RIVERLEA environment society

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From the Chair

It may feel as though Riverlea is under seige at the moment with construction work on Howell Avenue and at both southern and northern ends of Hammond Park – all in connection with Te Awa Cycleway. At the same time, the commencement of new Peacocke subdivisions across the river has been signaled by the start of work on the Cobham Drive flyover and associated new Waikato River bridge .

Since our last newsletter, the Environment Court has issued a resource consent for the Amberfield subdivision. This was significantly influenced by RESI, resulting in greatly improved protections for the resident long-tailed bat population. For this, we make special mention of the outstanding drive and commitment provided by Riverlea resident and former RESI chairperson, Dr Andrea Graves. Andrea led RESI's campaign alongside our equally outstanding legal counsel, Phil Lang, as well as some of the best experts there are in planning and bat ecology, David Phizaklea and the Stirnemann sisters, Rebecca and Ingrid. As a team, they navigated the exacting and stressful judicial process lasting more than three years.

RESI thanks residents at the top end of Howell Avenue for taking on Hamilton City Council in a separate 'battle' at short notice to ensure four street trees targeted for removal will remain. They did a fantastic job.

In July we were sad to lose the services of our Conservation Co-odinator of the past three years, Paula Smith. However, we're pleased to say we have recruited a new community co-ordinator, Gabrielle Woodds (full introduction in our next newsletter). We're also delighted that the Covid 19-induced recess on RESI activities has ended and our regular working bees have resumed. Finally, we wish all Riverlea residents a merry Christmas and a happy and healthy 2022.

Allan Pearson

Farewell Paula

The Saturday morning working bee in July in Hammond Park took on a special 'flavour' with our tea lady extraordinaire, Anne Ferrier-Watson, providing matching china cups and saucers and a delicious carrot cake. The occasion served as our farewell for Paula who brought many skills to the conservation coordinator role, noteably her fantastic plant knowledge and people management. We will miss her gentle and enthusiastic approach, and wish her well as she focuses on her full-time job and growing family. We look forward to seeing her back at Hammond Park as a volunteer when she has time.

Photos: Lindsay Cumberpatch

Peacocke Structure Plan - Plan Change 5

Recently, Hamilton City Council publicly notified proposed plan changes (PC5) to the current Peacocke Structure Plan (PSP). RESI responded with submissions advocating a strengthening of some of the conditions within the PSP so that they would be aligned with the conditions fought for and achieved with respect to the Amberfield resource consent, and being principally for the protection of Hammond Park's long-tailed bat population. These included:

- Existing indigenous planting be enhanced ahead of each stage of development to improve flight paths for foraging and roosting trees .

- All forms of lighting (street, housing and vehicles) be controlled, so as to mitigate adverse effects on the nocturnal activities of bats.
- Pest control to reduce the predation of bats and birds.
- Adequate monitoring for all stages of PSP development to determine any adverse effects on indigenous fauna, and to allow timely prevention or mitigation measures to be implemented.

Finally, it is noteworthy that the PSP PC5 comes in advance of a review of the Hamilton City District Plan next year. Our hope is that learnings associated with the development of PSP PC5 can be applied city-wide.

Full steam ahead for Te Awa River Ride

The cycle trail through Riverlea is progressing apace in two locations: first, on the northern end of Hammond Park with the widened footpath at the top of Howell Avenue and the ramped boardwalk from Geoffrey Place to Hammond Park. These works are well advanced.

Work on Te Awa Cycleway at the north end of Hammond

Work on Te Awa Cycleway at the south end of Hammond Park. Photos: John Badham

The second location is a boardwalk and path along the eastern bank of the Mangaonua Stream near its confluence with the Waikato River. This work is about half complete, with bulk earthworks and retaining walls erected part way along Mangaonua Stream to cross to Riverglade Drive. This work may be completed during autumn.

On the south side of the Mangaonua Stream in the Waikato District Council area, separate work is proceeding, linking the cycleway to Riverglade Drive and on to Tamahere. There are more elevated boardwalks on this stage because of steeper terrain and this work is slightly more advanced than on the Hammond Park side. This stage also includes the new bridge over Managonua Stream to link to Hammond Park.

At our 2021 AGM in July, Allan Pearson generously made himself available to continue in the role as chairperson for another year. Thank you Allan, we know the past three years haven't been easy!
The committee also remains the same: Treasurer Bruce Winders, Secretary Graham McBride, Jane Landman, John Badham, Trish Macky, Terry McDonald and Shubha Parukelar.
Anyone wishing to join the committee prior to our next AGM in 2022 would be very welcome.

Request From RESI Coordinator

Have you got time to help with the restoration project at Hammond Park? We have working bees you can join: Thursday - every second Thursday at 10.15a.m, and Saturday - the last Saturday of each month at 10a.m. We meet at the boardwalk entrance to Hammond Bush (Malcolm Street).

Donate to RESI

I would like to support the Riverlea Environment Society Inc. with a tax-deductible donation

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_____

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Suggested donation per household: $40 per year, or any other amount of your choosing. *Our bank account is 03 1559 0110053 000. To donate online, please use your surname as the reference, and email us stating the amount, your name and address so we can issue a receipt. Thank you for your support.*