

## **President's report**

### **OSCAR Inc. AGM November 2021**

OSCAR and its member groups have continued throughout the year to work actively in support of the community of the Sunshine Coast across a variety of issues both at State and Local Government levels and all within the constraints of an ongoing pandemic. We are very fortunate on the Sunshine Coast that we have so many passionate community members with knowledge and skills equal to the people with whom we work in both state and local government. If we look across the state I suggest that other LGS's do not have the numbers of active people and groups as here on the Coast.

Our thanks go to OSCAR members who represent OSCAR on various Council and community advisory groups. Active SCRC groups on which OSCAR is represented includes: the Transport Community Reference Group, where Greg Smith continues to represent OSCAR. Susie Chapman was OSCAR's representative on the CHAS for 2 years, joined by Ken Mewburn representing TAPP. They added great value and common sense to the process. Their involvement with other members of the CRG has been acknowledged by Council. I was nominated by OSCAR and accepted by SCRC to be on the Planning 2024 Community Reference Group (CRG)(community engagement). The Planning CRG has met on 4 occasions. The outcomes of 3 of those are on the OSCAR website. We anticipate being advised of the outcomes of the 4<sup>th</sup> meeting when the engagement program for the preliminary non-statutory engagement process has been finalised.

We acknowledge the work of member groups Development Watch, Friends of Yaroomba, SCEC, Friends of Buddina and Twin Waters West and Surrounds as they tackled and continue to call SCRC to account in relation to development approvals that were either NOT in accordance with the Sunshine Coast Planning Scheme 2014 (Sekisui) or did not apply the rules associated with code assessable developments (Friends of Buddina). We were disappointed to hear the determination by Judge Long in the Buddina case, but as Lesley Dimmock from FOB commented – there were wins along the way in terms of stricter conditions.

In relation to TWW, SCRC refused the Development Application and is now part of the P&E court process. OSCAR along with a number of member groups and individuals is supporting SCRC in this decision as Co-Respondents. A number of Court reviews have been held, expert reports delivered, 2 Court directed mediation sessions completed, and another Court review on 9 December 2021.

We wait with interest the outcome of the Supreme Court hearing re Sekisui. One of the very clear messages to SCRC and Noosa from the community, as evidenced by the activity in the courts is that poor processes and decisions by LG will garner community action as has happened in the examples above and as we see it happening across other Coast communities. However, good decisions by LG will be recognised and supported by the community. OSCAR's Right to Information (RTI) re the Sekisui decision, highlighted the best and worst in processes and decisions-making by SCRC.

My description of our working relationship with all levels of government is that of "bouquets and brick bats". We enjoy and value the working relationships we have with them but we do not hesitate to call out examples of where they have not worked in the community interest.

At a State level OSCAR has been very active over the last 2 years, as part of the Community 6 (OSCAR, SCEC, Surf Rider Foundation Sunshine Coast, Development Watch, Coolum Residents Association and Friends of Yaroomba, in fighting the attempt by Consolidated Properties Group for a Priority Development Area declaration over part of the Maroochy floodplain at Coolum West for an intense residential development, commercial areas and wave pool. The residential development and shopping centre are "prohibited development under the SEQ Regional Plan 2017." We will continue to advocate to the State

Government for a refusal to this long-term development wish by the developer and a landholder on this site. Officers in Minster Miles office are very aware that we are very frustrated by the fact that the State is still giving this proposal air time. It is now 2 years since this recent farce started and we call on the State Government to call a halt to this unsustainable proposal and it is okay to say "no".

With the change of faces at SCRC, bringing both experience and fresh ideas we have seen greater transparency, fewer confidential items and a greater focus on community engagement. The willingness of officers to meet with and brief community groups is most welcome and we congratulate Council for that. We have had a number of briefings from SCRC, both face to face and online. We acknowledge and thank SCRC for undertaking such engagement. Briefings have included: Mass Transit, CHAS, new flood mapping by SCRC and Cr Ted Hungerford explaining his consideration and decision relating to a number of SCRC proposals.

