

Garden of Tane RC meeting minutes
Tuesday September 12, 2023, 5:30
Held at Madeira Hotel

Present: Suky Thompson, Alan Hemsley, Steffan Kraberger, Jeremy Buchanan, Bryn Thompson
In Attendance: Nigel Harrison, Paul Devlin, Steffi Brightwell

1 Apologies

- Apologies from Lynda Wallace, Ron Birch, Leigh Hickey were accepted.

2 Membership

- Ron Birch has been approved by the Community Board as a member
- The Community Board secretary has been supplied with email addresses for all members

3 Declarations of Interest

- Steffan Kraberger declared that his business Wood Ltd has a current contract for slip repair work in the Garden.

4 Minutes of the previous meetings

The minutes of the meeting on June 13, 2023 are approved.

Thompson S/Thompson B

5 Progress since previous meeting

- Arborist work by the Tree People included felling Lawsons cypress in Grotto, canopy lift and full delimb of two other large cypress trees, removal of vegetation below Big Pine lookout and of Tasmanian Blackwood suckers below carpark.
- Wood Ltd completed track work to improve Cemetery Link Track steps, mulch Lovers Lookout, tidy Tui Valley entrance steps, install hardwood posts at Hospital Track entrance, Construct steps from Grotto to Lower Nikau Track, add drainage to Grand Ave, and improve mounting of sagging signs. Some final minor items to complete are:
 - removal of a culvert on Cemetery Link Track where the slip had come through
 - tidying of the lower edge of Grand Avenue
 - cutting the hardwood posts to be even in height
- New track signs from Paul Newport installed making clear to users where Big Pine Lookout Track is and to prevent continued use of a cut-through from Fern Gully plus label for the Pipeophone
- Walkabout on 17 August with Kerri Bowen, Fiona Waghorn, Suky Thompson and Steffan Kraberger visited slips caused by storm damage and agreed on remediation
- Original heritage bench re-furbished and installed at Big Pine lookout. Bryn Thompson was thanked for his donating the slats and the work, and doing the installation.
- Working Bee planted trees on the cut-through from Fern Gully. Fiona Waghorn thanked for supplying trees
- Pest Free Banks Peninsula possum pulse in Garden of Tane complete – 19 possums caught.

- Ron Birch and Suky Thompson attended the Community Board induction meeting for reserve committees.
- Three Year Plan drafted and circulated subsequent to advice received at this meeting.

6 Financial Report

- There is no capital budget this financial year from CCC.
- Steven Gray has advised that the Parks Unit are looking to spread out the future funds allocated for the Garden in the LTP (\$100k in 2030) at the rate of \$10k per annum. Paul Devlin requested the project number for this funding.
- The Akaroa Civic Trust holds \$1,204.39 behalf of the Garden of Tane

7 Three Year Plan

The Draft Three Year Plan circulated had been developed after the Community Board induction meeting, and had been based on discussions at Reserve Committee meetings and walkabouts over the past year. It summarised what had been achieved since the Committee's inception in 2012, and set out 4 goals for the coming three years including: Establishing a Maintenance Schedule, Setting up a Capital Renewal programme, Revitalising the forest and Improving Adjacent Road Reserves.

- A key matter threaded through the Plan is tree health, and the concern of the Committee that due to their age and the weather, many of the large exotics and older natives in the Garden have been showing signs of stress, with some dying and others dropping limbs, creating concerns about public safety.
- The Plan was accompanied by a proposal from The Tree People arborists, in which they suggested that six monthly arborists inspections be carried out, setting out a per day price for remedial works, and offering to hold this price for three years and carry out additional inspections prior to the Lumiere Festival if contracted.
- Suky Thompson reported that the plan had been discussed with Community Parks manager Kerri Bowen who was comfortable with the schedule of works for her team, as per the draft circulated to the meeting.
- Support for the Plan had also been given from absent members Lynda Wallace, Ron Birch and Leigh Hickey

The Plan was discussed working through each goal.

- Nigel Harrison suggested that the plan should include a heritage goal to re-install a water feature at the Grotto. This was added noting that absent member Lynda Wallace had often spoken of this feature.
- Paul Devlin advised that:
 - capital funding was easier to obtain than operational funding, and where possible, work should be classified as capital. This tied in well with the Plan strategy to develop areas where the trees are in poorest health
 - he would look into the Tree People proposal to see what could be done. He appreciated that there was a long term relationship between this arborist firm and the Garden of Tane and the value that this brought.
 - fire resilience be added as a goal – with a particular focus on Beach Road as fire

generally spreads up hill. This would tie in with the goal to improve road reserves.

- Staff are working with Committees under spirit of new Terms of Reference and would not put barriers in the way
- Plants may need to be sourced 2 years in advanced, particularly natives which should be eco-sourced. The Botanic Gardens may be able to supply trees, and some could be purchased from a commercial supplier such as Southern Woods.
- In conjunction with Steffi Brightwell he would invite Wolfgang Bopp, Director of the Botanic Gardens, and a representative from the Roding team to attend the Committee's December meeting.
- The Plan should be presented to the Community Board for their endorsement, rather than approval. Public consultation and a formal development plan are not required given that the Plan goals and proposals falls within the scope of the Reserve Management Plan.
- The Plan should be co-presented to the Board with Kerri Bowen.

The Three Year Plan is adopted with the additions of goals for the heritage water feature renewal and fire resilience and with the Tree People proposal attached.

Thompson S/Hemsley

8 Storm and other damage issues

- Wood Ltd will commence work to reinstate the damaged parts of Cemetery Track, Bernies Track and Tui Valley Track as agreed on the walkabout within the next couple of weeks. The sources of the slips will also be identified.
- The contract includes pro –bono work to oversee the milling of the Lawsons cypress logs lying at the Grotto. These are to be milled into fletches for future use in the Garden for benches, tables etc. Suky to co-ordinate removal.
- Members noted the following other issues:
 - Trees are down on the Upper Nikau Track – Community Parks to be informed
 - The Yellow Pine in the Playground is being monitored
 - A large cedar has been cut down above Fern Gully and left lying, but it is not known who did this– possibly Orion power line works. Suky asked to investigate
- The de-limbed cypress trunk by the old toilets should be removed when arborist work is next done, as the tree had been dead for some time, so could be a fall risk.

9 Coronation Tree Plaque

- The wording as amended by the School was approved.
- Steffi Brightwell will now source funding through Parks, but needs an image of an existing plaque and the price of the plinth from Steffan Kraberger.

10 Behaviour issues and bikes in the Garden

- The new planting and signs appear to be working.
- If other issues arise, bollards could perhaps be made from stumps.

11 Pest Free

- Pest Free Banks Peninsula reported a successful Akaroa Pulse taking 19 possums out of Garden of Tane with live traps

12 Health and Safety

The committee is concerned about the following health and safety matters:

- Tree health given the frequency of trees falling or dropping branches in storms
- Storm water running off adjacent roads and causing slips, including storm water management above Fern Gully – which takes the water coming from the upper part of Aylmers Valley Road

13 Public forum

- No additional matters raised

Meeting closed 7:05 followed by a dinner.

Members will be advised of when the Committee is presenting its plan to the Community Board

Date of next meeting Tuesday 12 December at The Garden if fine, Madeira Hotel if wet.