

**Meeting notes for the meeting of the CERA Community Forum
Thursday 16 February 2012, 7.30pm
Christchurch Netball Centre, Hagley Avenue**

Present:

Community Forum Members

Hon Amy Adams, Associate Minister for Canterbury Earthquake Recovery

Jane Bryden, Office of the Hon Gerry Brownlee, Minister for Canterbury Earthquake Recovery

Benesia Smith, Chief Advisor to the Chief Executive, CERA

Withheld under section 9(2)(g)(i)

Apologies:

Joseph Chamberlain, Susan Valance (on leave over next few months) Emma Twaddell, Ross Brereton, Rachel Fonotia, Peter Jenkins (arrived late), Brian Parker, Brian Viecei

Chair:

Trevor McIntyre

1 Notes of last meeting

Accepted as true and accurate at the time of the meeting.

2 Kath Fox resignation

The Chair advised Kath Fox had resigned from the Forum following her appointment as Chief Executive at Nazareth Care, a role which will require frequent travel.

3 Associate Minister the Hon Amy Adams

The Minister noted her appointment as Associate Minister for Canterbury Earthquake Recovery to support the Minister for Canterbury Earthquake Recovery.

The Minister acknowledged the Forum's role in providing advice to the Minister for Canterbury Earthquake Recovery. As Associate Minister, she will attend Forum meetings, as her schedule permits, and act as a first point of call for the Forum. This will also enable her to support the Minister by acting as a conduit to Cabinet about issues raised by the Community Forum.

4 CERA update

4.1 Zoning

Benesia Smith confirmed 650 properties remain zoned orange, 450 in Southshore and the rest in the central city, Richmond and Linwood. The remaining issue is whether area-wide land remediation is viable, or will individual solutions be viable.

Other issues to consider are health, social wellbeing, and disruption to communities. CERA is making best endeavours to complete this work as soon as possible.

The timeline for white zone decisions is March to June 2012. An update for release the following day will provide some definition of CCC, CERA and EQC roles and responsibilities, and a note that decisions made in Christchurch around Port Hills issues will have an effect on other areas of NZ and may set a precedent for all of NZ.

4.2 Planning

The draft Recovery Strategy, which sets a framework for the recovery, will be submitted to Minister for his consideration and discussion with Cabinet colleagues, it is hoped it will be approved in 4-6 weeks.

The draft Recovery Plan for the CBD, developed by CCC, is one component of the recovery planning framework. This is currently with the Minister for his consideration and approval. CERA requested further comments and these are being summarised so CERA can provide them to the Minister. The current timetable for approval is April.

Withheld under section 9(2)(f)(iv)
Withheld under section 9(2)(g)(i)

4.3 Community Wellbeing

CERA has hosted community meetings for property owners in the red and green zones, with red zone seminars focussed on assisting with options and support required, along with door knocking of those property owners zoned red.

More property clearances are to be undertaken in next few months, and CERA is talking to residents about preparation for this.

CERA is talking with the NZ Police and Fire Service about burglaries, long grass, etc. in red zones.

CERA is working with social development organisations in Christchurch to ensure support services are well connected, and any gaps and overlaps are identified.

One such gap is the provision of support around insurance advice from independent services. It might be construed that providing "insurance advice" is seen as providing "financial advice" and there are new controls around such advice under the Financial Advisors Act. Consultation with the Retirement Commission, Insurance Council of NZ, Insurance and Savings Ombudsman to resolve potential issues is underway.

Jane Bryden suggested a presentation by the Consumers Institute might assist Forum members understand this issue and better position them to advise people.

ACTION: Forum to discuss requesting Consumers Institute, or other, to present to Forum.

4.4 Operations

1030 CBD buildings have been approved for deconstruction, there are still about 500 to come down.

CERA is writing to all property owners, and getting detailed engineering assessments from a range of property owners across greater Christchurch, to ensure owners are taking seriously their obligations for the health and safety of people.

4.5 Infrastructure

The Stronger Christchurch Infrastructure Rebuild Team (SCIRT) is a partnership of CCC, NZTA and CERA (along with five contractors) working on horizontal infrastructure, moving from emergency response to long term solutions.

A discussion followed about the comments by overseas expert Tom O'Rourke, about where the planning exercise should start - school network, roading network, stadium, convention centre, etc., depending on the objectives and competing interests. A number of public interests need to be balanced in developing a horizontal infrastructure work plan that carefully prioritises and sequences work.

