



**STRATA COMMITTEE MINUTES**  
**1830 Wednesday March 15, 2017. Altair SC Meeting Room.**

**Attendance:** Ralf Harding (Chair), Eric Moses (Secretary), Michael Cluff, Mandy Heimann, David Mackinnon, David Saul, Kevin Wellington.

**Guests:**

**Apologies:** Chris Gardener, Luisa Liotta

**Minutes of Last Meeting:** Accepted

**Matters Arising:** See following

**Correspondence:**

- 1) AGM. Letter received from a non-resident owner, Edward Lloyd, noting that he had not received the Agenda for the AGM; and a response from the Chair attaching written advice to Strata Choice (SC) from Mr Lloyd's agents requesting that SC send documents relating to Mr Lloyd's lot directly to them.
- 2) STRA. Letter from the Commissioner of Fair Trading on behalf of Premier Berejiklian and Minister Kean advising receipt of letters from the Chair regarding STRA.
- 3) A/C.
  - a. Email from an owner, Adam Beck, with suggestions about the power supply issue (Plan B). Receipt acknowledged by the Chair noting that the issue would be discussed at this meeting.
  - b. Letter from owners, Barry and Cathie Brownjohn, noting amongst other things that the A/C issue is complex and multi-faceted; and requires a comprehensive evaluation of all issues so that owners have a full background for decision-making (editors paraphrasing). Receipt acknowledged by the Building Manager.

**Finance Report:**

The Financial Summary for February indicates that we are slightly (\$20k) under budget YTD. SC agreed to load the monthly financial summary onto the website each month.

**Building Manager's Report:** Attached

Smart Green Apartments

As an adjunct of the CoSC Sustainability Audit, we have been introduced to another CoSC initiative – Smart Green Apartments (SGA). We are investigating opportunities to benchmark ourselves against other large residential complexes and to actively

monitor various energy flows such as water, gas and electricity via SGA. Our Building Manager is in liaison with SGA and is evaluating opportunities for Altair to more actively manage our energy usage. It seems likely that we will be given access to their Energy Evaluation Portal and that we will have the opportunity to join a residential apartment benchmarking scheme.

### 2017 Capital Works Programme

- a) Water and Fire Tanks. These have been serviced and disinfected.
- b) TV Antennae: Scheduled for April
- c) Concierge Mess: Scheduled for May
- d) Roof Membrane: Scheduled for July
- e) Window Latches (Child-proofing). Scheduled for September.
- f) Car Park Louvres. Scheduled for October.
- g) Car Park Lighting and Pool Boilers – on hold pending CoSC Energy Sustainability review. (See following)

### Gardening

Owners may have noticed that the hedges on level one (in front of the studio apartments) have been heavily pruned. This pruning is deliberately severe, on the advice of our gardeners, to prevent the plants getting 'leggy'.

### **Updates**

#### 20-year plan

We have re-reviewed our 20-year plan. Our 20-year plan has previously been circulated to the SC. The current plan will be posted to the Altair website.

We note that the plan may be affected by the CoSC Sustainability Audit – approx. \$190k of works recommended (from 2018?); and the possible upgrading of our power supply (see Plan B following).

These programmes may require a complete re-think of the whole Financial Plan - depending on possible future decisions. We can shuffle money between funds to help deal with this and other issues, and probably will as indicated in our new 20-year Financial Plan, **but**...

...it has also become obvious that the costs in the Admin Fund are steadily increasing faster than the other (Capital Works and Lift) funds - and general (CPI) inflation.

This increase is exacerbated by such things as energy costs. Electricity costs are up as much as 50% for 2017 alone. Gas costs have increased around 50% in the last 5 years. For these and a variety of other reasons Admin costs are increasing faster than CPI and our plan. For example, our budgeted Admin Fund expenses for 2017 are up 4% over 2016 but we are only collecting 3% more in levies. This doesn't seem much but this difference quickly grows (the wonders of compound interest) and we will have to watch this carefully.

We have sufficient funds to comfortably run Altair in the medium term and to pay for the agreed Capital Works programmes. The situation is not urgent; however, our planning indicators suggest that we need to collect more money in the Admin Fund.

At this (very early) stage we are contemplating maybe increasing annual rises in levies from 3% to 4% (?) for a yet unknown period.

This is a matter for the 2018 AGM and beyond, but owners need to be aware that we can foresee pressures building which may require levies to rise a little more for a period than in recent years.

