
WELLINGTON CIVIC TRUST



www.wellingtoncivictrust.org

FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Members,

This first Newsletter is an opportunity both to thank you for your continuing support for the work of the Trust and to acknowledge my fellow Board members for accepting their roles for the year. A considerable amount of our effort last year went into the Hilton Hotel Appeal and raising the funds to cover the significant costs required for this. Again we are deeply grateful for your generous contributions which brought us within \$8500 of the target.

I want to now acknowledge the commercial appellants, and in particular the Intercontinental Hotel, who have contributed this balance to the Trust to wipe the debt. This enables us to start this new year debt free and to apply your subscriptions to the important work ahead. This starts with the Awards, and more about those elsewhere in the Newsletter. We are also in the process of responding to the Draft Waterfront Plan and engaging with the City on a design competition for the Outer-T of Queens Wharf. Having won the first battle we need to ensure the most outstanding use is realised for this iconic waterfront site.

Wellington's inner city has sprouted a growing number of cranes as developers respond to the apparently insatiable desire for apartments close to the waterfront and inner city amenities. The appeal of walking to work rather than commuting is probably another factor as fuel prices steadily increase. It emphasises the need for asserting high design standards as the city grows upwards and in intensity. Our Traffic and Transport Committee is looking at long term initiatives to realise this City's carbon neutral aspirations. Planning transport modes for the long term is not just about sustainability but also the quality of space, and pedestrian and cyclist comfort and safety.

Please keep us informed of your thoughts through our website so we as your representative Board can reflect what is important to our membership. We are committed to this being a great city in which to live and work.

Seddon (Chair)

ANNUAL REPORT FROM THE CHAIR: MAY 2008

I am very pleased to present to you the 2007-2008 annual report.

The year started with an ongoing commitment to work alongside Waterfront Watch on the case to the Environment Court to appeal against the construction of the proposed hotel on the outer T of Queens Wharf on our waterfront. The Trust's position was to uphold the Waterfront Framework which was drawn up by a group of Wellington community representatives appointed by the Mayor at that time, in 2000. The Framework was adopted by the City Council and Wellington Waterfront Ltd in 2001 as the guiding document for future development of the waterfront, and is incorporated into the City Council's district plan. The Framework is very explicit about the significance of the Outer T and, for this site only, stipulated that a competition should be held to explore options for what sort of structure –not necessarily a building– would be best for this site. The Framework also noted the importance of taking an integrated approach to both arms of the T. Quite apart from deficiencies, in our view, in the design of the proposed hotel, and the proposed handling of issues like traffic, the linchpin of our case was that the development did not comply with the standards set in the Framework. We were thrilled that this position was upheld by the Court, and the Appeal successful. I want to acknowledge the few who laboured tirelessly on this Appeal, notably Dianne Buchan and Neville Beach, along with our legal representation from Morrison Kent and our expert witnesses. But I also want to effusively thank the many who supported this Appeal, financially and in spirit. We could not have taken this on, and remained steadfast, without the knowledge that we had the support of our members, and many Wellingtonians. It has drained our reserves and we still have a deficit, but it is the generous contributions of our members that have made the difference between a manageable risk, and an impossibility. We have also to be grateful to Waterfront Watch for sharing the costs, and the Ministry for the Environment who contributed to costs.

This is not the end of the story, however, and in fact, this is just the beginning. Wellington Waterfront Ltd has now embraced the concept of a competition and we are looking forward in the coming year to supporting that, and enabling the wider public discussion and participation in this.

The year has not been a one issue focus for the Trustees. We also started the year publishing and distributing the proceedings of the Gateway Seminar, and I acknowledge Alan Smith for his role in that.

We met with the Mayor and Administration to discuss our concerns about the decision to move the Sports Facility from the Gateway area on Centreport land, where it had central access and ideal public transportation, and parking potentially shared with the Stadium, to a suburban site in Kilburnie. We had to accept the Council position in relation to immediate capital costs, although such matters do raise the question about how current citizens as rate payers can pay for the very best long term decision. This is particularly pertinent to matters relating to the transportation system and long term sustainability, as our carbon footprint becomes not just a city issue but part of a global responsibility.