4.6 Question and Answers

A list of questions were asked by the Forum for CERA response, in part answered at the meeting and in part as a follow-up. These are attached as Appendix One.

4.7 General Comments

Forum members indicated that:

- The complexity of EQC/insurance issues is being underestimated and needs to be intercepted by CERA/government to allow for things to move forward
- What is holding the process up? What are the roadblocks around people in TC3 repairing their properties?
- There are too many players making decisions around different aspects of a single property, with little collaboration, causing frustration for property owners. Rights of property owners, and their rights to receive information about their own property, is compromised.
- Property owners have to pay rates, a mortgage and rent while they are waiting for white zone decisions (s124 notices are not).

4.8 Summary

The main concerns from the greater Christchurch communities are:

- Temporary housing need is increasing and government needs to intervene
- Collaborative thinking around decision making
- Decision making deadlines for Port Hills need to be clearer

5 Minister's Office update

Jane Bryden provided updates and responses to questions raised:

- The Minister is still considering the Forum rotation situation
- Going forward we will post formal minutes, as per statutory obligations, notes will be background for the Forum's information and referral, meeting notes taken to date will be edited and posted
- "In Committee" can be used for privileged/sensitive information as appropriate
- A secretary/ administrative support will be sourced and paid for by CERA - will they supply research and background support also?
- Elected Representatives and Community Boards have requested the Forum considered providing regular updates at their meetings. All requests will be sent to Trevor and the Leadership Team.

6 Draft Media Policy

Sub-group recommended that the Forum accepts the draft policy as it stands, with the deletion of item 2.

Forum agreed that no Forum member can discuss, outside of the Forum, any item taken "in committee".

ACTION: Draft Media Policy document to be tidied and circulated prior to next meeting for consideration and approval.

Ask CERA whether media training could be offered to relevant Community Forum members

Ask CERA to investigate development of a monthly newsletter from the Forum to communities that could be disseminated.

7 Development of a process for Forum members to take up requests of them

It was agreed that it would depend on the issue and a case by case assessment is best.

It was suggested that a skills matrix indicating what communities and organisations members represent be developed and used as the basis to guide decisions on who represents the Forum at different things.

8 CERA request for a Forum member on the interview panel for CERA Community Wellbeing roles

There was a mixed response among Forum members about the appropriateness of accepting the offer, ranging from the view that on-the-ground intelligence about what is happening at the community level would be advantageous to the panel, to concerns about the Forum maintaining a separation between policy and operational issues.

Some members were concerned about the risk of aligning the Forum with agencies rather than remaining impartial and focus on being a conduit for the community.

It was decided by majority vote to decline the offer.

Withheld under section 9(2)(f)(iv)
Withheld under section 9(2)(g)(i)

9 EQC request for Forum members to help draft a policy on prioritising vulnerable members of society

There was general support for Forum involvement and it was felt it would be appropriate to identify organisations directly involved with this category of persons and who EQC should consult with to ensure such a piece of policy was sufficiently drafted.

It was agreed that it would be extremely advantageous that they review and comment on the draft document and provide feedback to EQC.

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Chair to email Forum with details, members can self nominate or nominate a specific organisation/person with relevant skill set, etc. Expressions of interest to go to Mike Henstock at EQC.

Draft policy from EQC should be ready within a month. At that time, and at the same time as presenting feedback on this issue, Ian Simpson could be invited to give feedback on the email sent to him about Opting Out.

10 Other Issues

Risk World Wide. A US company which analyses claim settlements to see if you are being paid appropriately according to your policy and if they can get more, for 35% of the additional payout.

Are others out there? CanCERN is working to validate and endorse those which are legitimate. There was concern about the Forum being seen to endorse and it was suggested that it would be more appropriate to recommend people seek advice from local and national institutions.

Individual Forum members to email ideas/information as the Forum needs to be informed themselves so that if community members ask they are prepared.

Recovery Timeline. The Recovery Strategy (when approved) identifies work programmes and time frames for those. It was agreed that when the Recovery Strategy and its programmes are being finalised, including the Central City Plan for the CBD, it would be beneficial if the Forum was provided with an opportunity to comment.

ACTION: Forum agreed it would make an official request to the Minister

11 Next meeting – 16 February

There was some discussion and an agreement that those invited to Forum meetings need to be notified before they present to the Forum to maximise their knowledge/time.

