



Valerie Taylor  
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17/09/2007 10:58 AM

To dseministerial.mail@dse.vic.gov.au  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Fw: Re Upper House Select Committee of Enquiry.

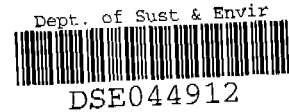
----- Forwarded by Valerie Taylor/VICMIN on 17/09/2007 10:57 AM -----

"Beverley Walker"

<bev1@bigpond.com>

17/09/2007 09:58 AM

To: Justin Madden/VICMIN@VICMIN  
cc: "Geoffrey Deakin A/P Wescott" <geoffrey@deakin.edu.au>, <enquiries@vcc.vic.gov.au>, <enquiries@gcb.vic.gov.au>, <webmanager@aph.gov.au>  
Subject: Re Upper House Select Committee of Enquiry.



The Hon. Justin Madden, MLC  
Minister for Planning and Communities

cc : [webmanager@aph.gov.au](mailto:webmanager@aph.gov.au)

Please direct my email to the correct addressee for:

1. Upper House Select Committee of Enquiry in to building on public lands and the implementation of Melbourne 2030.

cc **Libby Meares (Chair)** Victorian Coastal Council, **Duncan Malcolm (Chair)** Gippsland Coastal Board, **Liz Johnstone (Chair)** Central Coastal Board, **Lynn Murrell (Chair)** Western Coastal Board .

cc Professor Westcott

Please note reference to your paper in the attached letter which informed my questions to Minister Madden [1] Wescott, G. 2006. **The Future of Victoria's greatest asset: the coast. An independent review of the Coastal Management Act 1995 after ten years in operation.** Deakin University: Melbourne 1<sup>st</sup> Edition

•bcc Victorian Coastal Alliance.

16. September, 2007

Dear Minister,

**Members of the community being represented on a reference or review committee to enable enhancement of informed decision making at the Victorian Coastal Council or the Gippsland Central or Western Coastal Boards.**

Further to my letter addressed to Minister Madden on the 16th August following a afternoon tea with the minister and 22 rural, coastal and urban representatives. A substantial number of members of our Victorian Coastal Alliance were represented, I am re-submitting my letter with additions (attached).

**As I have received no response to my original letter I would appreciate it if you could facilitate a copy of this letter being presented as a submission to the relevant Upper House Select Committee of Enquiry.**

**I would also appreciate it if a reply to my request for answers to questions put in the abovementioned letter, be forthcoming. On behalf of concerned coastal communities, who from my recent and frequent personal exchanges are exhausting their lives in efforts raise the conscious level and the conscience of various Planning Ministers to the plight of our coastline.**

**The Victorian coastline has been subject to inappropriate decision making at shire council level in recent years. An example is, recently noted, of erosion of cliffs on Phillip Island at Summerland Bay where newly built houses are precariously poised to plummet.**

**We appreciate the positive responses by some members of the above named agencies (VCC,GCB,CCB,WCB) to a few of us.**

**We believe that by being able to have the opportunity to give local and evidence based advice to the various Coastal Boards, the Victorian Coastal Council and directly to the Victorian Government at a formal level our requests for action would be met. Much of the despair about what is perceived to be mistaken decision making at the very least, and ignorance at the most, would be reduced.**

**Despair and frustration can be turned around when community protestors of enormous energy and persistence are heard. Responses ought to be taken which acknowledge the fundamental right of communities to present evidence which supports their arguments in order to better protect the coastline.**

**It is imperative that responsible and appropriate evidence based actions by Governments are taken to protect the coastline - which after all is what volunteer campaigners and the abovenamed agencies are intent on achieving.**

**Thank you,**

**Beverly Walker**  
Beverley and Ken Walker

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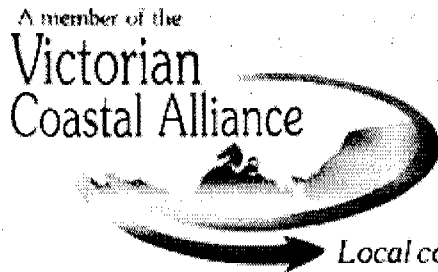
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Letter rejigged to send to Planning Minister Madden Presented on the day The Hon MLC. PR 4 IVCA doc.doc