During the year the Trust prepared submissions to the Draft Waterfront Development Plan 2007/08, the City Council's Adelaide Road Plan, and the Ngauranga to Airport Strategic Transport Plan.

Prior to the Local Body Elections we canvassed candidates for their positions on Transport, Urban Design, Environment and Heritage, and Public participation. These results went onto our website and were publicised.

We wrote to Council on a number of matters including the Capital Precinct (in the vicinity of Parliament), the Thai Embassy site in Thorndon, and the Auditorium size (which from our Seminar advocated 600-800 seats) in the New Zealand Music School proposed for the Jack Illott Green site.

The Trustees have shared the work through the Sub-Committees and I want to thank the Chairs and the committee members:

Chris Watson chairing the Traffic and Transport Sub-Committee, and Peter Brooks (with Dianne Buchan) chairing the Government Centre/Capital Precinct Sub-Committee.

Diana Shand coordinated a very successful Waterfront Apartment Tour in February to raise funds for the Environment Court Appeal. Our Trustees and friends all pitched in to help on the day.

Thank you to Bernie Napp who spent a day tutoring Trustees in publicity, public relations, and dealing effectively with the media.

David Pucher continued to do a great job compiling and printing the Newsletter, and chivvying the rest of us along for our contributions.

Callum Strong has worked on the Website which now has a completely refreshed look and will much more effectively serve our Members and those outside interested in our activities.

My grateful thanks also to Secretary Alan Smith who always promptly provides us with a comprehensive record of meetings and follows up on the work between meetings.

A big thanks to Peter Baillie who has just completed his tenth year as Membership Secretary, a job which requires much attention to detail and anyone who has seen Peter's handwriting will appreciate the flourish of his notes to members.

Finally I cannot say enough about the dedication of Dianne Buchan, who as Deputy Chair and Treasurer, as well as being Chair of the Civic Trust Awards Committee is a tireless advocate for the Trust. She has not only done more than her share, but has also covered for me more than I care to remember. We should also acknowledge Michael Moriarty, who behind the Treasurer has helped keep our books in good order.

It is with sadness that I acknowledge the decision by Peter Baillie and Neville Beach to stand down at the end of this year after sterling service.

Peter has been a member of the Board since 1997 and as well as being Membership Secretary has also served on two Civic Trust Awards Sub-committees and was on the organising committee for the Trusts 25th. Anniversary Celebrations.

Neville has been a member of the Trust since 1983 almost from the beginning, and has been a Board member since 1996 when he took up the role of Treasurer, until last year. He served as Chair from 1999 to 2001.

We are pleased to announce Peter and Neville as Life Members.

Finally, my thanks to our membership in general for your ongoing interest and support. The challenge for this organisation is to grow our membership and refresh it. The quality of Wellington's quality of life is nationally acknowledged and continues to attract an ever increasing inner city residential population. The role of advocacy for excellence was never more important, and we need to attract new members committed to this. It is time to refresh our membership and our image, and the incoming Board faces no small challenge.

Seddon Bennington
Chair

Waterfront Development Plan 2008/09

The draft Waterfront Development Plan has been released for public comment. The Trust has made a submission covering two areas where new work is proposed in 2008/09.

The plan envisages that during the year Wellington Waterfront Ltd (WWL) would seek resource consents for the redesign of **Frank Kitts Park**. The estimated cost of that work is \$4m.

WWL's revenue from commercial developments is lower than previously estimated. This is because commercial backers have not yet been found for sites on Waitangi Park and the Overseas Passenger Terminal is subject to a resource consent appeal. The failure of the Hilton Hotel development to gain resource consents from the Environment Court also means that expected lease payments will not eventuate.

This may only be a temporary revenue problem, but the Trust's view is that it would be prudent not to proceed further with the Frank Kitts project at this stage. The park is at present a much-used and popular public facility. While work on the site could only commence with Council approval the resource consent process is draining on the resources of applicants and of those wishing to make submissions. It would be better in our view if that process were not commenced unless and until there is a clear path to undertaking the project.

The second area on which we have made comments is **Queens Wharf**.

