



PORT COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS FORUM MEETING

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 30 MAY 2006

1. PRESENT AND APOLOGIES

PRESENT: Steve McGuire, Ross Island Residents Association
Vern Veitch, NaREF
Roy Shearer, Small Vessel Operator
Allison Hope, MICDA
Tania Thoreau, MICDA
Thea and Peter Hiskins, TRAC
Richard Perkins, Urban Quarter Apartments
James McLellan, NQCC
Frank Dallmeyer, Townsville Enterprise Limited
Paul Holden, Townsville Enterprise Limited
Arwen Rickert, Environment and Behaviour Consultants
Barry Holden, TPA
Ranee Crosby, TPA
Lesley McMahan, TPA
Catherine Hobbs, TPA
Melinda Loudon, TPA

APOLOGIES: Peter Mellor, DSDI
Jackie Hutchinson, Jupiters Hotel and Casino
Frank Hynard, Metro Quays Apartments
Glenys Schuntner, Townsville Enterprise Limited
Brian Pickup, Sunfish NQ
Leigh Turner, South Townsville Neighbourhood Watch Committee

2. AGENDA ITEMS

2.1 Eastern Access Corridor Update (Arwen Rickert)

Arwen Rickert provided a brief overview of the status of the proposed Port Access Corridor. She stated that flood modelling and an environmental management plan have now been completed. There will be a public display in September where the proposed design work will be presented. She stated that there would also be a ten day community consultation program taking place in June or July. This program would be advertised prior to commencement.

Members were informed that the Department of Main Roads plans to put in a bid for the construction of the Eastern Access Corridor in the 2009 round of Auslink funding.

Vern Veitch enquired as to whether future sea level rises have been incorporated into the design work for the road? Arwen Rickert replied that it had not.

Vern Veitch also stated that a ten day community consultation period for community groups is too short a time span. He also enquired as to whether the prawn farm will be rehabilitated as part of the process. Barry Holden stated that the Authority plans to rehabilitate the old prawn farm site as part of the whole process of the Eastern Access Corridor.

2.2 Proposed Alumina Refinery (Barry Holden, TPA)

Barry Holden gave a brief overview of the situation with the proposed Alumina refinery. He said that it would mean double the trade for the Port.

Paul Holden from Townsville Enterprise Limited stated that they are involved in ongoing consultation with the Chinese company, CHALCO. The company's proposal needs to be with the Queensland Government by the end of June and the Government should get back to CHALCO in August. Once CHALCO choose a preferred location an environmental impact study will begin. This process should take approximately 12-to-18 months. If the project does not meet the environmental standards it will not go ahead.

Frank Dallmeyer from Townsville Enterprise Limited stated that the decision on which location to choose lies firmly in CHALCO's hands.

Barry Holden added that each of the three proposed locations; Townsville, Abbot Point, and Gladstone, will be subject to the same environmental conditions.

James McLellan from NQCC asked whether the Port of Townsville would be equipped to manage the extra trade. Barry Holden replied that the Authority would need to make changes including building a new berth. Each of the three locations would need to make changes to accommodate the project. However, he said that there seem to be more advantages for the refinery to be located in Townsville. He also pointed out that it is a refinery and not a smelter.

James McLellan asked whether CHALCO had signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Queensland Government to investigate the possibility of a smelter in the future.

Paul Holden replied that they had signed an MOU. However, this does not guarantee that it would go ahead.

2.3 Townsville Region Export Awards (Barry Holden, TPA)

Barry Holden reported that the Townsville Region Export Awards had been launched in May. Ms. Lindy Nelson Carr, Member for Mundingburra, officially opened nominations for the awards. The launch also included an address by Townsville Port Authority Chairman, Ron McLean, and Jeff Landels from Southern Cross Fertilisers, one of last year's winners.

During the launch, Townsville Port Authority confirmed its sponsorship of the Townsville Region Export Awards for 2006.

Applications for the Townsville Region Export Awards close on Monday, 31 July 2006.

Barry Holden advised that the value of exports from the Port of Townsville exceeds \$3 billion each year, which amounts to more than 12% of the value of Queensland's exports.

2.4 Ross Creek Boat Ramps (Barry Holden, TPA)

Barry Holden stated that the Authority has decided to make some changes to the Ross Creek boat ramp parking arrangements as a result of complaints regarding cars parking without a trailer in the car park. However, he stated that these changes would not be made for a couple of months as there are a lot of tradespeople working on the Island who need somewhere to park during the week.

Vern Veitch stated that the car park was almost full on a particular Sunday, with a number of cars parked without trailers. Barry Holden stated that these cars were more than likely fined for parking there at weekends.

Vern Veitch enquired as to the possibility of handing over responsibility of the car park to the Coastguard. Barry Holden stated that the Authority had already examined this option and decided that it was not viable. This option was excluded based on the insufficient resources at the Coast Guard to manage this arrangement. If the option included paid parking with Coast Guard retaining revenue, there would still be disadvantages of paid parking. The cost in establishing parking meters outweighed revenue to be received. This also has the disadvantage of people parking without trailers at all times (i.e. people have paid to park, and therefore consider they are entitled to park there at all times, including weekends and public holidays).

