



northern
beaches
council

MY PLACE: MONA VALE PROJECT WORKING GROUP

MINUTES

Held online via Zoom

Wednesday 23 February 2022

Minutes of the My Place: Mona Vale Project Working Group Meeting 1

Held on Wednesday 23 February 2022

Online via Zoom

Commencing at 6pm

ATTENDANCE:**Committee Members**

Laurie Bimson	Aboriginal and/or Torres Straight Islander
Ashley Carlson	Arts and Culture
Jillian Macintyre	Environment and/or Heritage
Gordon Richards	Inclusionary and Disability
Jeffrey Quinn	Local Business owner/operator
Shayna Price	Local Business owner/operator
David Sparke	Mona Vale Chamber of Commerce
Lauren Jones	Tourism industry owner/operator
Andrew Hjorth	Mona Vale Surf Life Saving Club
Ross Smith	Resident Association (Friends of Mona Vale)
Marcia Rackham	Resident Association (Mona Vale Residents Association)
Peter Blanchard	Resident Association (Bayview Church Point Residents Association)
Mark McLaughlin	Local Resident
Allison Francis	Local Resident
Paige Jeanneret	Local Resident
Will Cassell	Youth Advisory Group
Azaniah-Kaitlyn Afualo	Youth Advisory Group

Councillors

Miranda Korzy	Pittwater Ward Councillor
Michael Gencher	Pittwater Ward Councillor
Rory Amon	Pittwater Ward Councillor

Council Staff

Louise Kerr	Director, Planning & Place
Andrew Pigott	Executive Manager, Strategic & Place Planning
Anne-Maree Newbery	Manager, Strategic & Place Planning
Nikki Griffiths	Manager, Place & Economic Development

Brendan Gavin	Principal Planner, Strategic & Place Planning
Jeanne Thuez	Planner, Strategic & Place Planning
Allison Cooper	Ward Coordinator, Place & Economic Development
Trish Chaney	Community Liaison Officer, Office of the CEO

WSP Australia

Roz Palmer	Project Manager
Steve Rossiter	Facilitator

Apologies

Laurie Bimson	Aboriginal and/or Torres Straight Islander
Ashley Carlson	Arts and Culture
Will Cassell	Youth Advisory Group
Azaniah-Kaitlyn Afualo	Youth Advisory Group
Adonna See	Principal Planner, Strategic & Place Planning

Disclaimer:

These Minutes reflect a summary of the key areas of discussion that took place during the PWG meeting.

All opinions expressed by PWG members are solely their opinions and do not necessarily reflect the views, directions and strategic approaches of Northern Beaches Council or indicate a commitment to a particular course of action.

1.0 Welcome

A welcome, Acknowledgement of Country and thank you was provided and apologies noted.

2.0 Members introductions and activity

WSP described the PWG function as a focus group of community representatives, to share and test ideas. PWG members gave a brief introduction about themselves and were asked to select a stock photo that captured their greatest hope for Mona Vale in the future that was shared with the group.

3.0 What is the Place Plan trying to accomplish?

Council is working with the community collaboratively to create great places that are safe, vibrant, inclusive and sustainable. Council is using the My Place process to determine how we go about planning and designing our centres.

The development of the Mona Vale Place Plan is informed by a number of strategic plans and policies. At a high level the Greater Sydney Commission's North District Plan provides regional direction and policies for the entire Northern Sydney region. At a Council level there is also a number of relevant documents such as Council's Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) *Towards 2040*. The LSPS guides land use planning for the Northern Beaches over the next 20 years. The Community Strategic Plan (CSP) *Shape 2028* is also relevant as the development of the Mona Vale Place Plan is identified in CSP that sets out Council's commitments for the next 10 years and the associated Delivery Program that identifies funding commitments for 4 years.

Overview of past community engagement

Place Score Survey and Care Factor reports were undertaken in 2018 for Mona Vale to answer the question: what does the community love and value? This was captured in the Place Experience Assessment.

