

Minutes of a meeting of the Maungatautari Reserve Committee held in the Committee Room, Cambridge Service Centre, 23 Wilson Street, Cambridge on Wednesday 9 February 2005 commencing at 9.00am.

1 PRESENT

Councillor RJ Cooper - Chairperson

Members

S Mackinder (Landowner representative), JB Mylchreest (Maungatautari Ecological Island Trust), T Roxburgh (Department of Conservation), R Smith (Parawera Marae), A Tairi (Maungatautari Marae) – from item 7, B Townend (Landowner representative)

In Attendance

Community Planning and Liaison Manager (A McFarlane), Asset Manager Recreation (M Ward), Committee Secretary (C Plowright)

Rose Smith opened the meeting with a Karakia.

2 APOLOGIES

RESOLVED

10/05/01

That apologies for absence be received from Mayor Livingston, Councillor Flay and Peter Tairi.

Cr Cooper/S Mackinder

The Chairman said that Ally Tairi would be attending the meeting later in place of Peter Tairi

3 LATE ITEMS

Nil.

4 CONFIRMATION OF ORDER OF MEETING

File: 01-85-26

RESOLVED

10/05/02

That the order of the meeting be confirmed.

J Mylchreest/R Smith

5 VISITORS

Nil.

6 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

File: 01-85-26

Minutes of meeting held on 17 November 2004 were included in the agenda.

RESOLVED

10/05/03

That the minutes of the meeting of the Maungatautari Reserve Committee held on 17 November 2004 be received subject to the amendment of the word “objections” to “objectives” on page 3.

B Townend/J Mylchreest

Matters Arising

6.1 Maru Road Boundary Adjustment

File: 01-85-26

Jim said the survey plan for the boundary adjustment to the property on Maru Road had been lodged with Council and was being processed.

7 MAUNGATAUTARI RESERVE COMMITTEE – OFFICER’S REPORT

File: 01-85-26

Report of Community Planning and Liaison Manager dated 1 February 2005 was included in the agenda.

[Ally Tairi joined the meeting at 9.12am.]

Community Planning and Liaison Manager, Andrew McFarlane, said the draft Maungatautari Reserve Management Plan had been circulated to members of the Committee in advance of the meeting so it could be discussed in some detail and, in particular, he drew Committee Members’ attention to section 6 of the draft Plan, which deals with its policies and objectives. He said this section would steer Council with the management of the reserve.

Mr McFarlane distributed an amended copy of the draft Plan, which has amended section numbers but no changes to the text, and an amended version of sections 6.12 and 6.13. He said amendments to those two sections had resulted from feedback from the Department of Conservation (DOC).

Mr McFarlane said the Committee should go through the draft Plan, section by section, and then recommend it to the Policy Committee for public notification, subject to any amendments resulting from today's discussion. He said a two-month public consultation period would follow when there would be further opportunity for input from the Committee. He said staff would pick up minor typing, grammar and formatting errors and that the Committee should focus on the broad principles of the draft Plan.

Ally Tairi said that, on behalf of all Tangata Whenua, she wanted to thank Mark Chrisp and Sharon Dines (Environmental Management Services) for making the process easier for Maori and for their enduring patience. She apologised for the time it has taken to obtain a response from Maori, which she said had been due to involvement in other matters that are still ongoing, and that the Maungatautari Marae would be going through the draft Plan in detail at a Hui on Friday 11 February. She said they would get back to Council with feedback on the draft Plan as soon as possible.

Ally said the main areas of concern to Maungatautari Marae were the cultural and historical aspects of the draft Plan and Rose Smith said Parawera Marae shared that view. Rose said that feedback from Maori on the draft Plan should be provided directly from the individual Marae, rather than through Nga Iwi Toopu o Waipa (NITOW), and Ally spoke in agreement on that point.

Ally said an archaeologist was examining the draft Plan, on behalf of Iwi, to ensure it has the correct historical perspective with respect to order. Jim Mylchreest explained that this would see various Iwi recognised in a formal sense in the correct order of where they are listed in hapu.

The Committee then considered the draft Plan, section by section, and the following amendments were noted.

Existing Authorisations (Section 2.2)

Jim suggested that the words ***“without a fresh Consent”*** should be added to the last sentence of this section.

Andrew asked if Council could have a copy of the consent authorising the aerial poison drop and Jim said he would follow that up.

Waikato Regional Policy Statement (Section 5.5)

Jim said he was concerned that, in their Regional Policy Statement, Environment Waikato said the focus for the Maungatautari Scenic Reserve was the preservation of flora and fauna as opposed to recreation. He said he felt there should be a better balance between the two objectives.

