

**MM-2 MAYORAL MINUTE - CONCORD WEST RESIDENTIAL
PARKING SCHEME**

Department Executive Services

Author Initials: AT

REPORT

On 26 October 2014, I attended a meeting of residents regarding the Residential Parking Scheme (RPS), in particular, the introduction of fees for permits and associated restriction of street parking that was introduced by Council in the 2014/15 Operational Plan and came into effect on 1 October 2014.

There were approximately 150 residents who attended the meeting, from the areas of Concord West and East Drummoyne. Also in attendance was the State Member for Drummoyne and Councillor Helen McCaffrey.

Resident Chris O'Keefe, who organised the meeting, provided an opening statement and nominated three resolutions that would be put at the end of the meeting for residents to vote. These resolutions were:

1. THAT Canada Bay Council increase the eligibility for residents to access permits for the Resident Parking Scheme
2. THAT Canada Bay Council remove all fees associated with the Resident Parking Scheme and that all fees that have already been paid are refunded to those residents that have paid for permits
3. THAT Canada Bay Council engages directly with the community if there is to be any changes to the Resident Parking Scheme

The residents were then invited to raise any particular issues they wished to have recorded. Some of the key issues raised were:

- Rhodes Business Park – lack of onsite parking was contributing to the issues experienced by Concord West residents
- Restriction of permits impacts on households where there are more family cars than spaces allocated (larger families)
- Some businesses on Concord Road have a large number of employees but a limited number of car parking spaces and therefore impact on local parking
- Rhodes Shopping Centre, staff and shoppers impact on local parking availability
- Lack of parking availability for visitors and tradesmen due to RPS
- Enforcement of parking restrictions has resulted in visiting doctors, tradesmen and visitors being fined
- Lack of response from Council when correspondence has been forwarded
- Resented being charged for parking in their street
- Concord Hospital expanded with no additional provision for staff parking or visitor parking – major contributor to parking issues
- Use of revenue from parking fines to be used to offset cost of Resident Parking Scheme
- Lack of enforcement around Formosa Street business precinct

I was provided an opportunity to address the meeting and answer questions, providing some background information to the residents to clarify Council's decision. Key points covered included:

- Permit parking schemes have been introduced by the City of Canada Bay in areas where residents are disadvantaged by others taking the limited parking spaces available near their premises. The limited parking available is often used by commuters, workers or shoppers – limiting the parking available for residents.
- The resident parking schemes provide some advantage to residents as the issue of permits exempt them from timed parking restrictions
- These Resident Parking Schemes do not cover all the City of Canada Bay.
- They are located in specific areas where parking problems exist.
- Permit parking schemes are governed by the RMS Permit Parking Guidelines
- The RMS Guidelines are mandatory
- The maximum number of resident permits is set by the RMS Guidelines as three per residential property, reduced by one for every off-street parking space which is available on the property or which can be reasonably provided on that property.
- The vehicles must be registered to the property to be eligible for a permit.
- Council allows one visitor permit per residence per year.
- The total number of permits issues in a permit scheme area cannot be more than the available on-street parking spaces in that area.
- Council's fees for 2014/15 will not cover the total cost of these schemes and therefore council is subsidising these schemes.
- Fees are charged for resident and visitors permits as a service fee. These permits are only available to residents who reside within a parking scheme.
- Income received from parking fines issued across the City is allocated towards renewing and upgrading our infrastructure ie. parks, gardens, sporting facilities, drainage, seawalls, roads, footpaths, community facilities etc.

The Member for Drummoyne was also provided an opportunity to address the residents. He spoke in favour of the Resident Parking Scheme but with “no eligibility” requirements and “no fees” attached.

He placed on record that the State Government had allocated \$150 million towards upgrading facilities at Concord Hospital including a multi-level carpark. The Member for Drummoyne also advised that he was lobbying the Federal Member for Reid for the Commonwealth to match that funding.

I am sure all Councillors welcome that commitment as a multilevel carparking facility at Concord Hospital will ease carparking tension in the local area and provide for the increased visitors and staff who attend the hospital on a daily basis.

Also, it would be timely if the Member for Drummoyne would recognise the increase in commuter parking in and around the Concord West Railway Station and assist in providing relief to local residents with the provision of commuter parking in that area.

The meeting concluded with the residents supporting the resolutions proposed by Chris O’Keefe. I agreed to meet with Mr O’Keefe and resident representatives to discuss their issues further, with this meeting to be arranged within the next week.

Prior to adopting the 2014/15 Operational Plan, Councillors gave due consideration to the Citizens Panel recommendations from 2012, the recommendations that flowed from the Organisational Review conducted by Strategic Consulting in 2013 and took into consideration all the submissions received following advertising of the Operational Plan regarding fees and charges, including the Resident Parking Scheme proposal.

For Council, our long term strategic goal is to be able to clearly demonstrate that we are “Fit for the Future” and are financially sustainable.

Equity in the subsidies we allocate across a range of services provided to our community (eg childcare, community organisations, sporting clubs, schools), is a major consideration in our decision making process.

We have strived to ensure our range and level of service in what we provide for our community is not diminished, and we have managed the allocation of funding in a fiscally responsible manner.

In giving consideration to the Notice of Motion that has been placed on the Business Paper by Councillor Megna, in response to the Concord West residents, it is important that we balance any decision with those goals in mind.

RECOMMENDATION

1. THAT the matter be deferred to allow officers to prepare a report on the impact of the removal of the RPS on Council's 2014/15 Budget and enable Council to understand the implications of rescinding the fees for the Resident Parking Scheme prior to a decision being made. This report should provide Council with options for alternatives for servicing the operation of the RPS
2. THAT Council write to the Member for Drummoyne asking him to confirm the State Government's commitment to construct a multilevel carpark at Concord Hospital and provide a timeframe for completion of that project so residents can be assured that carparking tension in Concord West, created by the expansion of services at Concord Hospital is being addressed. Further, the Member for Drummoyne be requested to address the provision of commuter parking in the vicinity of Concord West Railway Station so as to reduce the impact commuters are having on parking availability in nearby residential streets.