

Council

**Wednesday, 30 April 2003
Commencing at 5.30 pm**

PART C

REPORT OF THE MAYOR

**SUPPLEMENT TO THE AGENDA FOR AN ORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL
TO BE HELD IN THE CIVIC CENTRE, 6 WAIPAREIRA AVENUE, LINCOLN,
WAITAKERE CITY, ON WEDNESDAY, 30 APRIL 2003,
COMMENCING AT 5.30 PM.**

PART C - REPORT OF THE MAYOR

CLEANING UP THE FUTURE

This Council feels that going to Henderson is a good idea, and it is. To take the Council and all that it is and means - staff, operations, elected members - and centre it in the very heart of Waitakere City, is something that is both visionary and practical.

Visionary because if you think out twenty or thirty years, every city needs a strong supported centre, and Henderson has always suffered from being difficult to access, split in half by a rail line, and divided by streams and roads. To be honest, nothing has made much sense in Henderson, even the Great North Road was neither great nor north, it finished in the west. So of all the ingredients missing in Henderson, what was missing was a grand vision.

If we could have turned the clock back perhaps fifty years, we could have made some decisions that would not have seen Henderson so truncated, as if someone had thrown a puzzle up in the air and let the pieces fall where they may. An army of planners would be working overnight to get things logical.

But somehow it is coming together. The bits might just flow. There is a long way to go, but we do know where the new highlights are, West City and their new development Stages III and IV will anchor the centre, as will our new library. Of course, our supportive and good friends at UNITEC.

M1-M5

However, the rail link troubles me greatly. I trust neither Tranz Rail nor the future in delivering double tracking past New Lynn, at least not in our lifetime. But I do trust in the passion of our planners in realising that linking our City centre within a rail-bus corridor and thereby further linking transportation with the west city, Unitec is both feasible and realistic. If even that great grid locked City of London can make bold moves on transport and make them stick, there is hope even for Auckland, as attached at pages M1 to M5.

This is where the projects starts to take flight. To link all the pieces together in one concentrated effort is a must, if we are not to create a white elephant of any one piece. We need to show a master plan, such as in the illustration below.





It needs to be bold and positive, as we need to bring the public and our community with us. We need to see something that we used to see on architectural plans of new buildings, with sweeping roads, wide overhead trains, etc. that inspired us on how it could be. In the 1970s, Robbie had such plans drawn for Queen Street and light rail, and as an aside so did New Lynn in 1927. If they look like megatropolises of the 21st century, so they should.

M6

We have shown we are capable of design and style in the West Wave Aquatic Centre, Massey and New Lynn public buildings show: we know how things can work. I am asking a couple of our people to go and look at Taranaki. I think something exciting is happening down there, and it in a way reflects what is happening here in Waitakere City. We consistently think ahead of the pack, and that is why I believe it is difficult and we do get some slings and arrows but we know how it can work. So do they in New Plymouth, and I want to know how they got there, as attached at page M6.

Before we get there, we need to clean up the site. Henderson has had a rough ride, with poor retail delivery, tough landlords, difficult parking (though plenty of it), and lacking a civic group of retailers and businesspeople, and that's a pity. Of late, there has been a small but difficult group of local dropouts and interesting kids that have made shopping and street traffic difficult.

A month ago, I met with the management of West City. They are concerned that a lack of signage has compounded a trading situation that has not been up to expectations. Too many customers are simply not using Henderson as a destination. They are going down the north-western motorway to Auckland City, St Lukes and Parnell/Newmarket. The movie complex within West City is also in need of a promotional edge. We talked through some solutions; linking West City promotions with our own pool upgrade and promotional activities, and I am awaiting a proposal from both West City and our own officers on how a "shop and swim" combo might work.

At the same time Joe Moodabie of Village Force has offered to pick up on my suggestion of an art house series similar to top-end movies that are often an Auckland City destination: Rialto, Bridgeway, and Mission Bay. Joe is if anything a great showman and recognises that Village Force is also missing out on an audience from Titirangi, Waitakere and North Harbour. We are talking a June launch, of one theatre becoming a top-billing showcase theatre, and tied in with better coffee and snack facilities. This will offer Henderson another retail dimension that is at present missing; an older, more mature buying audience that is not shopping in Henderson at present.