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Bass Coast Alliance; Port Phillip Bay Alliance; Bellarine Peninsula Alliance; West Coast Alliance;

## Afternoon Tea

With the The Hon. Justin Madden MLC  
Rural and Regional Stakeholders

16<sup>th</sup> of August

### **re Venus Bay Urban Design Framework enabled by the Victorian Government**

I was invited last Thursday to an afternoon tea with The Hon. Justin Madden, MLC, Minister for Planning and communities. I was representing the Victorian Coastal Alliance which comprises alliances from Bastion Point in Mallacoota to Port Campbell in Western Victoria See Letterhead. The invitation came to me as convenor of one sub-group of the South Gippsland Coastal Alliance called Hands Across the Inlet which comprises 2 groups Tarwin Lower Venus Bay Association [TLVBA] and Protecting Anderson Inlet and Significant Environs [PAISE] (the latter represented by me) from South Gippsland Shire and 2 from Bass Coast Shire (a) South Gippsland Conservation Society SGCS and Inverloch Ratepayers and Residents Association IRRA (both represented by Dr Catherine Cook ) as the Bass Coast Alliance. Phillip Island also represented by two ratepayers.

Minister Madden stated that his ministry would not remove the powers of local councils to administer the planning scheme. However he did add that he was aware of some shire councils, which did not follow due process. Body language indicated that he was referring to Shires not very far from where we live in South Gippsland.

There were 22 coastal and rural towns represented at this afternoon tea. The Minister stated that he was impressed with the "passion" and the "serious nature" of our concerns. The Minister took notes and each group handed copies of their submissions to the Parliamentary Secretary, the Minister and to Mary Drost who convened the representatives from all over the State.

The following two pages are basically the genesis of my speech.

Chairperson: [IRRA Inc.] **David Sutton**  
Convenor [HAI] **Beverley Walker**  
President: [TLVBA Inc.] **Col Suggett**

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Victoria possessing the best managed (protected and planned) coastal zone in the world. The VCA comprises several organizations around the Victorian coastline amongst which is the Hands Across the Inlet coalition from South Gippsland which I am representing today.

We would like to thank the Victorian Government for what I believe to be the following improvements in the various policies and Acts:

1. Strengthening the Aboriginal Heritage Act 16/06
2. The Coastal Spaces recommendations.
3. The Farming Zone policy
4. Listening to the Venus Bay Peninsula community about on site waste water management of sewage and grey water in particular the suitability of the Biolytix system to this large sand dune.
5. Initiating and supporting the Urban Design Framework [UDF] which enabled the vital input of the community to:
  - a. Inform then re-inform the consulting team's second unit of the community concerns
  - b. Expand the South Gippsland Shire Councillors' knowledge enough to impact positively on the UDF.

I also am led to believe the UDF will now probably include the new Farming Zone legislation and be completed by 2008/9.

The following questions or with similar intent were put by me to the Minister:

1. **Please elaborate on the role of communities and define what is meant when choosing representatives on the Victorian Coastal Council and three Coastal Boards.**
2. **If communities are prevented from being adequately represented on Coastal Boards or the Gippsland, Central and Western Coastal Boards – then they will have to continue to campaign in loud and irritating ways, putting their emotional and physical health at risk,**
3. **The following outstanding and continuing challenges and questions for me, arise out of a review of the Coastal Management Act 1995 by Associate Professor Geoff Westcott<sup>1</sup> who states “that under the current government there has been substantial improvement”.**

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<sup>1</sup> Westcott, G. 2006. *The Future of Victoria's greatest asset: the coast. An independent review of the Coastal Management Act 1995 after ten years in operation.* Deakin University: Melbourne 1<sup>st</sup> Edition

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**Other comments and questions which were included in my submission:**

1. **How are representative communities defined by this government in relation to inclusion on the three coastal boards and the Victorian Coastal Council?**

**The following terms do not appear to be present to any satisfactory extent within the Act. I believe the Act should include those in bold below:**

*Coastal zones*

- b. Is the word **zone** included in a definition of Coastal?
- c. Does a definition of coastal include **marine**?
- d. Do Coastal zones include **private** land as well as Crown land?
- e. Integration of **coastal and catchment** areas – does this occur when considering coastal zones for development?