We have previously flagged this possibility in the SC Report to the Owners for both the 2016 and 2017 AGM's.

### Power Supply – Plan B

At the AGM, after some discussion regarding the power supply in relation to possible installation of air-conditioning, a broad proposal (Plan B) was accepted in principle by the owners for further investigation.

The Plan B three-stage programme is

- a) Obtain the best information we can with regard to the existing system, the power needs of universal A/C, potential system upgrade required and the costs associated with that.
- b) Conduct a poll of Owners to gauge interest in A/C with any associated Special Levy if required.
- c) If there is significant Owner support; build a complete package - of legal, engineering, aesthetics/acoustics, council, works and funding plans based on finalised pricing from competitive quotes - for consideration by Owners at a General Meeting.

SC member Kevin Wellington has consolidated a variety of inputs into a brief to commission a 'second' opinion on the power supply. This brief has previously been circulated to the SC. Kevin Wellington has agreed to manage the project based on this broad brief of:

#### 1) Current capability

- a) Current carrying capacity of Altair's existing mains and what sub-station are they fed from.
- b) The current capacity of Altair's electricity infrastructure (Main switchboard, rising mains, consumer mains etc.)
- c) Current peak electricity usage by Altair.

#### 2) Required capacity – with universal A/C.

Appropriate A/C consultant to design air con required for 1, 2 & 3 bed apartments to:

- a) Provide AC throughout each apartment - option 1
- b) Provide AC to bedrooms only – option 2
- c) Provide full load current for each configuration and option

### 3) Required upgrade

Using all of the above information, Electrical Engineer to undertake maximum demand calculations as required for each option:

- d) Size of mains required.
- e) Upgrade required to main switchboard.
- f) Upgrade required for rising mains.
- g) Upgrade required for consumer mains from hallway meter cupboard to apartment switchboard
- h) Electrical Contractor or Engineer to consult with AUSGRID regarding the power available to us now, and what we would be required to do to access the increased amount of power we would require (e.g. possible new transformer)

### 4) Cost estimate

- i) A cost estimate for each of d) to h) and any directly associated costs.

CESA, who installed the original wiring in Altair in 2001/2, will be asked to provide existing 'mechanical' base data for points a) & b); and appropriate A/C and Electrical Engineering Consultants - who have not previously had any involvement with Altair and or Francis Management - will calculate points c) to i).

We are also mindful of the potential impact to Altair common areas (car parks) of re-charging electric cars, although this is probably a few years away.

Kevin Wellington advises that he is holding preliminary discussions with possible advisors next week.

### Plan C – Non-A/C solutions

In parallel with the above programme (Plan B) we are investigating what alternative options exist for cooling apartments without A/C (Plan C). In this light we have consulted with Smart Green Apartments and Sustainability Now (who did our Energy Sustainability Audit). We have received a preliminary proposal from a recommended consultant. The Chair, Secretary, Kevin Wellington and Building Manager plan to meet with the consultant next week to explore options.

### CoSC Energy Sustainability Audit

The Sustainability Energy Audit suggests that investment in various Capital Works of approx. \$190k could result in projected energy savings of approx. \$50k p.a.

Kevin Wellington has previously been appointed by the SC to review the programmes and potential savings to ensure that there is a realistic prospect of those savings being achieved.

This project is temporarily 'on hold' while Kevin focusses on the Plan B which may in turn generate learnings relevant to the Energy Sustainability project.

### Retail Lot

As discussed at the AGM, and in light of the further work being investigated and progressed on Plan B, the SC ratified the agreement to allow the Retail Lot to extend the existing temporary license for air-conditioning to 1 June 2017.

## Short Term Rental Agreements (STRA)

As previously reported Altair has contributed to a 'Fighting Fund' for a group called Our Strata Community. Our Choice to try and persuade the NSW government that strata plans should have the right to make their own decisions regarding STRA. The group is embarking on a letter-writing campaign with a suggested prompt for owners. SC agreed to send the prompt to all owners to encourage them to write.

Our local member (and Altair owner), Alex Greenwich, has raised issues relating to strata plans and STRA in the NSW Parliament. Another Altair owner, Jimmy Thomson, and his views on STRA in his Flat Chat column were cited in Minister Kean's response. We appreciate their efforts on this issue.

**Meeting concluded at 1715**

**Next EC Meeting Wednesday April 19**