My own thoughts are that we are missing out on customers looking for fashion and style. This is being provided by other areas, other malls, and I believe this will be borne out by our own surveys.

Linking promotions with our own facilities is hugely important. If we are going to link our civic centre and the staff that make up this City infrastructure we need to hold that customer base in leisure facilities such as gyms, meeting places, exhibitions, and different and diverse entertainment. It seems that we are not holding our students and we are certainly not attracting west harbour customers. A look around West City will show customers that tend to be local, or north-west based - Swanson and Ranui. This needs to grow to encompass a wider audience.

Of greater concern are the social problems that have started to grow out of a group of street kids originally centred the old railway stations and the Keeling Road area, but lately have moved around the main street and Catherine Street mall. Although small in number, they tend to be menacing to older residents, and there has been concerns in the media that they have been a reason for some of some of the downturn in retail.

I took a morning's stroll talking to Henderson retailers. I got a mixed reaction. Some retailers felt that the kids were not a problem and that they were in just about every town centre in New Zealand. They are not wrong in that assumption. But that not enough had been done to enforce truancy and bad street behaviour. But apart from the occasional fracas, the kids to me were simply at a lost end.



At the same time I had had urgent request from Ross Harvey to call a meeting with key Henderson landlords Ross Harvey, Maureen Brooker, Brian Corban, Eli Friedlander. We met with Waitakere Police District Commander Roger Carson and Inspector Rob Abbott. I wanted to include Helen Jones, Community Board Chairperson of Henderson and someone who has been totally committed to solving some of these problems and I was pleased that she availed herself to come to this meeting.

We all agreed that something did have to be done, and indeed it was being actioned. There was no doubt at the meeting that there was much that could be implemented to ensure that the streets of Henderson are safe, that lighting is absent and that the landlords feel aggrieved that they have not had the lighting issue addressed in a way that is acceptable to their business, to safety and main street revitalisation.

Lighting is important; it offers not only illumination but also a feeling of security. It also gives retail a sense of place and main streets like Henderson an acknowledgement of success. Believe me Henderson after 9pm is like a return to the 1950s. It is deserted, dark, and looks decisively unsafe.

M7-M15 Part of this problem is the absence of a business association. There has been little activity in this area, and it needs to start up again, and be supported and assisted by Council. The meeting received a number of letters, which Ross Harvey presented with grave concern. I am enclosing a few to give Councillors a feel for the concerns of our local retailers in Henderson, as attached at M7 to M15.

The meeting decided that supporting each other, the Police, the retailers, and the Council, was a way to move forward; that we would address the lighting immediately, that we would ensure that Catherine Place was designated for Police patrolling (this needed a change of designation by Council), and that we should explore support for the street kids, who could for many reasons (unemployment, dislocation of family) be simply surviving on the street. I know there will be adverse attitudes to these young people, but I have a great deal of sympathy for marginalized young people. They are not necessarily criminal or indeed involved in either or drugs, though this is often the long-term outcome of being homeless. We have discussed over the years a youth drop in centre.

A serious centre that is well modelled in other Cities where youth have had a real desire for better facilities - Lower Hutt, Porirua, Christchurch and Dunedin are ex that come to mind where they have converted warehouses or factories into well run and managed youth centres. We have been very proud we are the youngest city in New Zealand, but we have failed our young people in providing the kind of facility that is urgently needed in a situation like Henderson. The police believe that it is important that these facilities are available, and managed to the highest standard.

Helen Jones and our excellent and supportive Waitakere Police are well aware of the damaging and corrosive social issues. Their input into making Henderson a better destination, shopping and community town centre - are quite invaluable.

If Henderson is going to be a true centre of Waitakere, it needs to be alive and flourishing, if we are going to make the quantum leap with our other partners in this century, we are going to have to think smart and wider, socially, strategically, and with design and business acumen.

