

# Samson Precinct Group

**Minutes of Meeting held 5 February 2019**

**Venue: Annex Room, Samson Recreation Centre**

**Meeting Opened: 6:30pm**

**Attendance:** David Trimble (Chair), Councilor Jeff McDonald, Councilor Sam Wainwright, Karen Pina, Lynda Smith, Richard Evison, Alison Evison, David Hutchison, Cass Evans, Anthony Ruhland, Tony Miosich, Phil Redding, Graham Adams, Ryan Abbott.

1. David Trimble welcomed Mr Ryan Abbott, Manager Parks & Landscape, City of Fremantle to the meeting and thanked him for attending. Mr Abbott then provided a briefing on the following ongoing and planned council activities in Samson:
  - a. Verge trees;
  - b. The dogs on leash policy;
  - c. The fencing which had been recently installed in the park around the perimeter of the grass area;
  - d. The replacement of the basketball backboard;
  - e. The ongoing review of the Bushfire Hazard Reduction Plan;
  - f. The planned work to seal some of the bush tracks with limestone which will assist with weed control and off track movement;
  - g. Ongoing project to renew informational and directional signage within the park;
  - h. Two PHD students are including Sir Frederick Samson Park in their research into the Boobook Owl; and the
  - i. Community Capacity Building Project (handout provided) advising that a Friends Group Expo was being held on Saturday 9 February 2019 and 3 positions were allocated for members of the Friends of Samson Park group. Anyone interested in attending should contact Katrina Sachse at the City of Fremantle.
2. Mr Abbott remained for a question and discussion session with those present and the following matters were raised:
  - a. **Fencing around grass area.** Two persons present with experience in fencing expressed the opinion that this recently installed fence had been constructed to a poor standard, and queried the alignment.

They stated that it was visually obvious and unattractive, and with a little bit of planning could have been easily concealed or blended within the natural bushland in many sections. Others present at the meeting supported these views.

The fencing at the back of the basketball court was given as an example of the poor alignment as kids had to climb over it to retrieve their basketballs when playing there. Similarly a bush track that has existed for 30 plus years and runs in an easterly direction from the rear of the basketball court to Tuart Track has been fenced off. Someone has cut a section of this fence and re-opened the track.

This has also occurred at a spot on the fence line, on the western side of the grass area where a bush track that has existed for 30 plus years and runs in a westerly direction from the grass area to Woodland Walk has been fenced off. Someone has cut a section of this fence and re-opened this track.

Examples were given at the meeting of elderly people becoming confused after having walked down these tracks to the grass area and then being confronted by the fence, with some trying to climb over it and others following the fence line through the bushland to its end, both of which were considered dangerous actions.

Mr Abbott informed the meeting that less than \$10,000 of the allocated budget had been spent on the fencing with remedial work due to commence during the week commencing 11/02/19. Council planned to realign the fence behind the basketball court to overcome the problem with the children retrieving basketballs however it was planned to reestablish the fence at both locations where it had been cut and fence off the tracks at their opposite ends (where they join Tuart Track and Woodland Walk respectively) to stop the tracks being used and bush walkers walking down to the fence.

Those present were happy with the plan to realign the fence behind the basketball court to solve that problem. However there was total opposition to closing the fences again. It was explained that during winter when the grass area flooded and was impassable for walkers, the only to get around this was to use the track near the basketball court that allows access from the grass area to Tuart Track. It was also a very popular and long standing track within the park.

It was reiterated by those present that during the remedial work to the recently installed fencing, that the fence be realigned where possible to make it visually less obtrusive and blend in more with the parkland.

It was felt that the current fence surrounding the grass area is visually depreciating this *bush forever* site.

