To the Honourable Members of the Outer Suburban Interface Committee, I contend that Councils are still operating under the failed 2030 that has made Councils self governing islands. Whilst Councils consider themselves to be the planning authorities, then they will operate for self serving and ideological local interests without a centralized plan for the councils to follow. MAV said "any future planning for Melbourne should be a whole of government approach to avoid the pitfalls of melbourne 2030." Seventy-nine (79) planning authorities for one state (around 30 in Melbourne) plus other government agencies is far too many. This gives some explanation as to why the vast majority of council decisions are destined for VCAT and one would rightly conclude that the 10/50 and the 10/30 rule would not exist in this shire without legislation, making the area far more bushfire prone placing more lives at risk. Despite 41 deaths the council was/is ideologically opposed to both the 10/30 and 10/50 rules.

This North East area has a great deal of land available for conversion along the railway line. Diamond Creek with a bypass that could run along the Diamond Creek could also act as a causeway for flood mitigation purposes. This suburb precinct could become the focal point and business hub of the North East. Employment opportunity and life could be injected into the area, viable land exists both before and after Diamond Creek all the way to Wattle Glen and Hurstbridge already the land is fully serviced. An independent land capability and infrastructure assessment and environmental audit would prove the land should not be set aside, but rather utilized. Growth of housing and business could go hand in hand, in order to achieve this either commissioners need to be put into the Council or the Shire would need to be broken up. As I stated earlier self interest and political survival governs local government areas decision making.

In the North East

a) the Hurstbridge railway line is underutilized. There is a need to expand the car parks at Hurstbridge and Wattle Glen (land available) and a new station should be built at North Eltham this would lower congestion further down into Melbourne

the ring road is already here at Greensborough. It provides linkages and at some point needs to be completed. I contend that the original northern route is preferable and would provide many more linkages if completed, opening up countless opportunities for Melbourne transport and therefore business opportunities.
Locally Wattle Glen primary has 40-45 students when it could be catering for up to 100 students. Other schools also have empty places and if built elsewhere would cost a considerable amount.

Other expensive government infrastructure also sits idle. I contend that due to the need for fiscal restraint that better use will have to be made of existing infrastructure, the area of Nillumbik is in dire need of a commercial district. Skills are migrating out of the suburb due to a lack of opportunity. The area has little in the way of industrial, farming, retail, tourism and the aforementioned commercial/ business areas.

All the way to Hurstbridge there is an under used railway line, reticulated sewerage, gas, water, power and the internet. All this infrastructure is going to seed when it could be utilized.

b) The shire could easily accommodate 10,000 new residents based on the available infrastructure. All costly existing infrastructure is available in abundance rail, roads, sewerage, water, power, internet I believe this area would be ideal for expansion.

c) With the fixed rail people can be shifted both to work, shops, school and with links further afield to other destinations. Only public transport can alleviate congestion. With the rising cost of fuel and the new federal Carbon tax levy and the gradual depletion of fossil fuels, the rail represents a costly investment and new railway and would not have to be built elsewhere with money that will need to be found.

d) Wattle Glen ranks statistically as the the most educated suburb in Melbourne. Residents must go elsewhere to find work (see the above need fora commercial district). Young people must leave as there is little or no opportunity in the area and a lack of housing affordability due to excessive land restrictions. This breaks up families and causes fragmentation of the family unit making life very difficult for those forced to leave.

e) Business largely sits apart from the Nillumbik shire council as do other local groups such as Rotary and Lions Clubs. The council is not so much an educator but rather an indoctrinator in the field of anti progress/ development ideology . See the one million plus yearly losses on Edendale Farm. Without change its impossible for retention and utilisation of skills, council statistics show that the youth are forced to leave the area . Anti progress by the council is all pervading in terms of education. Anyone who stands up to their ideology is publically shamed. See Councillor Belinda Clarkson with former Councillors Bendtsen and Bulmer.