We have noted with pleasure that work is proposed to improve Hunter Street traffic control. We assume that WWL intends to install rising bollards which should have the effect of substantially reducing the number of vehicles accessing Queens Wharf around Shed 6. The Environment Court considered that this work "clearly needed to be done". We have also proposed that the conflict between cyclists and pedestrians in that area could be avoided if cyclists were required to use the waterfront lane between Kumutoto and Frank Kitts Park. This would require special attention to the needs of cyclists to avoid accidents with traffic coming to and from the underground car park, especially for child cyclists.

Another issue relating to Queens Wharf concerns the **outer-T**, the site of the failed Hilton Hotel project. In May we wrote to the Mayor proposing the procedures we would wish to see adopted to determine the future of the outer-T. We pointed out that no design brief had been established for the site, although this was the accepted procedure for all waterfront developments. Such a brief would, among other things, indicate how the framework principles could be applied to the site. We recommended that the draft brief should be open to public consultation.

As proposed in the waterfront framework a design competition should follow, and the approved design brief would be included in the documents issued to participants. We again proposed that the competition should involve the public both as participants and as critics of the submitted designs.

We have not had a reply to our letter. In June the Council held a workshop on the future of the outer-T but it was not open to the public or the media and Council rules forbade councillors from commenting on the event. We are hopeful that in the course of the Council's consideration of the draft waterfront development plan and the public submissions received, we will learn more about the outcome of the workshop and the Council's intentions for this special waterfront site.

It's Awards Time Again!!

The Wellington Civic Trust Award was established in 2002 to recognise projects which enhance the beauty and character of Wellington City. For this year's awards we have made big changes.

Five Different Categories

In previous years we have put all the nominations into two categories – community-based and corporate. Experience has shown that it is often very hard to make that distinction and also it is very hard to compare apples with pears so to speak and as a result many very worthy projects have missed out. This year we have revamped the Awards to create five different categories. Provided we get enough entries in each category that means there will be five separate Award winners.

In addition, rather than including sculptures in the projects that are adjudicated by the Civic Trust judges, we want the public of Wellington, and especially our members, to vote for their favourite sculpture. An award will then be given for "The People's Choice".

We will also have a Supreme Award which will be awarded to the winner of the winners. This project will receive a bronze plaque.

Eligibility

Because it has been three years since the last Awards, any project that has been completed since the last Awards presentation in August 2005 will be eligible for entry. The categories that projects can be nominated under are:

- Street Art: murals and authorised graffiti
- Building: new public, commercial or multi-unit residential development
- Heritage: restoration or preservation of a building or some other heritage structure or precinct project
- Environmental: projects that increase the ability of Wellington's natural environment to meet the needs of future generations and which enhance the quality of the living environment
- Public space: parks, streets and recreation areas.

Projects must be located within the geographical area that is the responsibility of Wellington City Council and preference will be given to projects that are of lasting value to the city. Projects must be freely accessible to the general public or have an impact on the public environment..

Adjudication:

Separate judging panels have been set up for each of the categories. These are:

Buildings: Michael Dudding (Chair), Bill Toomath, Tom Beard

Public Space: Michael Dudding (Chair), Yvonne Weeber, Rhys Williams

Heritage: David Pucher (Chair), Barbara Fill, Con Flinkenberg

Street Art: Callum Strong(Chair), Brad Williams, Kate Woods

Environment: Di Buchan (Chair), Clive Anstey and Cr Chris Laidlaw

Sculpture voting: Peter Baillie

Included with this newsletter is a nomination form. You may wish to nominate a particular project in more than one category. Please tick the category or categories you wish to nominate the project for. PLEASE USE A SEPARATE NOMINATION FORM FOR EACH OF THE PROJECTS YOU NOMINATE. You can photocopy the form if you want to nominate more than one project.

Also included in this newsletter is a voting form for the sculpture you think is the best.

PLEASE TICK ONLY ONE OF THE BOXES.

Everyone who nominates a project for an Award will receive an invitation to the Awards presentation evening at Te Papa on the 18th of September. It is shaping up to be a great night!!

Capital Centre

Last November the Trust made a submission to the Council's Strategy and Policy Committee regarding the Council's intention to discuss with the Government a proposal to develop and promote the area around Parliament as The Capital Centre.

We asked the committee to consider an alternative approach to that proposed. The Trust's view was that the proposal required to be more detailed and precise before the Government was likely to commit to being involved.

While unfortunately our submission has never been placed before the committee we have had discussions with individual councillors and relevant officers.

