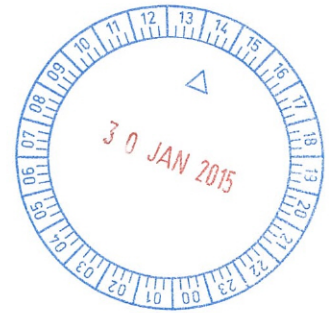


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30/01/15



January 30, 2015

The Honourable Catherine Esther Doust MLC
Chairperson
Uniform Legislation and Statutes Review Committee
Legislative Council of Western Australia
Parliament House
West Perth WA 6005

Dear Ms Doust,

I live in Subiaco where an unprecedented number of DAP approvals have been made on behalf of developers in the past few years. The particular section of Subiaco that I live in, East Ward, is characterized by narrow streets with Federation and Gold Boom dwellings. This area attracts multigenerational people and families due to its charm.

I am not opposed to modern architecture. I admire well-designed, interesting buildings that add to community life. However, recently developers have submitted plans that make a mockery of our Town Planning Scheme and do so blatantly on the basis of a need to make a substantial profit. As one developer told me, "Get over it. Design costs money." Furthermore, even when our planning scheme was amended, as in the recent Seddon St proposal, for high-rise apartments, those amendments were ignored. I was particularly appalled that the main paid speaker for the developer was a DAP panel appointee, who has been on every DAP panel meeting I have attended. That person was advocating, to his usual colleagues, for an office building, against apartments. He also claimed that adequate parking was not needed as workers in the proposed building will use a public transport system. The transport system of his imagining does not exist and will most likely not be built in the next twenty years. He and a sitting panel member cited as their example the London transport system that was created for a huge population and has been well-established for over 100 years.

It is also galling that we are limited in our presentations when developers have often arranged extra time, videos and have hired professionals, as in the DAP panel member to present their materials. At times, I have discovered residents have had only a few days to put together a presentation. It is also obvious that developers have met with panel members as the panel members are thanked for their remarks and "corrections" to their submissions. I am not allowed to speak or approach panel members to support my claims of loss of amenity and loss of property values or for clarification. We, the residents who have helped make these suburbs attractive and viable are not even given a right of reply—we are characterized as non-interested parties when our very way of life is being impinged upon and changed.

I had thought that the DAP could not violate Town Planning Scheme codes. However, with secret meetings, behind closed-door adjustments, and not having to face a right of reply which residents in other states are granted, ordinary citizens rights are not even being considered. On one development, Hay St and Olive St, we advocated for more green space and distance. The developer tried to claim the next door neighbours' yards as green space to be granted greater bulk and scale. It is almost amusing to hear the developers of the Pavillion Site at Rokeby and

Roberts Rd claim that the 19 stories they are proposing will be “seamless” and not noticeable. Both of these developers attempted to not use actual Subiaco or local traffic submission, but computer generated Eastern States submissions.

It is wrong that local residents who know the streets, the community, and have maintained their properties should be summarily dismissed. We are ratepayers who have chosen to live in particular areas, because of their character and have indeed helped create and maintain that character as well as have accepted and kept the various town planning schemes. I must keep to the Town Planning scheme should I plan to add to my dwelling.

I urge you to consider:

There should not be secret or behind closed-door meetings. If DAP panel members make recommendations to Developers, then they should also be available to residents so that amenities and property values are not unfairly impacted.

The DAP should have published times, dates, venues and agendas with at least one week’s notice.

The DAP should not be able to vote over local authorities. If a Town Planning Scheme is to be broken or amended, local planning should be won over to the plan and everyone should agree.

Developers should have actual information meetings for residents, not a quietly and privately publicized meeting at a restaurant for a chosen few. Their letters of praise often come from their own workers or from people who directly benefit from the scheme.

Design should be a prominent consideration. It does not cost that much more to create a building that the community and future generations can consider with pride.

Residents must have the right of reply.

DAP panel members cannot appear before their colleagues as advocates of a development. That is inherently unfair. To be frank, I believe the Seddon St development should be overturned.

The current system does not even pretend to be democratic or fair. At the panel meetings I have attended I had the impression of being lectured as a child by a few people who have their particular image of the city. In the case of Subiaco, our schools are full, our homes in this area sell quickly and are desired. The changes that a few developers wish to bring are not to aid our community but to create large profits for themselves. The appalling impact of too much traffic on our tiny streets, no where to put schools, services, or green spaces for the proposed massive apartment blocks and office are not even considered as the developers would have taken their profits and run.

I urge you to either abolish the DAP or at least make it an open and transparent system where residents as well as developers are considered. Our neighbourhoods are attractive as current ratepayers have respected the communities and kept them that way. We deserve consideration of our efforts. We are not plums ripe for raiding. Nor should we be seen as a particular

groups' social experiment. I urge you to examine these inequities and to uphold democratic decision-making.

Yours truly,

Linda Rogers,
Emeritus Professor