What the community loves and values:

- Natural environment.
- Cleanliness of public space.
- Ease of walking.

Areas to be improved:

- Evening activities.
- Lack of local history and public and community art.
- Lack of unique buildings and public spaces.

Overview of constraints to work within the Place Plan:

- State housing targets.
- State job targets.
- Council's Local Planning policies e.g. Northern Beaches Local Housing Strategy.
- Mona Vale is identified as a Centre for Investigation in Council's Local Housing Strategy.

Trends in population growth: If those trends continue the increased demand for cycling and safety has to be a major consideration as well as infrastructure considerations.

PWG Member commented that not enough engagement with the local business community has occurred. Their voices will be critical in this process.

4.0 Site analysis

WSP led the participants through the site analysis undertaken to date, including mapping of environmental, social, commercial, regulatory and other factors that will inform the Place Plan (e.g. topography, existing business and service locations, land use and zoning). Participants then mapped other opportunities and challenges they see in Mona Vale and participated in a simultaneous discussion. The following inputs were made in the discussion and through the interactive map:

- Mona Vale has a traditional industrial area. We need to be creative/not just hospitality and retail.
- Interest in connecting the industrial area to the CBD.
- Opportunities to diversify use of light industrial area with mix of commercial/office space.
- Zoning changes in the light industrial area could allow for affordable housing (Note by Council – the industrial area will need to be retained as an industrial/employment area).
- Bring back the corner store. Not the big retail business.
- Young people need places to be. Need for an Arts Hub.
- Need pedestrian/cycling infrastructure. Improving bicycle paths in the CBD and connections to the beach.

- Improving streetscapes in the light industrial area might make the area more appealing, similarly, creating nature strips throughout the CBD.
- Creating sustainable lighting to reduce light pollution at night.
- Improving laneway access and vibrancy with more cafes, restaurants, and bars/live music venues to improve connection and create village feel.
- Prioritising green space and connecting to nature will support health and wellbeing outcomes for the community.
- Should be able to walk into town – this is especially important for older people.
- Wider and better footpaths would improve traffic. Need to be able to walk a pram into the centre. People use walkers too, so from a disability lens, good footpaths will get everyone out on the street.
- Disability access to beaches.
- Need for more housing diversity and affordable housing. Increasing prices mean young people can't stay.
- Lot 3 and Bowling club could be included in Kitchener Masterplan to increase green urban space.
- Young people can't afford to stay. One member noted she wants to raise her family in Mona Vale and it isn't a realistic expectation; it's going to be a big adjustment for everyone since those who make it so fantastic can't stay here and it will change the demographic. Some members agreed.
- Without affordable housing, the funky and fun are going to leave.
- There is nothing to do for the 18-35 year olds. Many move away, and come back in 30s. To have a healthy community there needs to be representation across all age brackets; we need all of the groups together as our central concern, including older people, who may struggle with isolation. Everyone needs something they can downsize from their house into.
- We need to discuss housing diversity.
- We have the B-line – let's be smart about it. We have schools and preschools.
- Families are more open to living in [apartment] units today. Need 3 bed unit for young people; especially in order to work from home with one room able to be used as a study. A lot of families would be happy to live in that typology.
- Diversity of living arrangements is needed for Mona Vale and its future. Older residents, retirees have the money to spend and put income into town centres, so they have a place too in the dynamic. Particularly women who are over 60 and single; this is currently the largest group of people becoming displaced.
- During the day you want to see Mona Vale filled with people.
- A youth community hub linked to the skate park could provide space for kids to gather. Other venues/locations like the skate park that attract kids to get outside and play should be encouraged. Sporting and arts clubs could provide these opportunities.