*Victorian Coastal Council Funding*

- a. In 2006 this amounted to 240,000 per year to each of the **Gippsland, Central and Western Coastal Boards and the Council**.
- b. Will this match the amount spent on **advertising**? Quoted to be \$240,000 per day?<sup>2</sup>

*Education*

- a. What methods are being used to **educate the local, state beauracrats, developers and community stakeholders about Ecological sustainability**?
- b. Is the word **ecological** included in the Act when addressing sustainability?

*I would appreciate a response at your convenience to the above questions.*

*I would be happy to discuss my concerns about the last five years that we as a community spent campaigning against what was eventually realised to be inappropriate development on wetlands on both sides of Anderson Inlet. Why is there a need for communities, most of whom have spent their working life paying substantial taxes, to have to continue to monitor and keep a watching brief over local and state governments planning processes who have been elected to do just that? Surely they ought to be able to have a rational and informed voice, if placed on any one of the Coastal Boards. At the very least a community based reference committee ought to be formed.*

**Beverley Walker**

Convenor of Hands Across the Inlet

Convenor of the Victorian Coastal Alliance.

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<sup>2</sup> Wescott, G. ibid p 25

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major item in that paper. No mention of coastal or rural attendees.

Royce Millar had an article on the 2030 Futures Plan on Tuesday 21/ or 22nd 2007 page 13 which matched these concerns.

## HEADLINE

**THE State Government will not move to rip planning powers from local councils, Planning Minister Justin Madden has assured a group of suburban lobbyists.**

In a two-hour meeting, the group said Mr Madden clearly committed to leaving planning responsibilities with councils, in spite of industry concerns with slow and complicated planning processes.

The commitment comes as a relief to residents and councils, after the minister said he was considering a change to the system last month.

The plan for a shift has sparked the South Australian Government's decision to give major planning responsibility to council-appointed planning panels, rather than councils themselves.

On Thursday, Mr Madden met about 30 activists from umbrella group Planning Backlash, representing more than 100 local planning groups from across the state.

Group convener Mary Drost said she asked the minister to commit to leaving planning powers with councils.

"It was very, very clear he said 'I will not take planning power away from the councils'," Ms Drost said.

"Then he clarified that, and said, 'not unless a particular council wants me to take on a decision'."

Ms Drost said the decision was good news for residents determined to protect their suburbs.

"A lot of councils are part of that fight, and if they did lose the right to control planning in their areas, it would be a nightmare," she said.

Thursday's meeting was the second time Mr Madden has met Planning Backlash, a group organised off the back of opposition to controversial planning document Melbourne 2030. Mary Drost said members were furious a planned review of Melbourne 2030 this year had been downgraded to an audit.

When Mr Madden launched the audit, he warned the content of the document would not change. The basic principles of Melbourne 2030 are not up for review but we want the community's input into how we implement this crucial policy," he said.

Yesterday, Ms Drost said she hoped the meetings would help Mr Madden recognise integral problems with Melbourne 2030.

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and they were all singing from same songbook -- it always comes back to the fact that the planning policies are not working properly," she said.

Yesterday, a spokesman for Mr Madden said the minister had only confirmed government policy at the meeting.

"The minister reiterated the Government's position, that we will consult with councils on any issue regarding planning powers should such an issue arise," he said.

In a speech this year, Mr Madden identified slow council processes as a major issue.

Mr Madden named several councils that had large numbers of permit applications go to the planning tribunal.

Last year, Boroondara had 216 applications go before VCAT, and Stonnington had 198, while the average across all councils was just 45.

"If you have that number of matters going off to VCAT, then something's not quite right," Mr Madden said.

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