

Heritage Planner's Forum 16/3/07- Minutes
Venue: Waitakere City Council

Present: Vanessa Tanner- ARC, Megan Patrick – ARC, Alina Wimmer – Waitakere City Council, Michael Riley – Waitakere City Council, Naomi McCleary- Waitakere City Council, Sarah Dwyer – Christchurch City Council, Amanda Ohs – Christchurch City Council, Aranne Donald – North Shore City Council, Leslie Verhuis – North Shore City Council, Alexandra Teague – Wellington City Council

Apologies: Auckland City staff, Ian Lawlor – ARC, Robert Brassey – ARC, Ryan Bradley – Rodney District Council, Raewyn Sendles – Franklin District Council, Julia Forsyth – Selwyn District Council, Betty Connolly – Waikato District Council, Richard Frizzell – Nelson District Council

- Meeting started with tea/coffee and welcome at around 9.30am
- 10-11.30am joint presentation from the Waitakere City Arts Manager: Naomi McCleary and Cynthia Smith, McCahon House Trust. The presentation focussed on the works achieved by McCahon during his period of residence in Titirangi from 1953-1960 which were some of his most formative years of his artistic career. McCahon House is located at 67 Otitori Bay Road, French Bay.
- The house and land (including an adjoining block of land) were purchased by Waitakere City Council for development as an artists residence and to restore the former house owned by McCahon. Fortunately, the house was not modified much by the artist who lived in it from when the McCahons sold the property. The rooms and most of the house were intact – very unusual given the bach character of the residence and the 'gentrification' of the Ranges that took place in the 1980s-1990s.
- Although the land and house were purchased by Council this was handed over to the Trust who were able to seek funding for the project. Key to this was the employment of a full time staff member principally aimed at securing funding for the project and project managing the restoration of the house. The McCahon House Trust is affiliated with the Lopdell House Gallery and arts precinct in Titirangi and tours are offered to a range of groups from schools to various interest groups and the general public.
- Graeme Burgess from Burgess Treep Architects was involved in the restoration of the house and installation of interpretive material in the house. This has been complimented by the modern new artists residence.
- **Presentation on the Old New Lynn Hotel by Michael Riley and Alina Wimmer** focussed on the history of the building as one of the oldest staging posts and Hotels in West Auckland and its gradual deterioration as the previous owners neglected the building over several decades. This resulted in an application to Council to demolish the building and subsequently a decision in 1999 to purchase the property despite known structural integrity issues.
- The building and two adjoining lots were purchased at the end of 2005 and a conservation plan together with engineer's drawings for the structural upgrading of the building have been prepared. An archaeological report was also commissioned – details of remains have been located and identified.
- Council's solicitors have prepared a heritage covenant that would be entered into between a prospective purchaser/developer and the Council that would ensure the building's retention and protection of heritage features of the site.

- This project is probably at the “edge” of the types of buildings that Councils would get involved in as it is virtually demolition material after having suffered two fires and severe neglect.
- Council has advertised for expressions of interest – it may be possible for a third party to finance the restoration of the building provided that they can make a profit from the re-development of the remainder of the site.
- **Aranne Donald made a presentation on North Shore City Council’s Proposed Plan Change 21** for the Residential 3 area that comprises Devonport, Northcote and Birkenhead areas. There has been community concern over the changes to various iconic and neighbourhood buildings over the last 10 years particularly given the Council’s limited ability to regulate controlled activities. This resulted in the virtual demolition of a heritage building except for two bay windows and the re-development of the rest of the house in Devonport in the last two years.
- North Shore commissioned surveys of local residents, area studies by Matthews and Matthews and worked with Greg Mason, a PhD student who researched around 250 Council property files. A workshop with Councillors and photos of design issues was pivotal in getting a resolution from Council to proceed with a Plan Change that means that the height of fences will be limited, the entire exteriors of buildings (not just the front facades) will be protected and there will be visually permeable sites.
- Expect that there will be appeals from those who have found it profitable to re-develop sites in heritage areas, house removal companies and some sectors of the community who do not support regulation.
- Revised and expanded assessment criteria and in the process of developing staff training for consents staff that process applications to ensure that they understand the new provisions, their intention and what to look for.
- Working towards better standards for consent applications that should provide details of materials and finishes to be used on plans amongst other projects.