- Planning indicates we only need another 275 dwellings (to 2036); Ingleside is not going ahead, so that's another 900+ that Council needs to find. (Note by Council – Refer to Northern Beaches's [Local Housing Strategy](#) for more information).
- Important to have a diversity of demographics. People need to be able to live in the area they work (e.g. childcare).
- Where there used to be an average of 4.5 people per household, it's now 1.3. Opportunities to better plan for flooding and set up stormwater runoff and reuse infrastructure. (Note by Council – 2016 Census Data says Mona Vale has an average of 2.7 people per household)
- The Mona Vale Hospital site should be rebuilt and maintained as a level 3 public hospital with supporting services situated nearby to form a health precinct at a centralised location. Expanding hospital and other medical services will be important to meet increasing demand from a growing population. The Mona Vale Hospital should be renamed because it is not a hospital.
- Opportunities to encourage local tourism to the area through festivals, shopping etc., improved parking and public transport will be an important step.
- A participant asked what is the definition of Affordable Housing, which is defined in Council's Affordable housing policy ([found at this link](#)).

Challenges:

- King tide floods Mona Street, we need to plan for the future.
- Heavy traffic around schools.
- Main road through MV town centre is a barrier to pedestrian connectivity.



5.0 Discussion: Place Plan Principles and Guiding Vision

WSP reminded participants of the Northern Beaches Council Community Strategic Plan (CSP) vision: “Northern Beaches – a safe, inclusive and connected community that lives in balance with our extraordinary coastal and bushland environment.” WSP then asked participants how the Mona Vale Place Plan could move the higher-level CSP vision forward to serve the specific needs of Mona Vale. WSP also asked if there was anything the broader CSP vision misses that the Place Plan should capture?

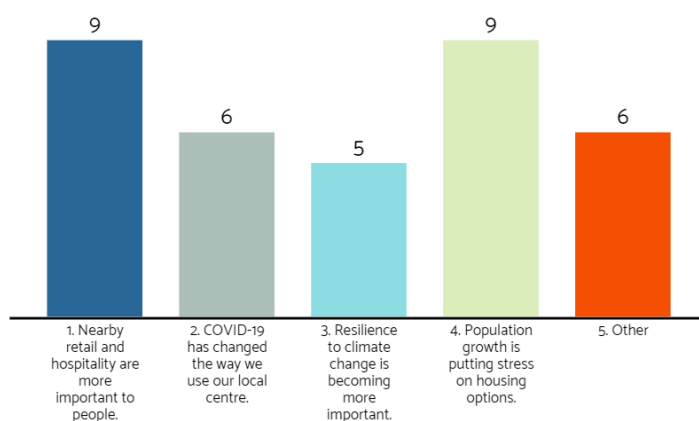
The participants commented:

- Mona Vale is described by Greater Sydney Commission, North District Plan as a designated Hub for the north part of the Northern Beaches.
- Importance of considering climate impacts, particularly with rising sea levels which put the town at risk.
- Landscaping that reflects Mona Vale’s coastal context.
- Decisions relating to the environment should consider the natural environment as a whole, not just bushland.
- Emphasis on Mona Vale having a big village centre. This must be part of an approach to improve community connection.
- Diversity is an important part of Mona Vale and must be preserved.
- Growth in the Mona Vale area should occur through leveraging existing strengths, such as tourism, and developing new sectors that make sense for the area and can build demand for the business community.

6.0 Discussion: Balancing Preservation and Change

WSP provided a brief exploration of recent global trends that are affecting our local centres, like COVID-19, climate stresses and extreme events, and population growth. Participants were asked to take a poll on which trends they thought were most relevant to Mona Vale, and then discussed what some of the other trends affecting Mona Vale are.

Which of the trends do you think are relevant to Mona Vale? You can also add a trend you think is missing in the Zoom chat.



- Importance of maintaining the diversity of the village centre, housing growth shouldn't detract from the activity in the town centre.
- Maintaining the Village Park should be a priority as it maintains the mature trees around the village.
- The Northern Beaches Council building with the library could be converted to provide greater amenity i.e. with a community centre.
- It is critical that employment lands are protected.

7.0 Future engagement and next steps

Next meeting will be 6 April and in person, pending COVID regulations.