

10. PROPOSED CHANGE TO ROAD NAMING PROCEDURES

Officer responsible Environmental Services Manager	Author Roger Cave, Community Secretary
Corporate Plan Output: Subdivision	

This report was received at the October meeting of the Community Board.

The Burwood/Pegasus Community Board had recommended changes to the current procedures of road and right of way naming.

The Burwood/Pegasus Board's Proposal

The Burwood/Pegasus Board wishes to choose the names for new roads and rights of way on new subdivisions in the Burwood and Pegasus Wards, as this would enable them to choose names with a common theme such as sea, Maori names or local identities on subdivisions with several new proposed roads. They believe that names submitted by developers do not take account of local history or identities.

The Current Procedure

Traditionally, in Christchurch and the majority of Local Authorities in New Zealand the land developer constructing the roads selects the names for their new roads and rights of way. The reasoning behind this is that the developer pays for the construction costs, and once the road is completed, the control of the road is vested in the Council. (Rights of way remain in the ownership of the properties they serve) Construction costs are expensive. One major Christchurch developer estimates his construction costs to be close to \$25,000 / allotment. An average cul de sac serving twenty sections costs around \$500,000 to construct. The developer selects the names for his subdivision, and forwards them to the Subdivision Officer who then checks the names for confusion with existing names, then prepares a report to the Board who will then approve or decline the names. (Name approvals were delegated to the Community Boards shortly after the formation of the new Christchurch City) After a subdivision Title Plan has been sealed by Council, it is lodged with Land Information New Zealand for checking and the issue of new Certificates of Title. The Title Plan is not accepted by them until the road names have been approved by Council. It is important to the developer who will usually have bridging finance, that the naming procedure does not unduly delay the lodgment of the plan.

Developer's Comments

Some of the larger subdivisions in Christchurch take place in the Burwood Ward, including Queenspark, Northshore, Travis Country, Fairway Park, and the large subdivisions between New Brighton and Travis Roads. Representatives from three of the companies carrying out these subdivisions were canvassed for their opinions on this proposal. All were unhappy with the proposal. They believe that the name of the road is an important factor when marketing their sections, a letter from one of these firms is attached. One surveying consultant stated that it was not uncommon to devote two hours weekly researching possible road names.

The New Process

The Burwood/Pegasus Board proposes that they be forwarded a copy of the subdivision plan for which they would then choose the names. These names would then have to be forwarded to the subdivision officer for checking for duplicity and confusion with existing names. The suitable names would then be returned to a Board meeting at which the names were approved. Once approved, the subdivision officer would then notify the developer of the names chosen and approved by the Board for his subdivision. If the developers were not happy with the allocated names, would they have any right of appeal to the Board ?

Recent Names Approved

Six names have been approved in the Pegasus Ward in the last three years. Five of these were on the Morganwood subdivision. Three of these were Maori names having a connection with the locality, while the other two had historical connections with the area. Sixty-one names have been approved by the Board in the Burwood Ward since 1994. Ten on the Queenspark subdivision which continued the theme of tree and landscape names, ten on the Fairway Park subdivision (situated next to a golf course) which had a common theme of American golf courses and nine names on the Travis Country subdivision which has used names from Cornwall and Somerset as a common theme. There is a further subdivision off Leaver Terrace and Effingham Street with five names having Australian east coast names. Of the remainder, only eleven names do not have an historical connection or are named after a local identity.

Difficulty in Choosing Names

Several Community Boards are now seeking names that have an historical connection with their area. The difficulty with this policy is that the majority of the early Christchurch settlers have roads named after them already, and with over 3,000 roads and rights of ways in Christchurch, most personal names have been used. On a recent naming exercise, land ownership was researched back to 1878 looking for a suitable name, and while there had been numerous owners, all their names were in use already. The use of Maori names also presents difficulties, with fewer syllables used and only fifteen letters used in the Maori alphabet, the majority of names submitted can sound similar to existing names. On a recent occasion the name Ti Kauka was presented as the name for the cabbage tree. There is however an existing street in Christchurch also purporting to be that of the cabbage tree but called Ti Rakau. (This name was checked before approval with the Maori Studies Department at the University) A check with two Maori dictionaries revealed three further spellings, being Ti Kouka, Ti Kaauka and Ti Kouka.

At their August meeting, the Spreydon/Heathcote Community Board suggested that the residents of their wards be requested to research suitable names with a connection to their area that were available for use on subdivisions when the developer was unable to arrive at suitable names. It was proposed to approach the other Boards with this idea and if they were agreeable, to then approach the Christchurch Mail to advertise the project. As a large response is likely wards should carry out the project over several months.

Bob Pritchard will be in attendance at today's meeting to discuss this report.

Chairperson's

Recommendation: For information and discussion.