



VALLEY VOICE

TE REO HAPORI WAIMAPIHI

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM AROUND THE ARO VALLEY SEPTEMBER 2022

District Plans for Aro Valley

As I write this a small team - a sub-committee of the AVCC - is preparing a submission on the Draft District Plan notified on 18 July. It is a daunting and cumbersome process as these documents are not written with plain English in mind. We miss Roland's breadth of knowledge and understanding of the intricacies of district planning! The WCC have provided help - but it wasn't until well into the submission period that it was possible to navigate the spectrum of documents involved on screen. And there are many!

In Aro Valley, we currently have a number of official Heritage buildings and precincts, and these together with the WCC definition and boundaries of 'Character Areas' has meant that we believed that these elements would continue to be part of the new District Plan - essentially that our history and heritage would be included in the new Plan. However, the proposed District Plan dismisses well over 70% of those Character areas.

You've heard it said before: Aro Valley is not here by default. Our predecessors created this suburb, defined its boundaries and community of interest and wrote the rules that insisted that any new development allow sunlight in one window in the middle of the winter.

In our east-to-west facing valley, sunlight is often at a premium and that is no longer a relevant consideration in this draft Plan which will govern the way we build next to our neighbours in the future. A packed hall of Valley-ites was stunned by the scale of the proposed changes and that included many landlords and developers, one of whom noted, "I would never do that to my neighbours!"

We believe it is possible to achieve the underlying goals of increasing the accommodation options and creating affordable housing without a wholesale fire on heritage values and the character that creates community. Is there any real need to destroy the evidence of the Valley's growth, from the source of pure water flowing into a lusciously bountiful swamp into the one of the most densely populated and diverse suburbs in Wellington?

What are our options to mindfully grow our suburb while continuing to create a sense of place? It doesn't take much to imagine the impact of a poorly located 6-8 storied building and the resulting consequences on access to sunlight, our heritage buildings, the impact on our strained infrastructure and the neighbourliness of our community.

Is this how we want to welcome newcomers to the Valley?

At this very moment it's all about getting a legal document to pin down and protect the legal interpretation of all that we treasure. Working on it!

~ Jaqui Tutt (AVCC)



MEET THE CANDIDATES

COME ALONG TO THE
HOTLY ANTICIPATED
AVCC CANDIDATES MEETING 2022
WITH MC BRYAN CRUMP!

JOIN US:
THURS, 8TH SEPTEMBER
7-9PM
LYCHGATE FUNERALS CHAPEL
CNR WILLIS AND ARO ST

OR WATCH ONLINE VIA WEBLINK
VISIT AROVALLEY.ORG.NZ
FOR MORE INFORMATION

Local Copper Beech Now A Heritage Listed Tree

By Julia Stace (Resident)

Around upper Abel Smith Street and Aro Park are many fine trees. Over decades people who have noticed these fine trees have taken the time to put them on the WCC Heritage List. Heritage trees are listed in the District Plan, along with buildings and sites of historical importance.

These are mainly mature, exotic trees, which the early settlers planted to remind them of 'home'. Consequently we have the heritage listed magnolia, poplar, gum and plane trees of Abel Smith St and a Norfolk Pine, London Plane and a puriri in Inverloch lane. There is a Northern rata in Victoria St, opposite Liquorland, quite a sight when it flowers in November. On Aro Park is the huge gum tree planted in the 1970s when the old Catholic School site was occupied by the community, thwarting the plans of the Salvation Army to build their new citadel here. It is not listed, but is on WCC owned land, which protects it somewhat.

Among all these fine trees is one that stands out especially over spring, summer and autumn. It is a deciduous, copper beech, *Fagus sylvatica* 'Purpurea', whose leaves in summer are coppery, reddish black. At this time of year it is bare branched but soon, in spring, the leaves will appear.

It is in the back yard of 143 Abel Smith St, one of that phalanx of tall houses at the top of Abel Smith St.

From the street there is no sign of the thicket of trees in their back yards.



Come onto the basketball court and behind the derelict bunker – there it is – the tallest tree in the thicket. Checking the WCC Heritage List I was surprised to see this copper beech was not included.

With the permission of the owner of the house I requested that WCC list it in the District Plan. As the owner was willing, and the tenants allowed passage through their house to get to their backyard, measurements were taken – using the 'STEM' test – health of the tree/ amenity value / impact on landscape/ any notable features. The result – this tree is over 40 + years old and in good health, its amenity value as part of the leafy background to the park is obvious.

It passed the test and is included in the forthcoming WCC Heritage List in the District Plan.

Anyone can propose that WCC list a tree which they find significant, providing the property owner is agreeable. Heritage trees on private land need permission from WCC for anything more than minor trimming.

Unfortunately the opportunity to list only occurs when a new District Plan is being created, as was the case earlier this year

About half Wellington's listed trees are on private property, the rest in public reserves, berms, botanical gardens etc. Imagine the Valley without the street trees, the greenery around the park and the three fine oaks at 335 Willis St (listed). Trees soften and enhance the landscape in ways we take for granted until suddenly they have gone.

