

26. 8. 98

**CITY PLAN HEARINGS COMMITTEE
27 JULY 1998**

**A meeting of the City Plan Hearings Committee
was held on Monday 27 July 1998 at 4.00 pm**

PRESENT: Councillor Charles Manning (Chairman),
Councillors David Buist, David Close, David Cox,
Newton Dodge, Lesley Keast and Margaret Murray,
Messrs Alex Clark, Bill Edwards, and Ms Maria Tait.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence were received and accepted
from Maurice Nutira.

Councillors Buist, Cox, Keast and Bill Edwards
arrived at 4.30 pm and were not present for part of
clause 1.

The Committee reports that:

PART A - MATTERS REQUIRING A COUNCIL DECISION

1. CITY PLAN HEARINGS AND DECISION PROCESS

RR 8122

Officer responsible Environmental Services Manager	Author Jane Donaldson
Corporate Plan Output: City Plan	

The purpose of this report is to seek the Committee's (and Council's) agreement to revising the target for completing the City Plan hearing and decision process.

It had always been our aim to complete, before the elections, the hearing of submissions on the City Plan, and the adoption by the Council of the decisions, and the release of those decisions to the submitters. As time has gone on, that has proved to be quite difficult, and our current objective has been to complete the hearing of submissions by early August, and to have the decisions adopted by the Council just immediately prior to the election, with the decisions being released after the election.

Even that target has now become impossible. Hearings are programmed to continue until the end of August. There is then the task of completing the writing of all the decisions, and of preparing an amended version of the City Plan showing all the amendments. These will then be placed before the Council for approval. This will be followed by a very large task of copying the various decisions in preparation for sending them out to submitters.

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I know that the impact on Councillors of completing the hearings process has been onerous, and you will all breathe a sigh of relief when mid-August comes. For the staff, the huge workload associated with that will carry on, and even grow. We have had several key planning staff leave over the last couple of months. These include Ken Gimblett, Dean Chrystal, and in the near future, Irene Clarke. We now have three staff associated with the City Plan who have serious health problems. Both myself, as Unit Manager, and Ken Lawn, previous Unit Manager, have reached the view that we cannot continue to place the level of pressure on the City Plan Team that we currently have. Quite frankly, the achievement of completing the City Plan hearing and decision process prior to the election is not worth the impact that it is having on people.

Our proposal is that we slow down the final stages of the process. It is still expected that hearings will be completed by the end of August. As written decisions are completed, they will be put before the Hearings Panels, and it is anticipated that most of these will be able to be completed prior to the election, but probably not all. The task of reproducing the City Plan including all its amendments, which is a critical step prior to placing the decisions before the Council, will not be completed prior to the elections. It is anticipated that the task of completing all the decisions, and preparing the amended plan, may be able to be completed for a Council meeting in December, although bearing in mind the impact on submitters, it may be more appropriate in late January, early February.

We believe that it is important that the existing City Plan Committee continue its task through to completion. It is possible that some members of the current committee may not be councillors following the election. However, there is a way through that. The existing City Plan Committee, and its hearings panels, can continue to operate until the date that the returning officer declares the results of the election (sometime in late October). The new Council at its first meeting in early November could then appoint a new City Plan Committee, and it can appoint to that committee, all the existing committee members. For those who are councillors, that is straight forward. For those who are no longer councillors, the Council can appoint to any committee, any person who is not a member of the Council if, in the opinion of the Council, that person has knowledge that will assist the work of the committee. (Section 114R of the Local Government Act.) It was pursuant to that provision that previous Councillors Arbuckle and Clark were appointed to the existing committee, and the two Tangata Whenua representatives Bill Edwards and Maria Tait. There is a requirement that the City Plan Committee contain at least one Councillor. That Committee can then continue to complete its task and make the appropriate recommendations to the Council in December or February.

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I would like to record, at this stage, appreciation of the tremendous effort put in both by councillors on the City Plan Committee, and by staff involved in getting the City Plan process to where it is. The effort, and dedication, has been outstanding. However, it is taking its toll, and we need to be realistic about what can be achieved.

- Recommendation:**
1. That the revised target for completing the hearing of submissions and adoption of decisions, as outlined in the report, be adopted.
 2. That it be recommended to the new Council that it reappoint a City Plan Hearings Committee, containing the existing members of the Committee from the previous Council to complete the City Plan process.
 3. That the Council record its appreciation of the commitment of the staff involved in the process of organising hearings and presenting evidence before the City Plan Hearings Panels..

It was noted that as Bob Nixon would not be available from the end of November, the Committee record its thanks of Mr Nixon's work.

The meeting concluded at 4.46 pm

CONSIDERED THIS 26TH DAY OF AUGUST 1998

MAYOR