Michelle Mitchell, CERA Community Wellbeing, to be invited to the next meeting. The Forum will email issues and questions to the Chair so he can brief Michelle.

As a group of big issues is identified for the Forum's planned priorities document, then the Forum can split into subgroups to work on questions to ask.

It was agreed that while discussions should not be limited strictly to an agenda, it would be good if the Forum could work more closely to the agendas set in future meetings.

Meeting closed 9.30

Appendix One
(meeting 16 February 2012)

Q: Did CCC not have a Capital improvement plan?

A: Yes, the key issue now is whether the current capital plan that was approved as part of the current annual plan is still the plan for the future.

ACTION: Invite SCIRT to attend a forum meeting to provide an overview of their work

Q: What is CERA doing regarding assisting people to get into new houses?

A: The Minister has used his powers under the CER Act to make changes to the Regional Policy Statement that enables rezoning of particular areas to open them up for residential development. The next step is working with developers on timing for infrastructure and when actual houses can be built. Consent processes are also being streamlined and more work in this area is anticipated.

Q: Is council going to facilitate people having their own design builds as opposed to standard developer's mock ups?

A: People can work with developers for this to occur.

Q: There is an Alliance for the underground infrastructure, why not an Alliance for urgent projects?; as the departure of people and capital increases, leadership and legislation needs to take a lead to implement a solution imminently.

A: The nature of an alliance is to have an agreement to work together based on a common understanding and the same objectives. CERA does not have the ability to make the property developers take similar courses of action.

Q: Does the housing shortage have an affect on the April 2013 deadline for residential red zone offers? Are there any plans for government to build more temporary accommodation villages at this stage?

A: There are no current plans to build more temporary accommodation villages. Currently existing facilities are at 92% capacity, but information is constantly being collected and monitored around the issue, including demand and how it might be supplied by the market.

ACTION: Forum requests more information on the temporary accommodation situation for their information to disseminate to their communities

Q: When rebuild kicks off, where will the workers live? What is the planning?

A: A key issue is the pace of recovery; if you want the pace to increase you need workers and they come with a further set of issues - Where are they going to live? Is there enough supporting infrastructure for families, such as schools? Is the roading network sufficient? What sort of workers are required? What are PMOs doing for their workers? Officials are working on identifying all issues which need to be addressed.

Q: How does the planning occur when there are all these issues to address, and who is going to make these decisions, and when?

A: It is a combination of Central and local government planning and decision-making, CERA is coordinating all the information so that it can be seen in context of the larger recovery framework.

The Forum suggested that regular updates should be made public as these discussions reflect community concerns.

The Forum further suggested greater use of video in preference to print, more informal and reassuring.

Q: Rents are rising, people cannot afford market prices, will Government's intervene?
A: Government still prefers this to be market led. 5000-6000 sections are available now, but residential development is still about developers making choices about when to open a development. Key issues that affect the release of sections to the market in a timely manner are – infrastructure constraints, consenting timeframes (resource and building), market demand, financing, and insurance issues relating to investment cover for the developer. Impediments and challenges are reducing and progress increasing.

Q: Port Hills – green zone; can rebuild or repair. One known case told by insurance that they will not allow a rebuild for three years, and the owner cannot demolish either. There are instances of misinformation leading to misunderstanding of the zoning issues and individual assessment issues especially in the TC3 categories.

A: Green zone means that land is generally suitable to be repaired and rebuilt on. TC3 classification means moderate to significant land damage from liquefaction is possible in future significant earthquakes, and site-specific geotechnical investigation and specific engineering foundation design is required. Unable to comment on the particular individual situation.

Q: Houses with s124 notices are entitled to a reduction in rates payments, but those who cannot live in their homes for other reasons are still paying 60/70% rates, plus a mortgage and rent in a new residence. If houses are inhabitable what is the difference?

A: CCC is responsible for setting rates.

Q: White zone residents want a definitive date for decisions to be made, and red-stickered property owners need to be told, if they must stay out of their homes for longer, exactly when they will be able to return - there needs to be a deadline.

A: There is a timeline on when land zoning decisions relating to the Port Hills will be made. There are a number of factors to be considered by different bodies, i.e. CERA has responsibility over zoning, CCC has responsibility over s124 issues and insurance companies will also have their own set of issues to consider. The government will decide whether the land is OK to rebuild on or not, but will not be making the final call about whether your house is OK to live in re s124 notices, this is a Council decision.