

A COMMUNITY ORGANISED MEETING TO PLAN FOR STREET TREES

How was it organised and who came? A workshop was held with residents in Melville Street (between Barrack and Molle) at the impetus of an enthusiastic local. A flyer inviting residents to a meeting was prepared (Photo) and used as part of a door-knock to all residences fronting the street (29 in total). Members of 11 households attended, represented by approximately 20 people. Three households apologised (two favoured trees, one didn't).

What was the agenda? The meeting was introduced by the event's organiser. The project consultant spoke to the benefits of large street trees, the need for communities to be involved and the ways that trees could be introduced into the street (i.e. in the footpath, within parking bays or centrally). A section drawing through the street was used as part of the latter discussion.

A wide ranging conversation ensued during which strong support for large trees in the street was elicited as well as several negative responses to additional trees of any size (there are already trees on one side of the street).

A plan, produced by a resident, was tabled showing the location all of the houses in the street, the location of overhead wires, existing street trees and driveways. This plan was used as a tool for further discussion. Some of the issues raised included: the blocking of views (houses with these concerns were noted), the shade cast and its impacts on available light in homes or on gardens (a shade diagram was drawn to illustrate which areas might be affected), traffic concerns and the possibilities for trees and landscaping to occur in proposed roundabouts (the possibility of trees in a roundabout at the intersection of Molle and Melville Streets was opposed by one resident).

What resulted from the meeting? The plan was used to identify 6 locations, along the centreline of the street where large trees could be established that would not affect the views from the residents opposed to street trees in front of their view (Plan). The 6 trees were marked on the plan as were the proposed roundabouts, one showing small trees.

How was the meeting concluded? The meeting concluded with a discussion of the way forward. Of particular concern was the length of time that it might take for something to happen. Attendees were informed that the City would need to do further consultation and formal investigations, including liaison with various internal departments and with utility providers, and if the process were to proceed, appropriate tree stock would need to be secured. The latter was noted as needing to have a 4m clear stem so that branches would not interfere with passing traffic and that such trees were not always readily available.

Residents were provided with a list of tree species from the City of Melbourne tree selection guidelines that were indicative of the types of trees that might be used in a central median planting. They were advised that not all species were suited to Hobart and not all would be available. The list could, however, be used to get a sense of scale and general type of tree that could be used.

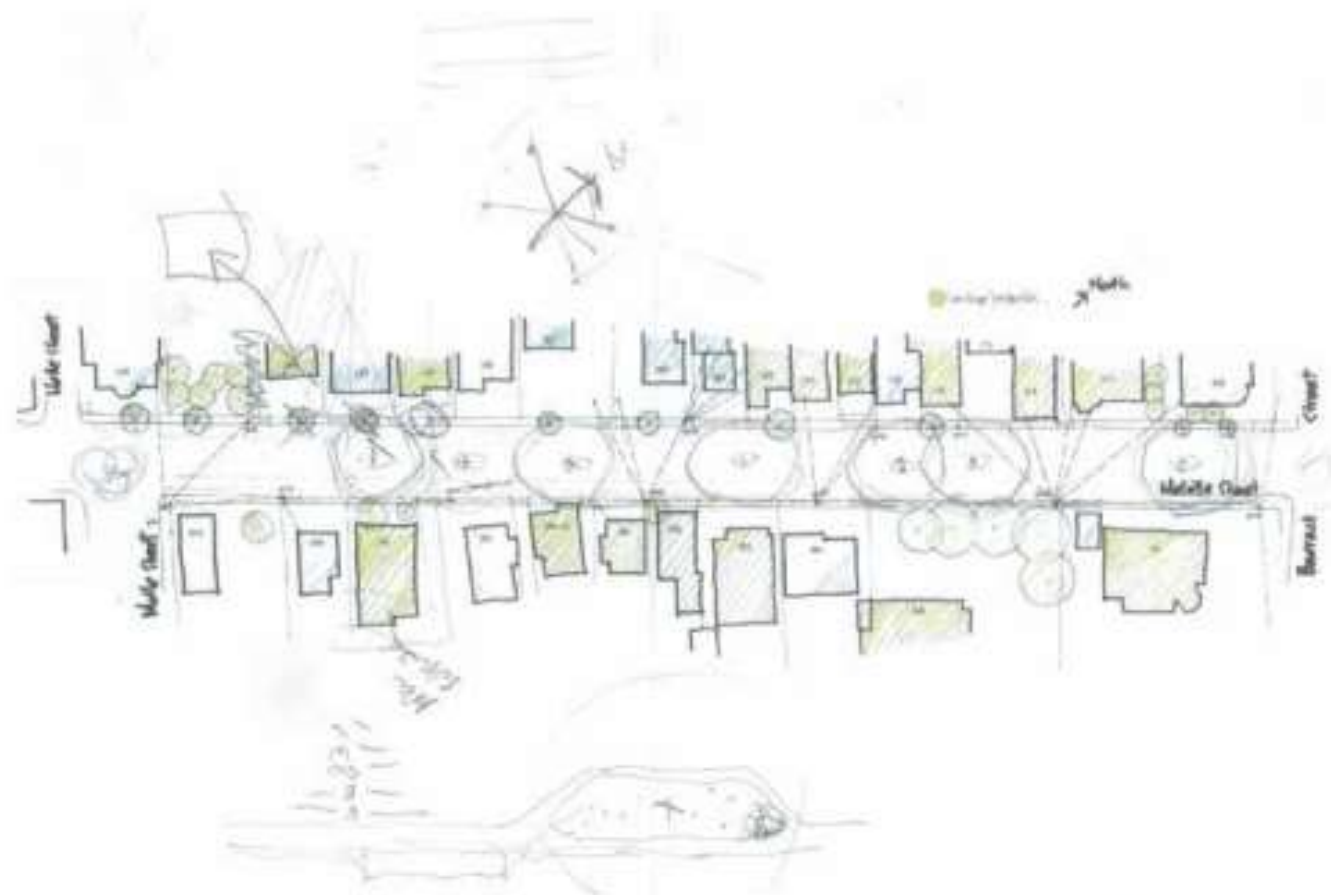
Residents were encouraged to contact the City with their support or opposition so that Alderman were made aware of the residents' views on the matter.

What did we learn? Door knocking and a flyer were successful in getting a good attendance. Having a facilitator is important, albeit they should stand apart from the process to avoid bias (although all views were canvassed at the meeting, the consultant did have a strong opinion in favour of street trees and put those views in opposition to some of the negative comments that were made).

It is important to have a plan of the street at the meeting including locations of driveways, power poles, overhead and underground services and existing trees (public and private). It should be to scale and have a north point on it. Examples from elsewhere are helpful. A cross-section of the street marked with the widths of footpaths, parking and vehicle lanes is essential.

No recording of the event took place, something that should be done in the future so that an accurate account of what was said could be made available at a later date.

Is this the way to go in the future? Yes it is.



Hand drawing produced during community workshop showing notional locations for tree plantings in Melville Street