



CTAG Rally 26/10/2008 "Sustainable Public Transport - No Road Tunnels or Freeways" Photo Cory Baudman

Royal Park Protection Group Inc.

News Bulletin – November 2008

Final Battle Looms in War over Road Tunnels and Freeways through Melbourne

Since our last news from the front dating from September in which Premier Brumby and his Cabinet were reportedly gearing up to approve funding for the Eddington Review, the Royal Park Protection Group Inc. (RPPG) has joined other disaffected community groups to form CTAG - the Coalition of Transport Action Groups. These include (in addition to RPPG): Brimbank Transport Action Group, Flemington Association, Frankston Bypass Group, Kensington Association, No Freeways 4 West Footscray, South Morang Rail Alliance, Sunshine Residents and Ratepayers Association and Yarra Campaign against the Tunnel (YCAT). Meeting regularly at Trades Hall, we are coordinating action against Eddington's road tunnels and freeways/tollways and are demanding sustainable public transport.

Our first action was to organise a rally held under The Clocks at Flinders Street Station on Sunday 26 October 2008 with the theme "Sustainable Public Transport – No more Road Tunnels or Freeways". The rally was a great success with more than 600 attending; there was a great diversity of participants attending with a preponderance of young people; the TV media coverage was good; and Daniel Bowen, President of the PTUA, was an impressive keynote speaker. He informed us of the urgent need for the reform and increased funding of Victoria's public transport system. I spoke for RPPG and read out messages of support from about 25 groups from Protectors of Public Lands Victoria Inc. (See YCAT website for reports and photos www.ycat.org.au.)

CTAG subsequently met after the rally and we reviewed our objectives. We renewed our "pledge" as follows: *"That this meeting reaffirms that CTAG supports sustainable, equitable and accessible public transport and remains opposed to the proposals under the Eddington Report for construction of road tunnels and elevated tollways in Melbourne. Additionally, we consider that there should be no negotiations entered into with the State or Federal Governments over the Eddington project."*

Premier Brumby says he will unveil the Melbourne Transport Plan in mid December 2008 (it was to be November.) Despite the financial downturn and uncertainty of federal funding, the State Government may press ahead with the Eddington tunnel projects. If so, be prepared to respond!

Quotable Quote: Mr Peter Mc Mullin, a Lord Mayoral candidate in the Melbourne Council election, when answering a Herald Sun online question as to whether he opposed The Tunnel prevaricated and said ... *"if the state government's response to the Eddington Report is to accept the recommendation regarding the tunnel, I will vigorously protect JJ Holland Park from being a staging ground or exit point. Parks like JJ Holland Park are an indispensable community asset and must be protected at all costs. If there has to be an exit in that area, I would advocate for it to be via Paddy's Brickworks in Kensington Rd."* This is all news to "Paddy" who doesn't know that a tunnel might be coming through his brickworks! Watch our lips Mr Mc Mullin and Council candidates - **NO TUNNELS!**

Recent Events in the Campaign Opposing Road Tunnels from mid September 2008

The frenetic pace of events held since mid September concerning Melbourne's Transport system indicates community support for improved public transport and opposition to new freeways/road tunnels. They include:

Wednesday 24 September: State wide Freight Conference attended by RPPG and PPLVIC representatives at which RPPG asked a question of Minister Tim Pallas re the wisdom of spending \$9 billion on road tunnels instead of rail freight.

Wednesday 5 November 2008: RPPG Representatives Met Melbourne Zoo Director: Julianne Bell and Dr Barry Clark met Dr Jenny Grey, Director of Melbourne Zoo, to warn of the threat to the Zoo animals if the proposals to construct a tunnel next to the Zoo in Royal Park proceed as planned in the Eddington Review and to request that she make representations to her Minister. Barry also raised our continuing concern about the adverse impact on Zoo animals of the effects of light at night. Two thirds of the Zoo is illuminated at night by light spill from the State Netball and Hockey Centre hockey fields light towers. I raised the issue of the new inappropriate supermarket-style carpark at the Zoo's nth entrance. It was opposed and lost by RPPG at VCAT.

Saturday 15 November 2008: Walk Against Warming: Numbers of anti tunnel/pro public transport campaigners took part in the Annual Walk against Warming, a protest against climate change and need for action. YCAT and RPPG attended with "No Tunnels" banners and placards. It was disappointing that we were not warned that the Myers Christmas parade had blocked off most of the city and many did not get to the event.

Tuesday 18 November 2008: Meet the Candidates for Melbourne Council Election: The North and West Melbourne Association held a meet the candidates' forum which gave us the opportunity to quiz them on their position re Eddington's road tunnels. All except Robert Doyle's team were unequivocally opposed to the tunnel. In view of the fact that Lord Mayor John So sacked virtually all the Parks and Gardens staff as a cost saving measure, I asked would candidates guarantee that proper staffing levels be restored to save our parks?

Other Recent News

Parliamentary Committee for Environment and Natural Resources – Inquiry into Melbourne's Future Water Supply: I made a submission for Royal Park Protection Group Inc. on the need for local water sourcing projects to ensure water supply for Melbourne's Parks and Gardens, including Royal Park. I attended a hearing which included submissions on storm water projects and local water sourcing projects. See the website under www.parliament.vic.gov.au for submissions and presentations. The Inquiry is proceeding at a snail's pace despite the crisis re water. The next hearing won't be till February 2009!

Royal Park Master Plan Implementation Advisory Committee: At the last meeting for the year a representative from the Royal Children's Hospital attended and tried to defend the huge land grab by the RCH. Other unwelcome and unnecessary infrastructure projects are the car and bus parking at the Zoo's North Entrance; the cycle path through Royal Park which is already built and appears hardly used by commuters or anyone else; and the bus pull in bay outside the Urban Camp which as predicted blocks traffic on Brens Drive.

Council Rejection of Application by CSL for 6 Storey Carpark on Parkville Site

Thanks go the City of Melbourne Councillors for refusing the application by CSL for a 6 storey carpark, which would have overlooked and overshadowed the Wetlands of Royal Park plus intruded on the residential amenity of the Parkville Gardens residential development. (Council staff had recommended that it be approved!)

WHATS ON?

NOTICE OF IMPORTANCE – RPPG AGM WEDNESDAY 3 DECEMBER 2008

Time: 6:45 pm for a 7 pm start. **Date:** Wednesday 3 December 2008

Key Speaker: Dr. Leigh Glover, Assistant Director of the Centre for the Governance and Management of Urban Transport (GAMUT) at the University of Melbourne on "Sustainable Transport for Melbourne."

Venue: Upstairs Meeting Room, North Melbourne Library, 66 Errol Street, North Melbourne. (Near corner of Errol and Queensberry Streets.) Parking available in surrounding streets. Tram up Elizabeth St.

Why Attend: We appeal to you to support us and attend our AGM. RPPG is one of the few organisations standing in the way of Royal Park being bulldozed and homes in West Parkville being compulsorily acquired. Once RPPG folds, organised resistance will disappear. So spare us a few hours to make the evening a success!

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RPPG acknowledges that this bulletin was produced with the assistance of a grant by City of Melbourne.