

TAMBORINE MOUNTAIN PROGRESS ASSOCIATION INC.

'Protecting the quality of living on Tamborine Mountain'

Newsletter.....July, 2015

Gillion Pty. Ltd. (Power pde) – commercial water extraction

This matter is now in the Planning and Environment Court, with all submitters having received notification from the Gillion lawyers, HWL Ebsworth, that they were able to stand as co-respondents in the court process. In the ten days allowable, 108 of the 1,200 objectors were able to be processed and this list was duly registered at the court on Wednesday, 1st July.

Having so many people responding as a block is a rare event for the court. Apart from people being outraged at the large removal of the mountain's aquifer, many feel a strong message to the legal eagles shows determined wide community interest.

This time we are on the same side as Council which by now must be thoroughly sick and tired of this matter and must be sorry they showed the green light so many years ago. With lots of residents riding along beside it, Council hopefully will see the matter through to a successful solution (for itself and Tamborine Mountain residents).

We now wait for a court sanctioned timetable to be set. This sets out the wearying succession of document viewing, experts meeting, further requirements, mediation session before the matter finally gets to be heard by a judge.

Mt. Tamborine Camping & Activities Pty. Ltd - Guanaba

Following Council's unfortunate approval of this inappropriate development application, the conditions set by Council are being challenged by the developer. It will probably be end of July at the earliest before this matter is cleared for the next stage.

At this stage TMPA and residents will be able to lodge an appeal. If this development application proceeds, a large part of the mountain's eastern escarpment will be irreparably damaged and the conservation value of this site will vanish. This is not to mention the aggravation to so many residents. Preparations are in hand for our next step.

SRRC Biodiversity Strategy

Council has come up with a splendid wide reaching (and expensive) Biodiversity Strategy draft document. It is beautifully presented, lots of illustrations, and without doubt containing a vast amount data which illustrates Council's recognition that Scenic Rim indeed boasts a unique natural environment.

Council's approval of the Guanaba extreme sports development on the mountain's eastern escarpment would tally with the response one judge made of another Council development decision - "inexplicable and incomprehensible". (TMPA Biodiversity Strategy submission attached)

Mayor Brent's financial woes

Mayor Brent's financial problems have been reported widely in the media. Besides the Courier Mail, Beaudesert Times and the Boonah newspaper held large headlines and were sold out very soon after they hit the shelves. Westpac's demand for repayment of a \$3.5 m. debt far exceeds the amount owing in the Tasmanian onion grower's case (where the judge referred to Mayor Brent as a "dishonest witness"). On top of this the "aunties' trust fund" now needs to be repaid and further debts are being called in. These are coming from local farmers and the Rocklea Markets, and the total is a figure somewhat larger than the amount claimed by Westpac.

Undoubtedly, a large debt owing to farmers does not sit well with Mayor Brent's recent OAM – given for “services to agriculture”.

The OAM was also awarded for “services to local government”. Quite apart from the fact that the Mayor is very well paid in his regional job, it is this aspect of the OAM which is particularly galling to a community organization like TMPA.

In the old Beaudesert Shire Council days, ex-mayor Joy Drescher happily told all that any local community issue raised was dealt with by her “area representatives”. Amalgamation brought about a seismic change.

Running Council like his personal fiefdom, Mayor Brent's “not on my watch” stance has too often denied ratepayers their participation (even via their “local representatives”) in what one generally understands as “local government”. Council is not a distant State Govt. department, nor should it be a separate corporation dictating to residents what it considers best for them. Alienation and secrecy can best describe council activities since amalgamation.

Mayor Brent is widely reported to be again in the running at the next election (March, 2016). It is to be hoped we do not once more see the disgusting tactics employed previously to eliminate a political rival. Innuendo and unsubstantiated rumours coming from a mayor weigh heavily on potential voters. TMPA did not miss out, and reports came in that the Mayor was telling everyone he was going to sue this organization. It has never been explained why.

TMPA's One Hundredth Birthday Party

Held on 14th June, several hundred people arrived at the Zamia Theatre to join in the celebrations. Ensembles from the Tamborine Mountain Orchestra, a special illustrated timeline of mountain history, salmagundi lucky dip, professional guest caricaturist and a huge birthday cake filled out an afternoon enjoyed by all.

The one hundred years of resident activity has given the region a unique asset. By close involvement of its residents in the mountain's development, this small plateau is now the opposite of the sanitized lookalike areas found elsewhere. No wonder so many residents love the place. And where else would you get a couple of kids setting up a lemonade stall in the CBD ??

Jeanette