

# Meeting Minutes

## Northern Business Liaison Group Meeting

Date	10/02/2022	Time	07:30am-09:30pm
Chair	Jeni Coutts	Meeting no.	1 of 2022
Location	via Zoom	Minute taker	Hugo Birch

## Attendees

Attendees			
Name	Organisation	Name	Organisation
Jeni Coutts (JC)	Independent Chair	Jeremy Richards (JR)	Watsonia Optical / Watsonia Traders Association
Noella Jacobs (NJ)	Greensborough Chambers of Commerce	Matt Guest (MG)	Watsonia RSL
Erica Hardie (EH)	Banyule City Council	Kate Zisos (KZ)	CPB
Renato Marnich (RM)	NELP	Tara Larkin (TL)	SPARK
Francis Wickerson (FW)	NELP		

Apologies			
Name	Organisation	Name	Organisation
Tony Aouad (TA)	Kebab Nation / Anchor Fish and Chips	Sarah Maguire (SM)	Watsonia Traders Association
Holly Havers (HH)	SPARK	Danielle Phyland (DP)	Nilumbik Shire Council

## Key discussion points/decisions

Owner	Action
Jeni Coutts (JC)	<p><b>Welcome and outstanding business</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>JC welcomed the group to the first meeting of the year for the Northern Business Liaison Group, apologised for having to run the meeting online. She introduced Renato in his role as trader Engagement Specialist and the other presenters for the session.</li> <li>Kate Zisos, CPB.</li> <li>Noella Jacobs, Greensborough Chamber of Commerce.</li> <li>Francis Wickerson, NELP's Urban Design Landscape Plan Specialist.</li> <li>Tara Larkin, SPARK.</li> </ul>
Renato Marnich (RM)	<p><b>Introduction and current objectives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RM introduced himself in his role and career background in where he worked with traders and corporate entities. He summarised his position to assist traders during the construction period and its build-up, to support the shopping precincts and business by promoting the business-as-usual message to locals, and discussed the current survey being run to get information on local businesses and gain an understanding of what they want interactions to look like in the future.</li> <li>RM talked about the intent to increase membership in the Northern Business Liaison Group, he will be talking with businesses about joining the NBLG, concurrently the Southern business group is planned to start around July. Day and time preferences for these meetings are in discussion and feedback will be sought from members.</li> </ul>
Jeni Coutts (JC)	<p><b>Actions and Issues</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>JR had previously talked with Renato about providing a current business listing for NELP. , This has previously been supplied for other works and NELP produced a trader directory for its workers. He has also instructed Sarah to provide Renato with a new list.</li> <li>JC Closed the above item as well as the 4.1 renewal of membership. 4.3 was kept on due to its potential relevance in future communications for Tara and Holly.</li> </ul>
Kate Zisos (KZ), CPB	<p><b>CPB Early Works Update</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>KZ gave a presentation covering work updates at Watsonia Station, including future works in the area covering the installation of the new Telstra tower.</li> <li>The Telstra works have an approximate start date of April and works are expected to last for two months. A more accurate program is expected to be received from Telstra prior to the next meeting.</li> <li>The Watsonia Road gas relocation works will now occur at night. A detour with a road closure will be needed for trenching works. The program will be around Easter with more details available next meeting.</li> <li>JR noted that some traders are very busy during Easter while others are quiet.</li> <li>KZ will work with Sarah to better understand how businesses will be affected.</li> <li>KZ Showed a planned detour route around Watsonia on screen and discussed issues with welding works as well as possible actions to lessen the impact.</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Frensham Reserve site compound and its benefits were discussed. More information will be available at our next meeting, with the impact mostly affecting residents, not businesses. The Greensborough Road water relocations for night-time work on 11,12 Feb and 19 Feb, resident relocation offers were discussed. The Telstra service installation plan was reviewed with the 20-week program being completed mid-2022.</li> </ul> <p>Questions/<b>responses</b>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>JC requested further information on Telstra tower completion dates.</li> </ul>
<p>Noella Jacobs (NJ), Greensborough Chambers of Commerce</p>	<p><b>Greensborough Chamber of Commerce update</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NJ gave an informative presentation which highlighted the Greensborough Town Centre and its mapped area, breaking down the fundamentals into seven sections. These included Town events, promotions, new logos and merchandising and events such as Christmas, Easter and Mother's Day. She talked about activities that were aimed at increasing community involvement via street activities, competitions and giveaways with a view to rejuvenating town activity. Live music and permanent music systems in Main Street were highlighted. Vacant shops were shown to be utilised as displays and efforts to share covid information shared. Council efforts and funding were used to paint over graffiti and clean up areas.</li> </ul> <p>Questions/<b>responses</b>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>JC Did many of the 400 businesses close because of Covid? <b><i>Some did, particularly in the plaza. The strip had a coffee shop that was unable to receive grants and other assistance. Now is one of the worst times due to staffing issues.</i></b></li> <li>JR Watsonia has the highest vacancy rate we've ever been in the last 15 years, about 10-12% vacant. There are a couple of new businesses coming in though.</li> <li>NJ Having vacant properties can make it harder to fill other properties, perhaps NELP could turn some shops into displays to bring in more people (just a brainstorm)? This is a bad time to have Council special rate and levies renewed which could also hurt our future here.</li> <li>JC What is the council element here? <b><i>Greensborough is fortunate to receive Council funding that is used towards graffiti cleaning, maintenance, and marketing. We raise \$175,000 from businesses \$105,000 from the council as well as any successful grants that I (Noella) applies for. Across 400 businesses and the town centre, the money doesn't go very far, and lobbying is needed for tasks such as gardening.</i></b></li> </ul>
<p>Frances Wickerson (FW), NELP Tara Larkin (TL), SPARK</p>	<p><b>UDLP Update and Introduction to Spark consortium</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FW Introduced herself and her role, showed the different package regions for the UDLPs on a map, explained SPARK's role in this package and reviewed the key dates and timeline for the entire project. She then broke down what is included in a UDLP into several factors. Key steps and stages for the UDLP timeline were shown, she stated that more details are coming and is looking forward to the continued communication.</li> <li>TL discussed the current efforts that are being put into UDLP planning and planning for construction. The consortium is currently hiring and building the team and is feeling motivated to get involved in meeting and communicating with residents and businesses. TL believes it is essential that SPARK is present and involved at the local level to form a connection with the community. All SPARK employee inductions will be held at the Watsonia hub.</li> </ul> <p>Questions/<b>responses</b>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NJ, Will my committee be able to have a separate meeting with you to go over the UDLP process? <b><i>Yes, The Greensborough Road stage will occur in 2023, which is when the</i></b></li> </ul>