AVCC AGM

Saturday Sept 24th, 2-4pm
Philosophy House, 33 Aro St

**AVCC is seeking new
committee members!**

Do you live or work in Aro Valley?
**Have time to attend a monthly 2
hour meeting in person or by Zoom
and lend a hand to community
projects from time to time?**

Email community@arovalley.org.nz
for more info or turn up to the AGM!

Housing vs Heritage in Aro Valley?

As hopefully you all know now, big plans are afoot for the Aro Valley through the Government's Statement on Urban Development and the Council's District Plan.

Under the District Plan, the Valley loses 73% of its character protection and will allow buildings of up to 6 stories around most of the suburb. The heritage protection for the shops will remain however.

I believe that the question above is not the right one to ask; what we need to decide is how we protect what we love about the Valley whilst building more housing.

Now is your chance to tell the decision makers, independent commissioners appointed by the Council what your views are on these plans. Submissions are due 12th September and can be made here [Plans, policies and bylaws - Proposed District Plan - Wellington City Council](#).

Key issues that you might want to think about are:

- Expert advice from Boffa Miskell said much more of the Valley should be protected.
- How much more housing might be enabled through master planning of the Valley.
- Protection for the park from shading of big buildings (I got an amendment through to require an assessment of new buildings on sunlight).
- Whether there is adequate protection of green space and enough provision of transport and water infrastructure.
- Whether there is enough done to protect the community from natural hazards.

The important thing is not to provide a highly technical submission but one which talks about your vision for the suburb and how you think the community can best meet its needs. You can ask for help with your submission from Council: Plans, policies and bylaws - Need help? - [Wellington City Council](#)

If you want to chat about your submission or anything else get in touch at iona.pannett@wcc.govt.nz or on 021-227-8509.



VOTE 1

Iona Pannett
Pukehinau Lambton

Your voice in the Valley

Authorised by Iona Pannett
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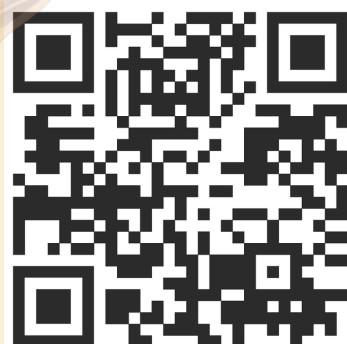
ARO VALLEY COMMUNITY CENTRE NEEDS YOUR HELP!

Construction of the revamped Aro Valley Community Centre is well underway and now it is time to find out what YOU would like to see in our new facilities.

Help us with the planning by taking this super short survey and let us know what you would like to see more of in our local community centre.

YOU COULD WIN A \$10 ARO BAKE VOUCHER!

**SCAN THE QR CODE
TO TAKE OUR SHORT
SURVEY**



With your support we can keep Aro Valley Community Centre providing excellent community events for you and your whanau!



VALLEY VOICE

All contributions and feedback to
community@arovalley.org.nz
or 027 267 0100

Valley Voice is published on behalf of
Aro Valley Community Council
48 Aro St, Wellington

Opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the writers and not of the Aro Valley Community Council (AVCC) unless adopted at a general meeting.

AVCC 2021 - 22:

Co-Chair(s): vacant

Secretary: Heather Mackay

Treasurer: Richard Skinner

Committee Members:

Lisa Thompson, Madeleine

Rashbrooke, Jacqui Tutt, Bridget

Stocker, Phaedra Brice-Chen,

Sarah Jane Parton, Mattie Timmer

Aro Valley Community Centre

Co-ordinator: Vorry Mahal

vorry.mahal@arovalley.org.nz

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ARO VALLEY COMMUNITY CENTRE HALL : UPDATE

Work continues on our much loved Community Hall. As is often the way in renovation projects, extra things are discovered and need to be fixed or addressed once the exterior is peeled back!

This has happened in the renovation of our Hall and the contractors have been doing extra work to repair the interior walls which suffered fire damage in their previous life.

Thank you to the team who are putting our new and improved Hall back together again. We can't wait to have it back once the work is done and dusted.



MARTIN WILSON : COMMUNITY CHAMPION

Long-time Holloway Rd resident and Community Champion Martin Wilson passed away on August 11th. Martin will be remembered for his passion and dedication to both the Aro Valley and Wellington Music communities. Martin kindly donated much of his events and sound equipment to the Community Centre in hopes it will be used to inspire the next generation of musicians, performers and events organisers.

His last words to me were "May there be more Block Parties!".

Haere rā e hoa. ~ Vorry Mahal (AVCC Community Coordinator).

A full tribute to Martin will appear in the next edition of Valley Voice.

VOTE Jane O'Loughlin for WELLINGTON CITY COUNCIL

Standing for smart sustainability

I'm a fresh, independent voice committed to building a functioning, collaborative council team that listens. Let's work together to build a city we can all be proud of.

Follow me on Facebook: JaneOLOWgtn or find out more about what I stand for on my website: janeoloughlin.nz

Authorised by Jane O'Loughlin | janeoloughlin.nz