M16 There will be ongoing meetings until these areas are resolved, but I would like to start a process now of Council support to attempt to resolve the retail concerns. You will see from the request of Janet Hannan who is the key officer for the Henderson revitalisation programme, that we have been attempting to encourage business and landowners to improve their lighting while at the same time the Council have been active in cleaning up graffiti, rubbish and making the Henderson main street attractive and sustainable, as attached at page M16.



I have asked the Chief Executive to action the replanting of all the trees that have died in the main street. I would now like the Council to immediately address the lighting issues with the retailers and encourage the local business to re-form and enthuse the Henderson Business Association.

I believe that Henderson can become a vital and hugely successful town centre. Not in competition to Massey or New Lynn, but in its own right a very successful commercial hub of Waitakere City. But it will not happen without a huge commitment, good planning and strategic smart thinking.

I am pleased that the integrated transport approach that will see the moving of the railway station has gained wide approval. The new civic library, its situation in Trading Place and the realignment with Ratanui Street is one of those key ingredients. What I would like to see clearly spelled out is new road access that would link in a "ring road" scenario the Council, library, aquatic centre, in a clear and easy thread. If I can return to the west City concern of signage, Henderson must address its signage absence. It is invisible from the north-western motorway, and this is of urgent concern.

Henderson is not a destination, it is an afterthought and it must be lifted to an important, major destination for shopping, leisure and entertainment. My recommendations to this meeting are as follows:

- That the Council actively pursues a working partnership with Henderson retailers and landowners, in order to jointly ensure that lighting, safety and a coordinated shopping and leisure experience is delivered in Henderson.
- That the Council works closely with Waitakere Police, the Henderson Community Board and the Maori Wardens and reports to Council on actions to resolve the street kid problem.
- That the Council develop a comprehensive retail and community revitalisation programme for Henderson in conjunction with the Civic Futures, Henderson Library and Twin Streams Projects.

ANZAC DAY, IRAQ AND LAWRENCE OF ARABIA

Over the Easter weekend I read again *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* by TE Lawrence. This brilliant memoir reminds us that the hard part is yet to come; that Iraq is one of the most complex and difficult of all the Arab states. Let us start with a plain fact: the military forces of Saddam Hussein were no match for the might of the "Coalition of the Willing". So it is surprising, with all the running hype from CNN and daily outbursts, that no one seemed to care that this has all been played out before. This was how it went: Lawrence, who was part of the original strategy to create Iraq was a friend to the first ruler of Iraq Prince Faisal Hussein, and together they helped channel the Arab nationalism into a doctrine of guerrilla warfare. They understood clearly that the ruling states of the Middle East were setting out a pattern that would work for their interests, and foreshadow the inclusion of their alter ego Palestine and the Jewish state. The Iraq state would grow from this complex game.

So what has happened in the ten years since the Gulf War? If CNN held any truths in its "embedded" coverage of this war, it was that the Iraqi army were simply a bunch of rag-tag conscripts. Nothing needed to be done as seriously as the Americans would have us believe. Containment was so much a better agenda than this war of nonsense.

Whether or not the occupation of Iraq (and now possibly Syria) ends with a more democratic middle east, or a protracted people's war, is now open for conjecture. So much depends on how the Blair administration can relate to a world they cannot possibly understand or comprehend. Blair and Bush to me are simply repeating the waking nightmare - even Lawrence was aware that his guerrilla efforts required time: "A province would be won when we had taught the civilians in it to die for our ideal of freedom. The presence of the enemy was secondary. Final victory seemed certain, if the war lasted long enough".



Of course, the long-held rhetoric of the White House seems to promise just such a protracted situation, and not just in Arabia. The United States is going to be the world's police force, and an active one at that, taking the "war on terror" to the streets of Baghdad, but where next? Damascus? Pyongyang? Manila? Tehran? Auckland? We would do well to keep in mind that - with the technologically and economically dispossessed, the militant religious sects, and the terrorists who act from the age old truth that when there is no future, nothing is forbidden - we are entering an age of global crisis and we should choose our weapons carefully. As Lawrence wryly remarks, "War upon rebellion is messy and slow, like eating soup with a knife".