**Mr Abbott noted these comments and stated he would discuss them at the City.**

- b. There had been recent glyphosate spraying at the park including on areas where the council has recently laid grass.
- c. There is a possibility that foxes may inhabit or pass through Sir Frederick Samson Park. They had been seen in O'Connor and are becoming more frequent in the metropolitan area. Mr Abbott advised that the council was aware and monitoring the situation.
- d. The population of blue tongue lizards in the park appears to be stable. One person present stated she had seen 3 on a recent walk and others present reported also having seen some.
- e. The possibility of having university students conduct research in Sir Frederick Samson Park as part of their studies was discussed, if this was offered by the City of Fremantle. One person present stated that it was unlikely that an offer of this type would be accepted due to City's past record of ignoring research when making decisions regarding issues concerning park management.
- f. The dead area of bush land on the northeastern corner of the park at the corner of McCombe and Sellenger Avenues was raised. It is generally the first view people have of the park and looks terrible and is a poor representation of this *bush forever* site. It was felt that this is an area of the park that the City should treat as a priority for remedial treatment and a planting program. **Mr Abbott noted these comments.**
- g. David Trimble apologized for his comment at the last meeting that the City may not be aware that DFES had not endorsed the Samson Park Bush Fire Hazard Reduction Plan (2014). This was incorrect and it is recorded under the heading Fire Authority on page 6 of the Plan. He had realized his error and notified Councilors McDonald and Wainwright by email on 06/02/19. Mr Abbott informed the meeting that the City is in regular contact with DFES and they are satisfied with the fuel load in the Park. The Bush Fire Hazard Reduction Plan is being reviewed over the next 6 months.
- h. The possibility of conducting controlled burns in the park was raised, as the Australian bush is known to recover well from a bush fire. Mr Abbott stated that this had been discussed at council but not taken further. One person present with expertise in this field provided brief information on the subject and stated the reasons why a controlled burn would not be suitable for Sir Frederick Samson Park.

- i. Bushes growing on the verge on McCombe Avenue on the southeastern side of the intersection with Petterson Avenue are causing a problem from drivers from Garden Parklands Village. The height of these bushes restricts their vision of traffic travelling north on McCombe Avenue. **Noted by Mr Abbott.**
- j. It was raised that the erection of a new fence around the playground and a fence around the barbeque and picnic area would enhance this area of the park. The current fence around the playground is very old and in need of repair. If this fence was replaced it could be incorporated with a new fence surrounding the barbeque and picnic area. If the barbeque, picnic and playground area were completely fenced off it would eliminate any interaction between humans and dogs in that area thereby reducing the likelihood of complaints. **Action Trimble**
- k. The large concrete and limestone drainage outlets in the central grass area of the park regularly have water collecting in them that becomes a breeding ground for mosquitos. Suggested that regular spraying is required to treat this problem. **Noted by Mr Abbott.**
- l. A resident from the Garden Parklands Village requested the possibility of the council supplying mulch for residents to use to maintain the verge on Petterson Avenue in front of the village. Mr Abbott requested that they send him an email and he will follow it up.
- m. The City plan to formalize some bush tracks with a limestone base within the park was discussed. The unnamed track which runs along the eastern side of the park near McCombe Avenue was discussed at length as it is one of the tracks that the City intends to formalize. Those present felt that this track was too narrow for such works to take place and any attempted work would result in destruction or damage to the natural vegetation and possibly fauna. One person present stated that the southern section of the track near the gate was very sandy and would be suitable for a limestone base. Mr Abbott had previously advised in response to a query from the last meeting that the track work was expected to commence in April – May 2019. **Mr Abbott stated that he was aware of the narrow restrictions of this bush track and noted the comments.**
- n. Mr Abbott had advised in response to a query from the last meeting that funding for a dog fountain would be in the 2019 – 20 budget proposals. A suitable dog fountain had been selected which had no standing water and was the same as dog fountains installed at Cantonment Hill and Stevens Reserve. The meeting requested that once the budget approval process had been completed that this item be prioritized for the park and installed before the 2019 – 2020 summer.

- o. Councilor Wainwright raised the matter of maintenance of the laneways within Samson that had been discussed at the previous meeting. Mr Abbott advised that mowing of the laneways was part of the regular 3 monthly program now being conducted by the council.
- p. As raised at the previous meeting the entrance to Samson at McCombe Avenue and South Street was discussed. It was felt that this area was very untidy and poorly landscaped. Those present asked if the City could improve this area. **Noted by Mr Abbott.**
- q. Prior to Mr Abbott departing the meeting it was stated that a large number of issues concerning Samson and the Sir Frederick Samson Park had been raised and discussed with him. He was asked if there was likely to be any outcome from these discussions as in the past when he had attended similar meetings and issues had been raised such as over the dogs on leash policy in the park no outcomes had been achieved. Mr Abbott replied that he did listen to the issues raised and would consider them.
- r. David Trimble thanked Mr Abbott for attending the meeting and he departed at 7:50 pm.

