phoned several times without response.

It is not surprising therefore that the community was very concerned when the first notification was shortly after your media release. Information flyers were distributed to only a few dwellings in the immediate vicinity of the site, however the possible impact, and therefore concern is more widespread. The WCCC was only formally informed about the sites and possible number of dwellings at a meeting with the Taskforce on the same day.

This lack of opportunity to discuss the issues at an early stage resulted in a very large group of people attending our meeting on 29 March. The hall had a capacity of 60 which

we thought would be sufficient but this was an underestimate as close to 200 people wished to listen to the presentation and ask questions. Unfortunately we had to abandon the meeting. In good faith we advised those at the meeting that we would schedule another meeting at a larger venue where the Taskforce could make its presentation.

It is our opinion that if a meeting and presentation does not go ahead any hostility in the community would be heightened. We note the proposal to extend to 3hrs the 'Drop In' event to be held at the Community Hall in Coleman Court on Saturday 8 April also the suggestion of booked and timed interviews. However this would only allow consultation opportunities to a comparatively small percentage of the community who wish to comment

This was expected to be a heated meeting but without a chance for discussion we could not say who would have supported the proposal and who would not. We totally agree that members of the Taskforce should be treated with respect and not be abused. A statement was made about this at the meeting on 29 March and every effort would be made at a rescheduled meeting to ensure this would not occur.

Today we have been advised that a meeting with the Woden community is likely to go ahead on Wednesday 5 April. Unfortunately this could be construed by the Weston Creek Community as a clear disregard for their concerns and the value which is placed on their right to be appropriately consulted on such an emotive issue.

We request that you reconsider your decision to not allow a presentation to be made by the Housing Renewal Taskforce to the Weston Creek community at the earliest opportunity.

Pat McGinn

Acting Chair

Weston Creek Community Council