

TWENTY HECTARE NATURE RESERVE ON TRACK TO BE ESTABLISHED IN INNER SUBURBS

FRIENDS OF ELSTER CREEK PRESS RELEASE 15TH November 2016:

The future of Elsternwick Park North has been up in the air, since the Bayside council rejected the Golf's courses proposal to build a golf driving range last year.

Stage 3 of a community consultation process wrapped up this weekend with deliberations by a panel of residents. The panel was considering a range of options, including sporting, environmental and recreational interests. This followed a range of presentation the preceding weekend.

The community panel voted overwhelmingly in favour of an option to create a public park focussing on:

- Maintaining and enhancing the existing natural environmental assets,
- Indigenous flora and fauna, natural environmental values, habitat and biodiversity,
- Expanding the wetlands,
- Emphasis on passive recreational and educational purposes,
- Flood mitigation, and
- Elster Creek and downstream water quality.

This is a great outcome for the residents of Bayside and those that surround Elsternwick Park and Bayside City Council should be congratulated for this process that has led to this outcome

On Sunday the consultative panel, made up of 25 residents and a small number of interested parties, voted strongly in favour of the area becoming a public park, wetland and wildlife habitat with 83% support. The second most preferred option, establishment of a mega cricket complex at Elsternwick park and the degradation of many of the environmental assets had only 25% support. According to Max Hardy, the facilitator of the process on behalf of Village Well, "any level of support over 80% [83% in this case] indicates extremely strong support for the proposal."

As a panel member commented "This was a difficult decision, balancing the competing interests but I'm excited about the future of the park. As well as habitat for local flora and fauna the park will also contain an area dedicated to junior sport."

One of the key pieces of information relied on by the panel was information provided by Bayside City Council that cricket and or football fields comprise over 40% of the open space in Bayside yet were used by less than 10% of the population. Further, that most of these facilities were used only a small fraction of the week.

It is now over to the Bayside City Council to enact the community panel's recommendations.

Friends of Elster Creek congratulate community panel on this recommendation.

Gio Fitzpatrick is a local naturalist, Youth Wildlife Ambassador at Port Phillip EcoCentre, 2016 recipient of an Individual Achievement award from the United Nations Association of Australia and presenter to the panel. "Elsternwick Park North is unique. It is the only natural water course left in Bayside. It already provides amazing habitat for wildlife". Says Gio....."I have been studying the wildlife in Elsternwick Park North for years. I have found more than 1000 species that live in and around the Elsternwick Park area. Imagine how stunning this area will be, when it is developed into an outstanding park, wetland and wildlife reserve".

"The birdlife in Elsternwick Park North is outstanding", says Matt Pederson, local resident and wildlife photographer. "I am looking forward to it growing and thriving in this new wetland park".

"This is a win for the entire community", says local, resident, Jo Samuel-King "It gives this land back to the community, to whom it belongs."

Photographs taken in and around Elsternwick Park – for use with story

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Photographs – in order

1. Galah munching Dandelion
2. Young Red-rumped Parrots
3. Duck landing on pond
4. Crested Pigeon
5. Royal Spoonbill
6. Sulphur Crested Cockatoo
7. Musk Lorikeet
8. Southern Boobook
9. Australian Wood Duck family
10. Masked Lapwings
11. Tawney Frogmouth
12. Damselfly
13. Australia Reed Warbler
14. Eastern Rosella
15. Little Corella
16. Dragonfly

Videos taken in and around Elsternwick Park

Videos are licenced to be used in association with this story and not for any other purpose. Videos remain the property of Gio Fitzpatrick



1. Elsternwick Park Wildlife
2. Bouncing ducklings – (a must watch)

All Photos and videos are available at

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/m8tgki1zilfn9es/AACuZRJ5RD-1UhM_BMQWxBXma?dl=0

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higher resolution photographs are available if required