What is right is not always popular and what is popular is not always right. I contend that the problem with development in the outer suburbs is that local politicians seeking re-election are nearly always against development as their political survival depends on this stagnant viewpoint. In 2010 the then Federal Minister for Housing Tanya Plibersek made similar statements.

f) Sister City relationships. I find it extremely difficult to answer this question. This council does not seek innovation markets and does not seek trade. It is losing money every week and continually asks for handouts. Business is neither welcomed nor lauded. It is merely taxed. Questions and answers posed to the various traders associations have already confirmed this view.

g) As for manufacturing capacity, there used to be a piggery in the area, the council made life too difficult. There is little in the way of manufacturing and is most definitely not encouraged except on a boutique level. Since 2002 VC 16-UGB , 75-80% percent of the shire is covered by a restrictive zoning. By having a continuous two year gap between State and Council elections then always some level of Government is in election mode. To development and planning this means “inertia”as some level of Government is always waiting for the election or the next grand plan.
An example of a council running its own agenda

A case in point: recently the Councils with so called green wedge land were written to in the middle of the year by the Minister of Planning and asked to find "significant anomalies" near infrastructure of Lands suitable for development. They were required to respond by the 28th of November.

Nillumbik was one of the aforementioned Councils written to by the Planning Minister and at October 2011 Council meeting in the words of the Mayor Helen Coleman "there was a comprehensive review" undertaken of the anomalies in the Nillumbik shire. In this "comprehensive review":

1. Not one landowner was invited or allowed to make a submission to the council.

2. Council contacted not one land owner.

3. Council inspected not one property. - Councils must write to landowners as they have no right of entry. No letters received by any landowner, QED therefore none inspected.

4. No environmental audit or land capability study was conducted on a single property. In October at the Council meeting at Eltham the Mayor Helen Coleman said that "I refuse to spin the wheel of fortune for speculators". -The question remains, does the area need renewal? Not whether somebody might make money on their investment who in all probability had owned the land for over 50 years "condemnation without investigation is the height of ignorance" -Albert Einstein

5. Mayor Helen Coleman and the CEO met with the the Green Wedge Protection Group Mufti Kahn Franke DV leader 12/ 10/2011. A meeting by any landowner with the same council was/ is denied 14th september DV leader

6. The major reason provided by Mr Chad Griffiths strategic planner for Nillumbik shire council for not undertaking strategic work was the cost associated with new strategic work, however major strategic work was already completed re-2003 planning submission to the DSE.

7. The remaining Councillors who spoke at the council meetings in eltham 10/ 2011 and at Civic Dr 11/11 did not offer an alternative view despite according to the Nillumbik Planning Scheme Review 2010 that the area had an ageing population and numbers of family homes were diminishing. The Planning and Environment Act section 4, 1a to provide for the fair, orderly, economic and sustainable use, and development of land;

8. Council have plans to subdivide council land in Civic Drive Greensborough to medium density. Obviously this is a double standard - anti development yet developing itself taking away our public open space.

b. Is Council behaving in the public interest? At the moment there is a huge housing shortage and rental shortage within the shire and an opportunity has been lost or at least delayed.

10. The area needs stimulus due to a lack of other alternatives re farming, industrial, commercial and tourism opportunities largely withheld by Council. Despite this Council being already up to its debt lending limit (20 million). By the middle of next year the prediction by some staff is that they may not be able to meet Councils commitments, unless of course they sell land at the civic centre or another bushfire occurs and they gain another 9 million in state and federal funding.
11. Significant anomalie "investigation" - amongst other properties they arbitrarily turned down land at Wattle Glen opposite a railway station surrounded by houses with all services including the internet in the middle of a gazetted suburb. Is it time for the Commissioners? Is it time for amalgamation? With so many Councils playing to their own tune, I dare say some if not all are out of tune with the rest of Government. Without a cohesive plan that Councils are required to adhere to, then single minded poor planning for short term political gain is the result, usually stagnation. In November 2011 it became apparent that in the Significant Anomalies review of 11 the councils 7 either failed to provide decisions in the allotted time or failed to obey the ministers directions entirely, none were totally satisfactory.

Few people are capable of expressing with equanimity opinions which differ from the prejudices of their social environment. Most people are even incapable of forming such opinions. -Albert Einstein

And yes, if allowed i would like to speak to the substantive issue. issues surrounding opportunity, compensation, land tax and rates on land that suffers discrimination remain.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Hay