

Good Evening [intro]

Many thanks to Council for insisting upon a Public hearing. Public hearings boost constituent confidence that their gov't is listening to them and provides gov't with a boost in constituent esteem and trust. A win-win.

Ticking the boxes under the gov't act is not a win-win for WS; it does not result in transparency or real consultation, and does not boost constituent confidence in gov't. Why?

Where a community is large and spread out like WS, residents in one area may not be aware of streets and locations in another area-yet the impact of developments in other areas will affect the entire community. In this case, residents on Bligh, Leanne Rd or Peregrine Ct. may not know where AOR is; will not have the occasion to walk or drive by. A sign or news article or post on a website about an unknown area will not inform or engage. A letter that goes no farther than 100 meters does not inform, either. Residents are unlikely to participate on a website or drive into the DOS office to view a file if they are not engaged.

But information about this development is important to WS as a whole because it may involve a change in zoning and a new zoning bylaw affecting infill density. There are infill lots and tracts all over WS; accordingly, the impact of this development will reverberate all through the community. The community needs to know and see what the changes mean. (unlike a duplex which is well known).

Change can be good if the impact is clear and understood. But, if not understood and perceived as pushed, it can be/will be hard to accept and can lead to conflict, suspicion and controversy. Why not promote consensus, clarity and understanding instead?

How do you effectively get the information to the entire community early on? How do you create transparency and engage in real consultation? Just how do you do that?

Easy. Use the Association. Send WSCA a detailed referral early on in the process. WSCA would get the information out as it has in the past to facilitate understanding of the changes that may affect WS under new infill density rules. Pictures and plans help understanding. WSCA has members everywhere in WS and members talk to non-members all the time about development in WS-whether by informal meetings, over coffee or in someone's driveway. Message sent. Communication received. Understanding and clarity promoted. A win-win.

WSCA's mandate includes monitoring DOS for issues that affect WS. We take that mandate seriously and endeavor to do our best to fulfill it. DOS has engaged with WSCA concerning developments in the past. The Association hopes it will do so with AOR and with future developments.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on behalf of the Association.