**3. Apologies:** Andrew Williamson

**4. General Business:**

- a. It was reported that bushes growing on the verge on the southwest corner of McCombe Avenue at the intersection with McKenzie Road restrict the vision of motorists driving east on McKenzie Road and entering the roundabout at this intersection. **Councilor McDonald will report this matter to Technical Services.**
- b. Councilor McDonald reported that the building application by the developer of the vacant block at the corner of McCombe and Petterson Avenues was not due to lapse in the near future. He will monitor this situation and report as necessary to this group.
- c. Councilor McDonald provided an update from the Planning Committee to the meeting:
  - i. 3 applications from Samson were on the agenda for the next meeting and there were no issues arising from any of the applications; and
  - ii. An application for a 5 storey building in Foley Village, Hilton had been refused.

- d. The meeting was advised that the Perth Sauna and Massage Centre had recently opened in the block of shops on South Street, O'Connor at the intersection with McCombe Avenue. It was in premises previously occupied by an Indian supermarket. Neither Councilor McDonald nor Wainwright were aware of this new business. **Councilor McDonald will follow the matter up with the City to ascertain if the appropriate planning approvals have been obtained.**
- e. The condition of the vacant block at the corner of McCombe and Peterson Avenues remains a concern for residents of the Garden Parklands Village who consider it a fire hazard, and also have to live with weeds and sand from the block blowing in to their Village. The City is to be requested to advise the owner to address these maintenance issues. **Action Trimble**
- f. The footpath from the Garden Parklands Village gate to McCombe Avenue is a hazard and needs to be cleaned and maintained, as it is very sandy and dangerous to village residents walking on it. This situation arises from the condition of the vacant block as detailed in the previous point (4 e). **Action Trimble**
- g. Events in the Park. Councilor McDonald informed the meeting that he had attended two meetings at the City regarding holding events in the Sir Frederick Samson Park. Multiple options were discussed including Movies in the Park, a festival event, and community led events. The Community Development team, the Mayor, Cr Fitzhardinghe and himself had discussed the possible mix of City run events, and community driven events, on a rotating roster. The Community Development team are revising and drafting the process for applications, governance, etc. It was suggested by a person at the precinct meeting that a suitable activity could be a nighttime walk in the park with a guide leading a group of people. This had been done several years ago and was very enjoyable. Councilor McDonald to provide this feedback to Events Group at the City.
- h. Councilor Wainwright informed the meeting that consultation was still ongoing regarding changes to the free public transport within the City's boundaries. He would provide further updates when appropriate.
- i. Changes to the free parking at the Parry Street car park in Fremantle was raised. Previously the first hour was free, this has now been changed and motorists have to pay for the first hour and the second hour is free. The meeting was advised that there is a section within the new Cappuccino Strip car park (where the Stan Riley building used to be) that has free 30 minute parking. The entrance to this car park is off South Terrace opposite the Norfolk Hotel.

- j. Councilors Wainwright and McDonald informed the meeting they had attended a Council and Senior Management Meeting to develop a Strategic Plan for the City of Fremantle. This plan did discuss the provision of underground power. Councilor Wainwright attended the second meeting and Councilor McDonald addressed the items of the second meeting out of session. A third meeting is planned with all Councillors’.
- k. Councilor McDonald informed the meeting that a Risk Management review had approved the City’s procurement processes.
- l. David Trimble informed the meeting that he was unable to access the Freospace webpage to post the minutes and agendas for the Samson Precinct Group meetings. There appeared to be some problem with the webpage and until it was resolved he would email the minutes and agendas to each person as per details provided on the attendance list.

**Next meeting to be Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2019 at 6:30 pm.**

**Meeting closed at 8:30 pm.**