

The Secretary.
Legislative Council Select Committee on Public Land Development,
Parliament of Victoria,
Spring Street,
MELBOURNE. 3002.

24 September 2007

Attention Mr. Richard Willis

Subject :Inquiry into the Sale and Development of Public Land and Open Space

Dear Sir,

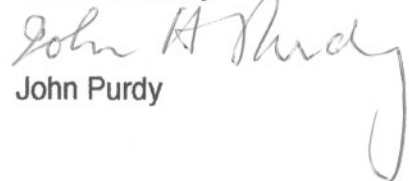
1. I write to you as a resident of the of Collier Ward which is part of the City of Knox in relation to the closing of the Wantirna Heights Primary School and the use made of this public openspace for low income housing which has resulted in a further reduction of recreational space in Precinct 2 of the Knox council's openspace strategy.
2. Lot 1 /54 Kingloch Parade is recreational space that has been used by the local residents over the past 30 years, owned by the Education Department then Transferred / sold to The Office of Housing contrary to a petition by the residents which was presented to State Government and Local Council. June 2002
3. As residents we are now asked to refinance the purchase of this land if we wish to keep it and have it rezoned as public use recreational.
4. Over the past eight years we have lobbied both Council and State government representatives standing for election, all of which have supported the residents petition, but who have found it difficult to achieve any beneficial out come due to State Government's party politics and polices which tend support both electoral and financial gain.
5. Acts, policies and strategies exists that determine the proper use of public open space and each case can be argued on its merits but Government Policy and not community's opinion plays an important roll around election time or when there is the need for making a quick buck.
6. One finds it hard to comprehend how government acts work when in the case of the Federal Government applied Acts, Polices and Strategies to the State Government over the Mornington Peninsula National Park openspace affair and the State Government crying foul when they themselves are treating local communities exactly the same.
 - a. The out come always remains the same if you have the money, the ability to convince the public or simply ignore acts you win on that day.
7. In our area alone I have seen the closure of Knox Technical School, Ferntree Gully Technical School besides many portions of public land, all for the finance benefit for both State and Local Council with little though to the consequence of those lands being loss to future generations forever, as well as the reduction of usable recreational space.

8. SUMMARY.

- a) Public openspace be placed in the hand of government who remain custodians not owners this land. This includes Government Departments
- b) Like past generations there is a need to plan for the future allotting recreational land on population need i.e. Hectares per population density.
- c) Interested communities need to be consulted before any changes are made as to the ownership, so a consensus can be reached.
- d) Public Land should be leased not sold.
- e) School sites are Community Hubs and similar to New South Wales Government's policy on such sites have special Acts applied.

Hoping you will give some consideration to these points at your review.

Yours sincerely


John Purdy

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