Vern Veitch stated that there are over 9,000 registered boat owners in Townsville with only one suitable ramp for large boats. He enquired as to whether there would be funds to improve these facilities?

Barry Holden stated that the Authority maintains the ramps, and also cleans and maintains facilities on the freehold land area such as car parking, toilets, water, lighting, etc. The Authority does not receive any funding or revenue for managing the public boat ramps facility, but it does pose a very significant cost to the Authority.

Tania Thoreau from MICDA enquired as to whether additional car parking spaces could be made available?

Barry Holden stated that there would not be any more made available. He stated that there is additional car parking in the area but people don't want to pay for parking. He also stated that the Authority have submitted plans to Government for new boat ramps in the future.

2.5 Land Use Plan Update (Catherine Hobbs, TPA)

TPA is still operating under a Land Use Plan which is ten years old. A Statement of Proposal is primarily a consultation tool that provides the opportunity for the community to gain a clear understanding of the major issues and challenges within and surrounding the port area, and to make meaningful contribution towards determining how the Land Use Plan will respond to those issues and challenges.

The format of the document will be:

1. Introduction
 - Purpose of the Statement of Proposal
 - What the Land Use Plan means for the community
 - Process for preparing the Land Use Plan and Further Opportunities for Community Input
 - What the Land Use Plan is required to do
2. Form of the new Land use Plan
 - General Approach
 - Proposed Format
 - Desired Environmental Outcomes
 - Measures
 - Regional and Local Context
3. Townsville Region
 - Geographical Features
 - Population / Demographics
 - Relationship to Adjoining Townsville City Council
4. The Port
 - About the Port
 - Current Port Trends
 - Imports
 - Exports
5. Core Matters
 - Land use and Development
 - Proposed Response to Land Use and Development
 - Port Facilities
 - Proposed Response to Port Facilities
 - Valuable Features
 - Proposed Response to Valuable Features
6. Where to From Here
 - Consultation about the Statement of Proposal

Members will be updated on the preparation process at future Port Community Partnerships Forums. The Statement of Proposal (1st document) will be released to all port customers in August 2006. For further information contact Catherine Hobbs – Planning Officer on (07) 4781 1601.

2.6 Environmental Park Works (Melinda Louden, TPA)

Townsville Port Authority has engaged contractors to provide approximately 2.6 km of concrete paths to both Stage 1 and Stage 2 of the Environmental Park. The work is bounded by Archer Street to the northwest and Boundary Street to the southeast.

At completion, the project will deliver a two metre wide walking track designed to enhance accessibility of the park to the wider community so that full enjoyment of the coastal theme planting may be achieved. The works will be complete by the end of June 2006.

The present project follows on from previous works which has seen coastal theme plantings over an 8-hectare area.

Furthermore, the Authority has also set aside funds to undertake additional works such as interpretive signage, installation of seating and further plantings during the coming financial year.

Members were asked to be aware that whilst works are in progress the area is a construction site and ordinary workplace health and safety rules and obligations apply.

Also, since the project's inception there has been vandalism and theft in the area and members were asked to report any sightings of vandalism or damage to the Authority.

3. GENERAL BUSINESS

3.1 Thanks

Vern Veitch thanked the Authority for continuing with the Port Community Partnerships Forum meetings. He stated that he finds them very useful as a source of information and an opportunity to air any problems.

3.2 Keith Thompson Land

Steve McGuire stated that somebody has been keeping truck tyres on the old Keith Thompson land but removed them before the EPA could investigate.

Barry Holden stated that the Authority is not responsible for that particular patch of land.

3.3 Live Cattle Cargo

Thea Hiskins from TRAC stated that she was not happy with the Port of Townsville facilitating live cattle exports.

Barry Holden stated that this was a legitimate trade and that there are very strict laws regarding the transport of animals. He stated that a few years ago the Port of Townsville facilitated a large number of live cattle exports and that the number has dwindled in recent years. He also stated that he expects the number to increase in the future. In addition, he stated that media reports of poor conditions on board livestock vessels were not consistent with his knowledge of these vessels servicing the Australian trade.

Thea Hiskins stated that if live cattle are exported it sends jobs overseas.

Lesley McMahon stated that if Australia doesn't export the cattle then another country will.

3.4 South Townsville Residents

Steve McGuire stated that some residents were still cleaning grass clippings from their houses as a result of hovercraft operations during the recent US navy visit. He asked if they could be provided with a warning prior to a similar operation in the future.

3.6 Feedback Surveys

Members were advised that the Authority has carried out its annual customer, community, and employee feedback surveys. Barry Holden noted that the results are generally favourable but the Authority is not as well known amongst the community as it would like to be.

3.7 110 Year Anniversary Celebrations

Members were advised that the 110 Year Anniversary Celebrations would take place on 17 August 2006.

3.8 Ross Creek Presentation

It was agreed that Lesley McMahon would ask DJ McKenzie from Townsville City Council to make a presentation at the next meeting.

4. NEXT MEETING

The timing of the next meeting is to be confirmed. It is preferable to host the meeting at the same time the Department of Main Roads launches design plans for the Eastern Access Corridor.

5. CLOSE OF MEETING