

7 marston avenue indooroopilly 4068 +61 7 3371 9355

Save Our Brisbane Suburbs

Part of the Australia wide *Save Our Suburbs* network

Concerned residents really do care for Brisbane ... yet Brisbane City Council won't listen!

Your efforts as a concerned resident or as a member of a concerned community group have been noted and are supported by others. However, the history of Brisbane is littered with the efforts of concerned residents and community groups who have individually sought to defend or improve rather than destroy the amenity and character of the places they value.

But BCC has no mechanisms for allowing or promoting local differences, the diversity that makes places valuable ... because they are cared for and different. Because BCC operates at a whole-of-city level, it has city-wide policies and plans. Even the Local Area Plans are always dominated by city-wide issues, policies and design standards for consistency.

Arguably, then, as each local group tries to assert its "local" ownership, BCC sees such efforts as a threat to its city-wide processes and power. If one local group "gets its way", others would also seek their local solutions ... resulting in a threat to the city-wide policies.

So "have your say" which BCC so strongly promotes as a form of consultation is really a means for endorsing city-wide policies which ensure local groups do not "get their way".

The only means of tackling this issue is a city-wide (or better still, regional or state) response which demonstrates how the current planning processes strip away at community enthusiasm by managing the planning process to reduce if not eliminate the opportunity for concerned residents and groups to "have a say" which "gets their way" during planning processes.

You have been contacted because, like many before, you have engaged with BCC in an effort to "have your say and get your way". SOBS, *Save Our Brisbane Suburbs*, has been created to begin to create a network which can provide evidence that current processes do not allow people to "have a say" in the outcomes. Worse, because it encourages participation then frustrates those who become involved, while BCC provides opportunities to "have your say", how often does it accept the community messages ... unless it suits BCC to do so?

This may appear controversial but that is also part of the problem. It suggests that people without previous experience in planning processes believe that Council will not only listen but will implement what people seek when they "have their say". We need to collect and record the experiences of concerned residents and community groups in order to make available to the public the community experiences and expertise, successes and failures of planning processes in meeting the differing needs of local areas throughout Brisbane and beyond.

When most people only become mobilised when threatened by planning proposals, the difficulty of obtaining good news stories is recognised. However, there must be at least some successes otherwise the whole planning process would be futile and "have your say" a furphy.

Establishing SOBS or its equivalent is in itself a major undertaking because there have been so many "battles". Please do not use the SOBS name until the network is established and launched. But please do seek the support of other groups and please pass on contact details for all such groups to SOBS so the extent of past and present "battles" can be recorded.

For further information or assistance - call 07 3371 9355 or fax 07 3371 8039