The meeting between the Council and ministers has not yet taken place. Although it appears that we have failed to convince the Council that its initial approach should be more focused we will be in a position to resume discussions once the reaction of ministers is known.

Annual General Meeting

33 members attended the AGM held on Monday evening May 26th at Turnbull House. Seddon's Annual Report (now posted on the website) noted the intensity of challenges faced during the year, and the hard work of members in successfully working through them.

Two long-serving Trustees retired from the Board – Peter Baillie and Neville Beach – and the AGM confirmed honorary life membership for both in recognition of their many contributions, most notably for Peter's work as membership Secretary and Neville's as Treasurer and as a past Chairman.

The meeting concluded with a presentation by Brent Efford. The video Wellington light rail NOW – using tram-train to mend a broken spine, which Brent had developed, highlights the problems which the city experiences through having a rail public transport spine which does not connect to the Wellington “growth spine” – the CBD, hospital and airport. This is one of the points being made in the Trust's submissions to the current Ngauranga-to-Airport Corridor study.

The new Board met for the first time on July 3rd, where officer roles were agreed. The new Board is:

Seddon Bennington Chairman

Di Buchan – Deputy Chair

Simon Brodie Treasurer

Alan Smith Secretary

Callum Strong Membership Secretary

Trustees: Chris Watson, Christine McCarthy, David Pucher, Gerry Coates, Peter Brooks, Sharmian Firth, and Tony Town.

New Board Members

Sharmian Firth

Sharmian Firth's background is in education and psychology, but she has spent the last 25 years in publishing – a few in her own small business while living in the Netherlands, and the past 18 years as an editor and manager in Dunmore Press. She has been the managing owner of this long-established, now Wellington-based company, for ten years. Although absent from the city for many years while living in the United States, Europe and most recently Palmerston North, she was born and educated in Wellington and now enthusiastically joins the board.

Peter Brooks

Retired. Trustee from 1987 to 2000. Special interest is the waterfront. Currently chair of the Trust's subcommittee on the Capital Centre.

Gerry Te Kapa Coates

Gerry Te Kapa Coates is a consulting professional engineer of Ngāi Tahu descent, and is currently the Managing Director of his own consultancy firm Wise Analysis Ltd. His expertise includes governance work, feasibility and policy work in the technical, energy and sustainability areas, strategic planning, ethical studies, forensic investigations, expert witness services, and writing on technical and policy issues.

He was President of the Institution of Professional Engineers New Zealand (IPENZ) in 2003-2004 leading a task committee on sustainability. In 1983 he founded the independent group Engineers for Social Responsibility (ESR), which continues its activities with some 200 members throughout New Zealand, and has encouraged similar groups overseas.

His current governance roles include chair of the New Zealand Wind Energy Association, Marine Energy Deployment Fund Evaluation Panel, Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, and formerly the New Zealand Centre for Advanced Engineering, IPENZ and Land Transport New Zealand.

He was made a member of the New Zealand Order of Merit for services to engineering in 2007.

Simon Brodie

Simon Brodie is the Chief Investment Officer of Tower Asset Management.

Christine McCarthy

Christine McCarthy teaches interior architecture at the School of Design, Victoria University, Wellington.

The Wellington Civic Trust.			
Chair:	Seddon Bennington		
Deputy:	Di Buchan		
Secretary:	Alan Smith		
Treasurer:	Simon Brodie		
Membership Secretary:	Callum Strong		
SUB-COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES 2008/9			
Civic Trust Awards		Traffic and Transport	
Di Buchan(chair)	Peter Baillie	Chris Watson (chair)	Gerry Coates
Michael Dudding	Callum Strong	Alan Smith	Diana Shand
David Pucher			
Capital Centre		Website	
Peter Brooks (Chair)	Alan Smith	Callum Strong	
Duncan Joiner	Blair Badcock		
Di Buchan			
District Plan Changes and Resource Consents		Newsletter	
Tony Town (Chair)	David Pucher	David Pucher	
Waterfront			
Seddon Beddington (Chair)	Peter Brooks		
David Pucher	Callum Strong		
Sharmian Firth	Di Buchan		
Publicity and membership			
Seddon Bennington	Sharmian Firth		
Callum Strong			