Owner	Action
	<p><i>builders are on-board, we're happy to talk about that and the tunnels which are more immediate but still relevant with local access. If there are things we can do to help with UDLP communications, please let us know so we can collaborate on some events and conversations.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>JC Broadly speaking when will this UDLP be ready for the public exhibition? <b>There is still a bit of work for the NELP Tunnel UDLP, but we are looking to have it ready in a couple of months.</b></li> <li>JC Is construction still a way off? <b>Yes, for major works that involve above-ground construction.</b></li> <li>NJ Would you be able to provide an overview of plans which look at the expected periods for construction and interruptions in the area? <b>We will work with SPARK and have a look into this, there's currently a huge amount of construction planning and are working on what this will look like.</b></li> <li>JC breaking down the confusion around where the different packages start and end including their contractors would be a good thing. <b>Having five different packages and contractors can appear complicated.</b></li> </ul>
Jeni Coutts (JC) Renato Marnich (RM)	<p><b>Open Forum</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NJ To Renato, it would be appreciated if you could pass on the information you get from business owners in the area. We are planning big picture longer-term changes such as the construction of a new town square to make a community hub and need the support of different government groups such as NELP.</li> <li>RM Regarding information that's collected, we can discuss how we can work together moving forward so that we can share relevant pieces as they come up.</li> </ul>
Jeni Coutts (JC)	<p><b>Closing up</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The next meeting is Thursday 17 March.</li> </ul>

## Actions - new

No.	Action	Owner	Due	Status	Update
1	JC has requested more information on relating to the Telstra tower completion.	NELP/CPB	Mid 2022	OPEN	
2	NJ has requested a one-on-one meeting with NELP to incorporate elements into the vision plan for Greensborough.	NELP/NJ	March 2022	OPEN	