

GRAfton Residents Association

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Chair's report to the members of the Grafton Residents Association for the year ended March 2019.

The new committee started its year with the question posed at last year's AGM – what exactly is GRA for, and can it continue in its advocacy for Grafton? While the jury is still out on the first part of the question, I can say for certain that GRA has indeed continued as an active advocate for Grafton. This is the same paragraph I reported at the 2018 AGM!

Grafton Vision

We received a \$10K grant from the Waitematā Local Board to undertake a community consultation project to better identify our stakeholders and to provide council with guidelines of the community's aspirations and concerns. Very little actual progress has been made on this project this year, after a number of false starts. One glimmer of hope is our recent connection with the Health Precinct Working Group. This is a big group of community stakeholders in search of a purpose, one of which we would like to husband to reach out to all the primary stakeholders in Grafton. If you haven't had your say, get in touch we'd love to hear your views.

Parking Regime

The new Grafton parking regime is now about 10 months old, with mixed success in achieving the goals set out for it. Daytime parking is much easier for residents, however weekends and evenings are still problematic, as we argued in our submission they would be. Parking during Domain events is still a nightmare, and AT has resisted even discussing a regime similar to Eden Park's despite our events being significantly larger.

Submissions

Over the financial year we have submitted on the 2019 Annual Council Budget and ancillary Local Board priorities, storm water consenting, 30kph speed limits, the Freedom Camping By-law, and the Electoral Boundaries Consultation. There have also been a few isolated consultations from Auckland Transport. This advocacy work is no small feat, so thank you to all who helped shape our submissions!

We have also taken part in numerous Domain Committee activities both at regular meetings and when requested, site visits to discuss actions related to the Domain Master Plan.

We did not succeed in our effort to remain wholly within Waitematā and Gulf Ward. Where we did succeed is in keeping Grafton together on the map. The original proposal would have seen Grafton split between Waitematā, Albert Eden and Ōrākei Wards – we would have effectively ceased to exist as a coherent community. As a result of our efforts, Grafton has been moved in whole into the Ōrākei Ward along with Parnell and Newmarket. We also continue wholly within the Waitematā Local Board.

Finances

At last year's AGM it was reported that we were in arrears with regards to some companies office filing, in addition to the new filing from our Rules changes at the 2018 AGM. All that filing is now up to date. Our current financial position may look good at the moment but the funds are allocated to the Grafton Vision project. We need to look at a more sustainable financial plan going forward.

General

Your committee has been meeting and working faithfully all year, and for that I am truly grateful. Behind the scenes Anne Mouat has kept the web and Facebook pages ticking over, and members old and new have been coming out of the woodwork to talk about what Grafton means to them.

If the Grafton Vision work is teaching me anything, it is that there is a deep vein of appreciation for the heritage values of Grafton and a desire to protect them. There is definitely an appetite for more work in the heritage space.

The community is changing a great deal. The park West project is changing the face of Park Road and leaving a long shadow across a number of historic homesteads. Grafton Hall is open in its new incarnation and the students are back. Grafton Residents Association turns 57 this year in a community that is significantly older.

I want to thank the Waitematā Local Board for their contributions to GRA and the Liberal Catholic Church for making their rooms available to GRA for our meetings. I want to thank Dianne Northcott for feeding and hosting every committee meeting we've held this year, and thank the whole committee for their work.

Richard Leckinger
Chair
May 2019