Round robin

- **Wellington City Council** – preparing a proposed plan change that will add about 30 plus buildings to the heritage list (there are over 500 already).
- Assessing buildings considered to be at risk of either re-development or demolition. This is based on consent applications and other screening techniques.
- Interested in adding more post WWII buildings to the schedule and state housing that is not well represented.
- Ngaio – suburban railway housing area has been recognised as important.
- Another Plan Change for the Central Area will provide greater protection for Cuba street, the Parliamentary precinct and tighten up heritage rules.
- Docomomo group suggests that modernist buildings from the 1950s and 1960s are most at danger of re-development as heritage has traditionally focussed on Victoriana.
- Wellington City Council
- **Christchurch City Council** requires conservation covenant for grants over \$50K.
- Repts agreed that covenants are only worth putting in place for large grants
- Christchurch is preparing a Plan Change that will strengthen objectives and assessment criteria. This should be notified this year. The Section 32 report is due mid-year. The Plan Change will add about 60 new listings and 120 places have been researched. This has been undertaken by a mix of in-house staff and consultants. Currently 583 buildings are listed and the Plan will include

thematic items and more modern buildings. Historic gardens and settings are important to be included.

- Reminder that this year's UNESCO heritage conference was being hosted in Christchurch with events due to run from 22nd June to 1st July for the conference and heritage week.
- Heritage incentive fund for Christchurch is approximately \$900K. This fund receives around 30 applications per year and is also used for rates relief. This fund now extends to the Banks Peninsula area as it has been amalgamated with Christchurch City Council.
- **Auckland Regional Council** have advertised for two additional staff members.
- Ian Lawlor is involved in submissions and preparing evidence for the Long Bay Structure Plan.
- Heritage celebrations planned in the Auckland region on April 18th and June 4th.
- NZ Archaeological Association Upgrade Scheme is well underway in the Auckland region.
- ARC have been developing a method of monitoring sites on regional parks. This involves GPS of sites and it is intended that this work can be undertaken by park rangers in the future. ARC have been working on simplifying recording of sites.
- Regional Policy Statement to be reviewed. Heritage team would like to develop a schedule of regionally significant places – this currently exists for natural heritage but not cultural heritage.
- **North Shore City Council** – Earthquake policy – trying to get some consistency between Auckland Councils.
- Signalman's House at Mt Victoria was built in 1898 – once conservation plan was prepared realised that there was still a lot of original fabric in place. It was proposed to be a writers residence.- Aranne's advice has been to minimise changes to the house and to reduce proposed parking and garaging on site. The site is visible from the sea and there were no additions since 1898. This has meant that the washhouse was converted into a studio but the rest of the house has largely been left intact.
- 27 Lake road Takapuna – old gas works & brickworks sites – all that is left is the clay store. Simple early concrete structure. Design competition was held in the 60s and the site was used as a d.i.y space. It has cultural values and the Council wants to re-develop it. Heritage division working with property services over this issue.
- Victoria Theatre in Devonport – purchased as it was not viable as a cinema. Requires seismic upgrading. Potential adaptive re-use but the person who wishes to use it as a theatre wants to separate it into 4 theatres. Two other groups are interested. North Shore City Council does not want to be the long term owner of the property.
- Pumphouse in Takapuna has a tall chimney similar to Victoria Park – needs to be structurally strengthened. Heritage staff with expertise in architecture are spread too thinly – need to keep tabs on a number of projects.
- Long Bay structure plan is in the northern-most part of North Shore. A Proposed Plan Change was prepared in 2004 and archaeological matters were inadequately addressed in the first instance by Council's consultants. The matter is before the Environment Court as much of the area was a seasonable encampment from the 15th – 19th century and has layers of Maori and later European occupation.

Next Planners Forum to be hosted by Nelson or Wellington – waiting to hear back from Nelson staff.