

YARRA GLEN & DISTRICT TOWNSHIP GROUP

Newsletter No 3

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Welcome to our first newsletter of 2007. The township group would like to wish all people connected with the Yarra Glen district a happy and healthy new year. Once again it promises to be a year of decisions within our part of the Yarra Valley with many projects on the go and many more in the pipeline.....

NEW CHINESE RESTAURANT

For those of you who haven't noticed, **Regional Fare**, the tourist food business operated by **Ron Harper** has been replaced by a new business, **Asian Appetite** which is in the final stages of fit out prior to opening early in this calendar year.

TWO NEW SHOPS FOR LEASE

Meanwhile, on the opposite side of the laneway, two new shops are nearing completion. The last time I looked, the "For Lease" sign was still on the shops so it may be some time before we discover what additions to the shopping mix in the town are achieved. The shops were connected to the gas lines last week so are nearly ready to go.

THE SUPERMARKET PROPOSAL

Most of you will no doubt be aware by now that council decided to refer the supermarket proposal to an independent Review Board who will hear submissions from all interested parties before reporting back to council with a recommendation. Councillor **Jeanette McRae** has advised that the preliminary hearing (to appoint board members and set up the judicial processes to be followed) should be held around the **12th February, 2007**. No doubt the invitation for submissions will be widely circulated so – if you wish to make a submission – make sure you keep your eye out for any publicity of the Review Board.

THE TOWNSHIP GROUP'S MEETING WITH YARRA GLEN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

A joint meeting of the YG&DTG and the **Yarra Glen Chamber of Commerce** was held late last year. The meeting was arranged after the Chamber expressed dissatisfaction with the way that the Township Group had been operating.

President **Marjorie Woollard**, Vice President **Chris Lamacraft** (a former member of YG&DTG), **John Lithgow** and **Joanne Spears** represented the Chamber of Commerce whilst the Township Group was represented by **Dorothy Barber**. **YG&DTG members Brett Shambrook, Melinda Koth** and **Stephen Shortis** (who are also members of the Chamber of Commerce) took part in the discussions. **Councilor Jeanette McRae** and **Ian Stewart** represented the **Shire of Yarra Ranges**.

An agenda, prepared by Chamber secretary **Frank Hoogenraad**, was read out by **Joanne Spears** and discussed at length. The Chamber reiterated their support for the Supermarket

complex whilst the Township Group explained the reasoning behind their neutral stance (as reported in our last newsletter) on this contentious issue.

YARRA GLEN BYPASS

The Chamber of Commerce and the Township Group both agreed that the Bypass was a high priority for the town and were disappointed that the community had missed out on having the project funded by the Federal Government under the Auslink funding. The Chamber of Commerce are endeavoring to ascertain the position of Federal Minister Fran Bailey in regards to further funding from the Federal Government to supplement the funding promised by the State Government.

COUNCIL STAFFING SUPPORT

One of the other items that the joint meeting did agree to was the need to write to the Shire expressing their concern that the Shire had not made any commitment to the ongoing employment of **Ian Stewart**, the Project Manager of the Lilydale-Healesville Rail Corridor Project (see below).

SUGAR GUMS V PLANE TREES?

Joanne Spears raised the issue of the proposed planting of sugar gums. She questioned why gums were being considered and spoke of the history of the vegetation in the Shire. Her concern was the lack of a consistent look, with numerous different types of plants but, more particularly the fact that the gums chosen have a tendency to shed limbs which raises safety concerns.

LILYDALE-HEALESVILLE RAIL CORRIDOR

The long awaited consultants report on this project was presented to council on 12th December 2006. The council embraced the preferred option of a tourist rail with a complementary community transport service together with a rail trail within the easement where possible and on a separate route where not. A three stage implementation is envisaged at a total cost of approximately \$23 million.

The shire is now putting together a Steering Committee to oversee this project. In addition, spraying of the blackberry and gorse which currently resides on and along the rail line will be sprayed over the next few weeks.

STATE OF ENVIRONMENT COMMUNITY SURVEY

An online survey to help the **Shire of Yarra Ranges** better understand the community's awareness, attitudes and behaviors toward the natural environment.

Links to the survey can be found at <http://www.yarraranges.vic.gov.au/surveyview/soe.asp>. Please note that the survey has to be completed by 12th January 2007 !!!!

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