

Toolangi/Castella CRC Chair Report: March 2010

Overall, there have been some positive outcomes since my last report in December 2009, but also ongoing challenges for the CRC. In spite of stress, and some ill health, CRC members are all still active and involved with their different projects.

Achievements

Community Fireguard

- New groups are currently in training.

SMS System

- protocols have been agreed and published on www.toolangi.net
- About 770 messages have been sent since the system was activated, with 393 in the last 30 days (includes the last storm warning).
- Currently there are 131 mobile numbers registered on the system.

Event: Beach Party Australia Day

- Linked to remembrance and recovery, targeting teenagers and children
- 170+ attendance; with local teen DJ, ice creams, drinks, fish & chips.
- Vigorous participation in all activities – sand sculpture, races, beach volley ball & cricket, bungee run & jumping castle.
- Teenager Sarah Priestly spoke about the effect of the bushfires on local youth
- Special Community Youth Awards given to parents, to give to their children
- Made connections with bushfire affected youth from Chum Creek, Healesville and Glenburn

Event: February 7th Memorial Event

- Event in CJ Dennis Hall was well attended (200+), and well conducted.
- State Service was televised; Captain Merv Lincoln conducted a short remembrance ceremony; John Marshall spoke about his experience when community was isolated by fires & aftermath; Wantirna Rotary prepared & served lunch.
- There was misunderstanding between the CRC, Eventism, and the Shire regarding roles and responsibilities, and payment arrangements. Feedback has been given to Eventism, and a letter has been drafted to the Shire outlining CRC concerns.

Centennial Multipurpose Track

- A formal community consultation took place at CJ Dennis Hall on Thursday 25 February, 7.00-8.30 pm. Objections have been noted, and are being followed up by Shire.
- A MOU has been drafted for Project Steering Committee approval.

Mural. No information available at present

Challenges

The following projects are giving us various degrees of frustration and aggravation:

Public Transport

- Still experiencing difficulties: negative response from Tony Pakula, Minister for Transport, through the Transport Connections Program.

Garden Restoration Part 2:

- Invitations have been sent to community who attended the first garden event, inviting their participation in Part 2.
- The project to hard landscape and plant bushfire affected gardens will consist of approximately 37 working bees from March 2010 – March 2011; working on 40 – 60 fire affected gardens; people are working on each other's gardens, to 'qualify' for assistance with their own. Volunteers (external to the community) from different Church groups are being bussed in to work with us at weekends.
- A sawmill has been purchased.
- Funding has been held up, and is yet to come through..
- Extra funding to feed volunteers has been applied for, as it was not included in the original grant application budget estimate.
- Shire has recently raised the issue of insurance coverage – project activity now may not be covered by the Shire

Projects to be assessed:

Central Park

- CRC selected this project as a top priority
- Budget is now very limited, due to CRC having to prioritise projects.
- New concept drawings from another company should be available soon.
- Proposal from the sponsor of the park maintenance is being sent to Vic Roads for approval

Tennis Court Repairs

- A preliminary meeting for a Project Scope was held with Tennis Victoria at the Toolangi Tennis Courts, to get a cost estimate on upgrading the courts. A diverse range of community members attended that meeting.

Neighbourhood House Upgrade/Extension

- Originally included in the Childcare/Community Hub proposal, assistance is being sought to upgrade the Community House, due to OH&S issues as well as lack of proper disability access, and lack of dedicated classroom/meeting space.

Historical Park. No information available at present

Pomaderris. No information available at present

Margaret O'Connell
Chair, Toolangi/Castella CRC
11/03/2010