Public Access to Maungatautari Scenic Reserve (Section 6.2)

Ally raised concerns in relation to the current public pedestrian access through Hicks Road and said the matter needed to be addressed before Council considered alternative access points. Jim explained that when Matamata County Council formed the pedestrian access from Hicks Road it had been done in a way that had caused ill feeling amongst affected landowners. He said the landowners wanted Council to go back to the original documentation and get the matter sorted out before it looked at other public access points.

Ally explained why the issue was of concern to the affected landowners and why it was important for Council to address this past grievance as soon as possible. She said that with an alternative access now being mooted the affected landowners on Hicks Road wanted an undertaking from Council that their land would be restored to its original status. Jim said there was deep-seated concern amongst the affected landowners because not all of them were consulted on the matter. He said it had the potential to cause conflict at some stage and he suggested the Committee recommend that Council investigate the past formation of the pedestrian accessway off Hicks Road and look at the provision of a more practical alignment for permanent access to the reserve.

Andrew said that if it was expected that the issue would be addressed before the Reserve Management Plan was adopted then that process would be held up. Ally said an indication from Council that it is prepared to progress the issue was what the affected landowners were seeking.

RESOLVED

10/05/04

That the Maungatautari Reserve Committee recommend to Council that the existing legal access agreement with Hicks Road is investigated with a view to amendment in order to address the concerns of landowners and accommodate the effects of increased reserve usage.

Cr Cooper/B Townend

[The meeting adjourned at 10.10am and reconvened at 10.30am.]

Management of Flora (Section 6.3)

Tony Roxburgh suggested removal of the word *“mammalian”* from the last Reserves Act Linkage in this section as there may be introduced bird pests in time.

Management of Fauna (Section 6.4)

Jim said it was likely that, as a safe haven, Maungatautari could be used to protect some species that were not there originally. Tony suggested the policy be amended to read *“To enable the re-introduction of desirable indigenous animal, bird and insect species”*.

Management of Mammalian Pests (Section 6.5)

Tony suggested inclusion of the word *“intended”* in the last policy to provide the flexibility required when advising affected landowners about pest eradication programmes.

Protection of Historic and Cultural Values (Section 6.6)

Ally said that traditionally logs from Maungatautari were occasionally used for Waka Taua stored at Turangawaewae and she asked if the third policy would prevent that from happening. Tony said fallen trees were used for that purpose and that the policy should be amended to read *“(excluding standing trees or logs ...)”* to make this clear. Andrew said the District Plan also has rules that provide protection for indigenous vegetation.

Councillor Cooper queried the reference to Section 46 of the Reserves Act about the right to take or kill birds. Tony said the Wildlife Act was specific about what birds are protected and, for the sake of clarity, the words *“subject to the provisions of the Wildlife Act, native birds are protected”* could be added to that reference. Andrew said it could also be mentioned that this part of the Reserves Act is subject to a caveat or, alternatively, completely take the reference out.

Research and Education (Section 6.7)

It was suggested that the words *“To enable an agent of Council to collect fees ...”* be added to this policy.

Accommodation (Section 6.10)

Jim said he felt it was too limiting to restrict overnight camping to the two enclosures. He said it might be possible that in 10-20 years time, when Kiwi and other species are established on the mountain, that permanent overnight shelters were required. He said it would be preferable for campers to use designated sites rather than making their own arrangements. He said some toilet facilities could be provided but there would be no requirement to provide showers and lighting (as required under the Camping Ground Regulations) because it would be classified as remote camping.

Asset Manager Recreation, Max Ward, said he felt a higher standard of accommodation should be provided, such as a lodge, and the draft Plan should not be limiting the accommodation to an open sided structure.

There was general agreement that the word **“shelter”** was acceptable but that the words **“northern and southern”** should be removed from the policy so accommodation is not limited in future.

Fires (Section 6.11)

It was suggested that the word **“open”** be inserted before **“fires”** in the first policy to make it clear that portable stoves and barbecues are permitted.

Commercial Activities (Section 6.12)

Andrew said this section of the draft Plan had been revised as result of feedback from DOC. He said the draft policy now provided for commercial activities within the enclosures but the balance of the reserve was restricted to guided walks. He said that limiting commercial activities in those other areas would give the Trust more say on what happens within the enclosures whilst leaving the rest of the reserve as untouched as possible. Jim said that whilst he saw the potential for commercial activities to take place in the rest of the reserve in the future, this would not be in the short-term.