When Bush decided to invade Iraq, my letter to all the mayors of New Zealand recommending broad-based multilateral action seemed somewhat irrelevant. Or did it? John Terris my mayoral Colleague of Lower Hutt, decided to send his decisive reply not only to me but also to all other New Zealand mayors too, and the Sunday "Snare" -Times.

For a while, I was perplexed at whether I should respond. But when Local Government New Zealand was meeting in Auckland, they decided to do it for me with a joint letter of support. I could not have been more pleased to have a stirrup from people that I not only enjoy but also respect. It comes down to really standing for what you believe.

I do not believe that Mayor Terris is right in saying that there is no place for local govt in these issues. I believe there is absolutely every reason for mayors and cities to show leadership, direction and, yes, a conscience. The absence of analysis of the huge political cost of this invasion of Iraq is interesting. The National Business Review in particular has been appalling in its criticism of government, underlying its failure to understand the reasons behind the Middle East conflicts or even doing any serious homework at where the problems originated. The Prime Minister has been more than careful, and I for one do not believe for an instant her so called gaffe meant anything. David Lange - back from the dead and in good form, spelled it out when he said on the Kim Hill interview last week that when New Zealand was in their darkest corner after the ANZUS pullout, the ever-grovelling Australians decided to up the ante against New Zealand by a formal visit by the then - Deputy Prime Minister Hayden to the White House. While returning home, the hubris-filled Hayden was told that the United States of America had just decided to dump Russia with cheap wheat, thus ruling out Australia's edge in the global wheat trading sector. There is no way that New Zealand can offend America, or please it.

These were my thoughts as I contemplated the Seven Pillars of Wisdom and the up and coming round of ANZAC day commemorations that this Council plays a major role in. ANZAC Day is an important day in our calendar. In this City rest the dead of the last century's world wars, and our dawn service is growing in numbers and in respect.

In the dark, as we wait for the march of the returned servicemen and women, one always thinks of the lessening numbers, and in the crowd the young children who seem to be more and more involved in this important and often moving lesson of what has gone before. This year more than any since I have been the mayor, we are in the aftermath of the trauma of a war. Nothing can soften that reality - the last month has seen the most dreadful of human tragedies - limbless innocent children, as innocent as the ones who are gathered at our cenotaphs on ANZAC Day.

M17-M21 I have never been a supporter of armed conflict to resolve any dispute, and I was almost tempted to send a letter of congratulations to the Hollywood gang who protested against the war on Iraq. I was particularly impressed by one of my favourite actors, Tim Robbins, and his address to the American Press Association, which I include below. He probably will not work in the star system again, and nor will his wife, the incredibly Susan Sarandon, but at least they both had the courage to acknowledge their conscience, as attached at pages M17 to M21.

My letter to the New Zealand mayors only caused one local outcry; someone anonymously sent me my photograph with a scrawled inscription and a white feather, the Victorian symbol of cowardice. Strangely I have never thought myself in that category. But I am always nervous at what is in the minds of the older returned servicemen and women, as they arch towards the cenotaph in the dark.



Later at the RSA's when their spirits are lifted, they will talk about their war experience - where they served, and their missing comrades. We will be missing Gene Leckey this year. I have always felt that they have wanted indeed deserved a world that considers war only at the very last resort.

The returned servicemen themselves seem more than anything to not want to see war happen. At the official completion of the far north Herekino walk, back at the Manukau Marae, many of the elderly men had been with the Prime Minister at the reunion for El Alamein. Eloquently and I thought surprisingly, they praised her judgement in not supporting the war and thanked her for not sending young New Zealanders abroad.

This feeling is one that I believe is strong at this ANZAC Day. This country feels that the conflict in Iraq is not of our making or of our resolve. Just as much as Gallipoli, it is an historical moment that shows us all that we have grown up. New Zealand has always been keen to jump into a scrap, generally other people, from the Boer War to Vietnam. In the last twenty years we have come to realise that these conflicts have a dreadful ongoing damage. A bit like bale fills, you have to look at a hundred years of aftercare. I am pleased that New Zealand is comfortable at standing up and choosing our conflict and aftercare.

