



general
purpose
committee

3
section

organisation
and
resources

GENERAL PURPOSE COMMITTEE - ORGANISATION & RESOURCES

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ORGANISATION AND RESOURCES

Meeting Date: 23 April, 2002

Item: **42**

ITEM: 42 **Approval for Interstate Travel**

SUBJECT DETAIL: Property Council of Australia - Cities Summit 2002 - Reclaiming Urban Australia.....NO MORE ACCIDENTAL CITIES

FILE NUMBER: GP027/001/GMA/OGD23LAX.G17

REPORT:

The Property Council of Australia “Reclaiming Urban Australia.....NO MORE ACCIDENTAL CITIES” Summit 2002 is being held in Brisbane, Queensland, from 23-24 May 2002.

The Summit will focus on issues affecting urban development and the commitment to advancing urban affairs policy within the development industry and government to make cities liveable, sustainable and appealing both to inhabitants and to investors. Sessions will include issues such as population growth -v- sustainability, liveable cities, and the Property Council push for a national urban policy.

Councillor Paul Rasmussen has indicated an interest in attending the Summit and, as the total cost will be approximately \$2,200.00 per delegate, in accordance with Council’s travel policy, approval for this is required.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council approve the attendance of Councillor Paul Rasmussen at The Property Council of Australia “Reclaiming Urban Australia.....NO MORE ACCIDENTAL CITIES” Summit 2002 in Brisbane, Queensland, from 23-24 May 2002.

ATTACHMENTS:

There are no supporting documents for this report.

oooO END OF ITEM 42 Oooo

ITEM: 43**Bellbird Hill Lookout**

FILE NUMBER: GC316/015 Pt5, P243/5425 Pt1, LEP005/98 Pt1, PK140
Pt2/CSV/OGD23LBX.C12

REPORT:

A report was presented to Council's General Purpose Committee Meeting on 28 January 1997 regarding the feasibility of developing a tourist facility at Bellbird Hill Lookout incorporating a restaurant/kiosk, viewing platform, amenities facilities, tourist information service and a forest walking trail within the property. This report was in response to an expression of interest called by Council for the leasing, licencing design and construction or purchase of part of the site for the purpose of developing a tourist facility incorporating the before mentioned components.

A further report was presented to Council's General Purpose Meeting on 28 April 1998 regarding a proposal from a Mr Bill Fitzhenry to develop a recreational facility on the Bellbird Hill Lookout site, incorporating amenities facilities, a kiosk, a viewing platform together with a toboggan slide and walking trails and that this proposal was supported in principle by Council. This proposal included a 60 (sixty) seat restaurant/kiosk and with the other facilities previously mentioned, the cost would be in the order of \$350,000 (three hundred and fifty thousand) excluding any fit out costs for the restaurant/kiosk, which would be added to this amount. No modifications for car parking were included within this estimate. This matter was subsequently deferred and it was resolved that a site inspection be carried out with the applicant present.

A further report was submitted to Council at its Ordinary Meeting on 8 September 1998 where once again the proposal from Mr Fitzhenry was reported. Within that report concerns were expressed from members of the community, particularly in relation to the environmental considerations, access and alienation of public open space. As a result, Council met on site with Mr Tom Uren, who advocated the concerns of the community and outlined his involvement in the provision of federal funds in the original purchase of the site. As a result, Councillors indicated a lack of support for the proposal incorporating a toboggan slide on the basis of the following:

- The proposal would alienate the large section of public open space on a significant site;
- The environmental impact on the proposal including noise, glare and the impact on the colony of Bellbirds on the site;
- Concerns with access from Bells Line of Road; and
- The fact that the development is not in the community interest.

It was subsequently recommended that Council determine not to pursue the particular proposal and suggested that consideration be given to the initial suggestion of the development incorporating a restaurant/kiosk, viewing platform, amenities facilities and tourist information services to be erected on the

site. The Department of Urban Affairs & Planning was subsequently informed of the decision not to proceed with the toboggan slide, but to continue with the draft LEP to reclassify the land and allow its use for a tourist facility.

In February 1999 a public hearing was conducted regarding the proposal to reclassify the land from community to operational and to allow the land to be used as a tourist facility. Council at its February meeting resolved to accept the report of the public hearing, amend the draft Local Environmental Plan as recommended by the Parliamentary Council, exercise its delegation in respect of the Section 69 report on Best Practice Guidelines for the Department of a draft Local Environmental Planning report, refer the draft LEP to the Department of Urban Affairs & Planning for gazettal and advise those who made submissions on the draft plan of Council's decision.

At Council's General Purpose Committee Meeting on 28 September 1999 it was reported that the draft plan, which was placed on exhibition and referred to the Department of Urban Affairs & Planning, had been declined by the Minister. This was due to his concerns about the physical constraints of the unserviced site in the highly visible location on the Blue Mountains Eastern Escarpment. The letter from the Department went on to inform Council that, should it wish to proceed further with a specific tourist facility on this land, a joint development application and LEP amendment should be prepared and that they should be exhibited concurrently under Section 79J of the Environmental Planning Assessment Act. The rationale for this suggestion was that it would enable a full environmental assessment of the site and the proposed tourist facility to be made concurrently so that the scale and the design of the development could be accommodated on the site without compromising public safety and visual impact. The Department then recommended that if Council wished to proceed with this course of action, then it should contact the Roads & Traffic Authority and the Department of Land & Water Conservation to ensure that their requirements were also met by such an application.

It was further reported that the only suitable development which may be allowed to be constructed on this parcel of land would be a small restaurant with associated car parking amenities facilities and a viewing platform. This has been previously investigated, kiosk designs prepared and cost undertaken. It was determined at the time however, that it was financially unviable to construct and operate such a facility of that scale. The only way that it may be successful is if Council was to receive a grant from the Government for the construction of the tourist information facility, or if there was private sector interest in the development. However, these options seem to be very unlikely because of the constraints placed upon this parcel of land from the Department of Urban Affairs & Planning.

At Council's December 2000 meeting, it considered a report regarding the possible location of the National Parks and Wildlife Service Information Centre on the Bellbird Hill Reserve and resolved to support the proposal and appropriately reclassify the land for this purpose on the basis that the Services would develop the information centre and associated offices within a period of two years. Council also resolved that they would work with the National Parks & Wildlife Service to try and ensure that this proposal became a city gateway. However, in August 2001, Council was advised that the National Parks & Wildlife Service preferred another site for this proposal, this site being the truck stop on the Bells Line of Road, approximately 6 (six) kilometres West of Kurrajong Heights.

If Council wishes to proceed with an expression of interest, the previous expression of interest would need to be amended to take into account:

- the proposed National Parks & Wildlife Information Centre and associated offices;
- the Minister's previous advice declining the reclassification from community to operational land;
- the requirement for a joint Development Application and LEP amendment;
- the Minister's concerns regarding physical constraint;
- the requirement to contact the Roads & Traffic Authority and the Department of Land & Water Conservation to ensure that their requirements are met by such an application; and
- that a suitable application may be limited to small scale development.

With regards to the timber decking, it has been previously reported to Council that to construct a 12 (twelve) metres by 4 (four) metres platform with materials which would be resistant to termite attack, it would cost in the vicinity of \$40,000 (forty thousand). Should Council wish to proceed with this project, it was also reported that it would be necessary to re-prioritise the capital works program to provide this funding.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the information be received.

ATTACHMENTS:

There are no supporting documents for this report.

oooO END OF ITEM 43 Oooo