There was discussion concerning MEIT's status with respect to being a licensee and a potential commercial operator, whilst also having the ability to influence how much funding Council puts back into the reserve from the payment of royalties. Andrew said it was hoped a Memorandum of Understanding between MEIT and Council would clarify that relationship.

Jim suggested that somewhere in the draft policy it should be made clear that normal access onto the Maunga is still available at no cost. Ally asked how Council would prevent tour groups from giving their own guided tours without paying the concession. Tony explained that self-policing amongst the commercial operators usually keeps this under control.

Ally said many Maori were offended at the prospect of being charged for accessing something that they deem to be their birthright. Tony said the only charge was for an added value experience and that normal access was not denied to anyone. Jim suggested that something should be included in the draft Plan to explain that the charge for “added value” would be used to pay for the significant costs of fence and track maintenance. Andrew said that was explained in the fourth paragraph of 6.13.1.

Andrew said Council would publicise what the requirements are for commercial operators and there would be signage placed at all the entry points explaining what can and cannot be done on the Maunga.

Domestic Animals, Dogs and Horses (Section 6.15)

Jim said this policy should relate to all animals, with the exception of some classes of dogs. It was agreed that the exception would be seeing eye dogs, dogs used for search and rescue and security and authorised hunting dogs for pest control. Tony suggested that the restriction should apply to all domestic and farm animals and all pets. It was agreed to add the words **“once fence completed”** to the objective.

Mountain Bikes

There was discussion about whether the provision of designated mountain bike tracks was appropriate on the reserve. It was agreed to leave this policy in and see what response is obtained when the draft Plan goes out for public consultation.

RESOLVED

10/05/05

That the Maungatautari Reserve Committee recommends Policy Committee approval to publicly notify the draft Maungatautari Reserve Management Plan as amended in response to Department of Conservation feedback and suggestions from the Maungatautari Reserve Committee.

R Smith/B Townend

The Committee then went on to consider the rest of the officer’s report.

Jim said the Trust had not yet had the opportunity to investigate the mountain and establish where other points of interest are and where future tracks might be developed. He said a higher priority for the Trust was to develop basic ridgeline tracks for monitoring and pest eradication work. He said he imagined that the development of tourist walking tracks would happen over a long period of time as demand dictates.

Andrew said Council wanted to know if future developments would necessitate another track crossing private property. Jim said the only other track being considered at present was to the waterfall and that would not cross private land.

Andrew said it was suggested that the relationship between Council and the Trust should be formalised through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to clarify the expectations and responsibilities of each party and how that relationship might operate. He said a first draft of the MOU had been sent to the Trust and would be amended to accommodate some of the issues brought up through the draft Reserve Management Plan. He said it was hoped the Trust would report back to the Committee on the MOU at the next meeting (13 April).

RESOLVED

10/05/06

That Council staff prepare a Memorandum of Understanding between Waipa District Council and Maungatautari Ecological Island Trust, the purpose of which is to clarify the expectations and responsibilities of each party, and to specify the means by which that partnership will operate.

T Roxburgh/S Mackinder

In response to the question asked in the report about meeting frequency, all members present said they were happy to meet bi-monthly in future.

RESOLVED

10/05/07

That meetings of the Maungatautari Reserve Committee be moved to bi-monthly.

T Roxburgh/R Smith

RESOLVED

10/05/08

That the report of the Community Planning and Liaison Manager dated 1 February 2005 be received.

S Mackinder/R Smith

8 PROGRESS REPORT FROM MAUNGATAUTARI ECOLOGICAL ISLAND TRUST

File: 01-85-26

Progress Report from the Maungatautari Ecological Island Trust dated 2 February 2005 was included in the agenda.

Jim reported on the excellent results achieved from the pest eradication programme.

Jim said the Trust's target for this year's construction season is 20km of perimeter fence which will require \$3.3 million. He said it was hoped to finish the fence in the next construction season, with the poison drop scheduled in August 2006.

Andrew asked if the enclosures were open to the public yet. Jim said the gates to the enclosures were operational using a key pad and the public were warned that rat traps might be put out if required.

Jim said the reintroduction of Kiwi had been addressed from a cultural perspective and the Trust was now waiting for Kiwi to become available from Operation Nest Egg.

RESOLVED

10/05/09

That the progress report from the Maungatautari Ecological Island Trust dated 2 February 2005 be received.

S Mackinder/R Cooper

There being no further business, the meeting was declared closed at 12.25pm.

Rose Smith closed the meeting with a Karakia.