M22

For my Mayoral colleagues throughout New Zealand who did not agree with this Council's stand on Iraq and our letter that followed our Council meeting, I wonder what they wrote for the ever-increasing crowd of young New Zealanders, as they put on their mayoral chains and robes and penned their speeches for the 25th, as attached at page M22.

MILESTONES

OPENED

Fringe of Heaven Retreat

M23

The wonderful home built by former Councillor of Waitemata days Bill Haresnape has been turned into an extraordinary addition to our bed and breakfast accommodation network. I would have liked to have done the honours and opened the Fringe of Heaven but I was up in the far North at the opening of the Herekino Te Araroa Walkway and could only make it for the wine and cheese following the opening by Rt Hon Jonathan Hunt who kindly stepped in and did the honours. Jonathan, who knew Bill Haresnape well, reminisced about Haresnape's environmental work in the Ranges and on the coast. We all talked into the early evening about what a fantastic project the House was for Bill and his wife. The house is run by Bev Ishbel and Julian, who have owned the place for about twelve years. Go visit and stay. You will find it at 4 Otitori Bay Road Titirangi, as attached at page M23.

LAUNCHED

Waitakere City's First Orchestra

It is with great pleasure that I am able to tell you that the composer/conductor Brigid Bisley of Titirangi has assembled an amazing orchestra for the enjoyment of the people of Waitakere. Known as the Waitakere City Orchestra, the first performance, more a rehearsal than an actual event, was attended by about 100 people and myself and David Cunliffe as civic leaders. I was disappointed that our Council and community board members did not avail themselves on this occasion to be part of the inaugural concert, but I am sure you will be there in the future.

The orchestra will play two concerts a year, and are at present bringing together a Trust that will involve Rt Hon Jonathan Hunt as patron and myself. We are at present asking Councillors for nominations for the Trust. I am sure you will all join me in congratulating Brigid Bisley for her enthusiasm and passion at giving Waitakere City an opportunity to enjoy music from the classics. They are at present assembling for pre-publicity photos with Ted Scott at the Karekare waterfall, and their first concert will be later in the year.



WON

Waitakere City Trusts Brass Band

And on the subject of music greats, let us all applaud Waitakere City Trusts Brass who have returned triumphant from thrashing the Aussies to be crowned the winners of the 2003 Australian National Brass Band Championships in Newcastle. As one of the patrons of this dazzling band, I look forward to their regular concerts. They are one of our great treasures, and I always feel that they are underused in this City. Winning the overall contest by eighteen points, Waitakere City "Trusts" Brass collected trophies for the highest aggregate score, best marching band in the Parade of Bands, best Drum Major (Allan McDonnell), best Hymn, best Set Test Piece and, of course, for the Winning Conductor (Andrew Snell). But to top it all, the band walked away with the prestigious Silver Fireman's Helmet, the symbol of brass banding in Australia, and the title of 2003 Australian National Brass Band Champions.



I am sure all Councillors will join with me in congratulating our Waitakere City Trusts Brass Band on their achievement.

DIED

Dick Pedrotti

One of our great voices, Dick was a foundation member of the Te Atatu Men's Choir (new Waitakere). A great lover of music and the fellowship of singing. He will be greatly missed by music lovers throughout the Auckland region. Much beloved father of international opera singer Mark Pedrotti, who returned from Canada for the service. This Council offers its deepest sympathy to wife Marjorie, and to his large and supportive family. A life well lived in song.



RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Report of the Mayor be received.
2. That the Council actively pursues a working partnership with Henderson retailers and landowners, in order to jointly ensure that lighting, safety and a coordinated shopping and leisure experience is delivered in Henderson.
3. That the Council works closely with Waitakere Police, the Henderson Community Board and the Maori Wardens and reports to Council on actions to resolve the street kid problem.
4. That the Chief Executive be asked to consider and report back to Council on how Council could develop comprehensive retail and community revitalisation programme for Henderson in conjunction with the Civic Futures, Henderson Library and Twin Streams Projects, with a view to building an existing work programmes and recognising the resourcing levels provided for in the Draft Long Term Council Community Plan.

RA Harvey, QSO, JP
MAYOR OF WAITAKERE CITY