

RIVERLEA ENVIRONMENT SOCIETY INCORPORATED



Newsletter #3 ♦ 16-Sep-2008

Notes from the Chair

Welcome to the third of our occasional newsletters. It's almost a year since we were first notified of Blacktop's application for resource consent to EW and more than six months since they withdrew, defeated by a strong and talented community determined to protect itself and its environment from the effects of one of the most polluting industries allowed to operate under the Resource Management Act. The experience of campaigning against the asphalt plant was both intense and, thankfully, rewarding.

From our first committee meeting in our lounge on 3 October 2007, the Society has asserted itself to be more than a single issue group. This newsletter bears witness to that, with work on the restoration of Hammond Bush proceeding well, and our successful application for funding from the Hamilton City Council Envirofund, thanks in large part to the efforts of committee member Martin Thrupp.

Finally, we understand Blacktop Construction still intends to relocate from their present Te Rapa site to somewhere in the south of the city. Wherever they go, Blacktop will need to apply to EW for Resource Consent. When we hear news of this application we will pass it on to our membership as quickly as possible. The latest intelligence is that Blacktop is negotiating for a site beyond the city boundary, in a more suitable industrial zone.

Stephen Hamilton, Chairperson

Hammond Bush improvements

Big change is afoot in Hammond Park. This is clearly visible from the boardwalk near the lookout area where keen members have been cutting and clearing out weed plants from the reserve area that runs between the boardwalk and private properties. Native trees are also being planted here and in other areas of the reserve. We are fortunate to have the guidance of Gerard Kelly and Tony Keen from Hamilton City Council. The restoration is following guidelines drawn up by ecologist Professor Bruce Clarkson from Waikato University.

Please join our Hammond Bush working bees on the last Saturday of every month. Everyone gets exercise and

has some fun. The arrangements for each working bee are always circulated by email prior to the day. If you are not on email please phone one of the committee for details.

Residents with gully sections adjoining Hammond Park are also getting help to increase the overall size of Hammond Bush by restoring the bush on their sections. Environment Waikato has organised subsidised pest plant removal and RES is able to follow up by providing eco-sourced native trees funded by a \$2000 Envirofund grant.

Charitable status

We are pursuing charitable status for our society, which will have the major benefit of making your donations (including those made last year) tax deductible. In order to qualify, we have been advised by the charities commission that we need to make a small rule change: we need to specify in our rules that in the event of the society closing down we would pass our remaining funds to another charitable organization.

While we recognise that it is unlikely that any of our members will object to this rule change, we have to follow due process and give you notice of:

- **Special General Meeting**
- Thursday 16th October at 7.30pm
- Location: 83 Howell Avenue.

The rule change will be enacted at this meeting if there is sufficient support. All members are welcome to attend this meeting, but there is no compulsion to do so because the committee members present will be sufficient to pass the rule change.

Wanting change?

RES members are invited to let the committee know of what changes they would like to see in Riverlea that could be realistically pursued by the society. Please email suggestions to riverlea.soc@gmail.com, or put them in the letterbox of 44 Chesterman Ave.

Riverlea community calendar

- Thu 16-Oct-08 Special General Meeting
- Sat 27-Sep-08 Working Bee
- Sat 25-Oct-08 Working Bee
- Sat 29-Nov-08 Working Bee

Ex-Asphalt plant site

Many of you will have noticed that the small road coming off Riverlea Road that houses the site that Blacktop Construction wanted to use has been named 'Mexted Lane'.

The contentious site remains empty at this point and the committee has no information as to its destiny. We would be pleased to hear about any activity in the area, because there remains a risk of dirty industry attempting to establish there.

Annual General Meeting

Our well-attended AGM was held at the Riverlea Theatre in May. Dr Stephen Hamilton was elected as Chair, Judy Chandler as Secretary and Bruce Winders as Treasurer. Most of the original committee members have returned for a second term.

Thanks to the Riverlea Theatre for allowing us to use their venue again.

Air quality

After kicking up a fuss about the asphalt plant, it's only fair that we as Riverlea residents do everything possible to keep our air clean!