The recent flood mapping briefing was an example of an officer going above and beyond. The CHAS, probably one of the key initiatives by both SCRC and Noosa saw wide community engagement, an effective and proactive CRG (SCRC) and outcomes that set key directions for both SCRC and Noosa. We look forward to seeing how the CHAS in SCRC is reflected in the development of the new Planning Scheme.

Probably the recent Mass Transit engagement process and reporting and interpretation demonstrated the good and the bad of community engagement. The amount of time allocated to the engagement process was excellent as was the willingness of officers to participate. However, the interpretation and treatment of the outcomes of that process in the final report demonstrates that SCRC still has a long way to go in valuing community input.

The recent Motion in SCRC re support for a PDA for the Airport was an example of appalling lack of due process particularly in relation to community engagement. The community and councillors were given 3 working days to liaise over this topic and the community was given no time to communicate with SCRC officers. The decision to support a PDA was clearly so that "no third party appeals" could be brought against whatever Palisades and SCRC want to do at the airport.

However, the decision by SCRC to Declare a Climate Emergency is welcomed by members and the community and thanks are due to councillors, in particular Cr Law for the work he did in bringing that motion forward. Similarly the decision by SCRC to remove both Bli Bli (officer's recommendation) and Yandina (CR Law) is testament to the work undertaken by both divisional Councillors within their divisions. We look forward to more such decisions by Council. We congratulate not only the new Councillors but those longer term councillors who have re-evaluated their role.

The new Planning Scheme 2024 (SCRC) we hope, will set a new benchmark for community engagement and further actions to ensure the safety and well-being of people, business and the environment through the planning process. We will have more to say on that in 2022.

2022 will also see OSCAR, SCEC and hopefully USC in conjunction with community groups, SCRC and Noosa Councils and a range of professional organisations, business and academics deliver a very successful "A Climate for Change – An Unconventional Convention in July 2022.

Thanks initially to COVID-19, we now have ongoing live-streaming of SCRC Ordinary Meetings. This has allowed many more community members to see how council meetings are conducted. It also allows time for community members to view meetings at a later, more convenient time. Council is to be congratulated for maintaining this initiative well past the required time under COVID-19. The number of "watchers" for the Mass Transit meeting, the Special meeting re the Airport PDA consideration and the Climate Emergency declaration were very high. MT and Climate Emergency were I have heard some 300 viewers.

Of course Noosa council has been and continues to live-streaming – simple and effective.

OSCAR meetings have been via Zoom for most of 2021 and the executive congratulates members who regularly attend online. Numbers have varied with some meetings having 24 attendees. Thank you for your patience. Using Zoom opens a number of opportunities for OSCAR to experiment that, with appropriate technology we can do both at the same time – face to face and Zoom. In fact Zooming has become very popular and convenient for many members. We have tended to work on the principle that where we hold a workshop or briefing then the OSCAR General Meeting for that month will be Zoom. However, we do need to be conscious that Zooming is not the preferred mode of participation for a number of members and share the face to face and zoom opportunities.

At a regional scale OSCAR has been active in the SEQCA (Melva and Greg) and QLGRA (Greg). 2022 will see SEQCA take on some key planning related initiatives.

Since the 2020 AGM OSCAR has made submissions to the following consultation processes. All the submissions are on the OSCAR website at: <https://www.oscar.org.au/members/submissions/>.

Three of the four submissions were made in December of 2020. Hence my comment last year about SCRC monitoring the timing of submissions.

- SCRC Heritage Plan
- SCRC CHAS
- PS Amendment package
- Mass Transit – June 2021

In conclusion, thank you all for your contribution to and support of OSCAR's work in 2021. I look forward to us continuing to make progress in achieving ongoing advances in governance, community engagement and sustainability in Local Government in 2022 and beyond. I welcome the new executive and look forward to working with them through 2022.

Melva Hobson PSM

President

Organisation Sunshine Coast Association of Residents. (OSCAR)