Environment Waikato advise that we should never burn treated, painted, green or wet wood, plywood, particle board or plastic. These release dangerous compounds into the air. There is further information on how to reduce the air pollution from fires at

<http://www.ew.govt.nz/Environmental-information/All-about-air/Air-quality/Home-fires/>.

If you notice an odour in the air that poses a significant nuisance, you can get help. Telephone Hamilton City Council on 838 6699 as soon as possible and they will investigate. Ideally, discover which property is the source of the odour to aid their investigation. (Note that air quality is Environment Waikato's responsibility, with Hamilton City Council contracted by EW to respond to complaints).

Heavy traffic

Sometimes heavy trucks use Hudson Street and Howell Avenue as a shortcut. This is not allowed: heavy traffic bylaws prohibit it. If you see this happening and can see where the vehicle comes from, it's worth telephoning the company's manager and politely pointing out what's happened. Committee members using this approach have had cooperative responses from managers.

Greening your property

If you have questions about clearing weeds, planting native trees and shrubs or controlling pests, free advice is available from the Waikato Biodiversity Forum.

Go to <http://waikatobiodiversity.org.nz/> or telephone 0800 BIODIV (246 348).

Riverlea zone change effort

Hamilton City Councillors have clearly acknowledged that a zone change in Riverlea Road is required to stop dirty industries being eligible to apply to set up business there. However, there is a long list of similar changes to the District Plan also required, so it could take quite a while before the change is in place.

The RES will continue to remind the council of the importance of the change at every appropriate opportunity.

Generosity

In our last newsletter, the committee called for RES members who pledged money to donate 10% of their pledge to cover the cost of our successful fight against Blacktop Construction. The response was marvelous, with many donors providing sums in excess of the 10%. Thank you.



River Walkway to be extended to Hammond Park (eventually)

As many of you will know, the provision of a walking and cycle link between Hamilton Gardens and the northern end of Hammond Park has been on the Council's drawing board for many years. The difficulty of negotiating the steep river bank cliffs has long been given as the reason for the delay in connecting the two parks.

In response to the Society's submission on the Hamilton City Council's Proposed 2008/09 Annual Plan, HCC has informed us that funding for the link will be considered in the forthcoming review of the Long Term Community Plan (2006-2016). Progress, of sorts. The Society will continue to press HCC on this matter.

Members might not be aware that the area above the proposed walkway in the vicinity of the trig station was once the site of important pa which overlooked an area of the river known historically as the Narrows, a place name now associated with an area further upstream. The pa was occupied by militia troops in the 1860s and transformed into a redoubt to control river traffic in much the same way the pa had in pre-European times. The square area of the redoubt is still clearly visible and has been fenced off to protect it from the horses. Go to the trig station by the top of the horse paddock, and you're at the site of the redoubt.

AMENDMENT TO THE RULES OF THE SOCIETY

The Society is in the process of applying to the Charities Commission for Charitable Status. The Commission has requested that the Society amend its Rules to clarify how the Society will dispose of its surplus money and other assets in the event of the Society being wound up.

Currently Rule 27.0 reads as follows:

27.0 Winding up

27.1 If the Society is wound up:

- (a) The Society's debts, costs and liabilities shall be paid;
- (b) Surplus Money and Other Assets of the Society may be disposed of:
 - i) By resolution; or
 - ii) According to the provisions in the Incorporated Societies Act 1908; but
- (c) No distribution may be made to any Member;
- (d) The surplus Money and Other Assets shall be distributed to:
 - i) Local residents through a local community event

This motion is to amend 'Section 27.0 Winding up' of the Rules of the Society to comply with the requirements of the Charities Commission.

Motion: That Section 27, paragraph d, be amended to read:

- (d) The surplus Money and Other Assets shall be distributed to:
 - i) a 'not for profit' group with objectives similar to those of the Society.

Moved: Stephen Hamilton, Chairperson

Seconded: Andrea Graves *de Graves Andrea Graves 27 Hudson St, Hamilton*

Signed: *Stephen Hamilton 44 Chesterman Rd, Hamilton*

Joan Forret 83 Howell Ave Hamilton

Barry Barton 32 Hudson St Hamilton

Yasuko Sakurai 26A Chesterman Rd., Hamilton

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