



Councillor Vincent De Luca OAM

Warringah Councillor for 'A' Ward

COMMUNITY NEWS

February 2016

ONE NORTHERN BEACHES COUNCIL IS NOT THE ANSWER

The NSW Government has rejected Warringah Council's One Northern Beaches Council campaign. The campaign cost ratepayers over \$500,000. Warringah's aggressive campaign, that contained incorrect and misleading information, attacked our adjoining Councils and the State Government wasted ratepayers' money.

The Government has instead proposed that Warringah Council be dissolved and divided between Pittwater and Manly Councils - both Councils are financially sound and unlike Warringah Council have never been dismissed. Sadly, reports indicate that Warringah Council is still one of the most complained about councils to the Office of Local Government and NSW Ombudsman. I support the two Council proposal as I believe it benefits our community in many ways. One Northern Beaches Council I think would be a developer's dream and we would see high rise development similar to that being built in Dee Why replicated along Barrenjoey Road, Pittwater Road, Condamine Street and other main roads. We do not have the road or transport infrastructure to cope with such development. The two Council proposal facilitates millions of dollars in cost savings while maintaining peoples' access to local services and the community's ability to have their say on local issues and the future of their area.

A similar proposal was first mooted by the Independent Member for Manly in 2003 and 2004 calling for Warringah Council's "B" Ward to be redistributed to Manly Council. Mr Barr stated in his speeches to Parliament that such redistribution would not benefit the Liberal Party. This evidences that the two Council proposal by the current Government is not for political reasons.

In Queensland and Victoria communities have proven that larger Councils do not work, marginalise the community, increase over-development and reduce peoples' access to services- there are moves to go back to smaller Councils.

Already Pittwater and Manly Councils have announced a **reciprocal parking sticker arrangement** will be used and ratepayers in both Council areas will benefit with the free parking sticker.

The community can have its say on the two Council proposal by writing to the Officer considering the proposal, Richard Pearson at richard.pearson@dpc.nsw.gov.au or by mail: Council Boundary Review GPO Box 5341, Sydney NSW 2001 by 28 February 2016.

\$68m COST SAVINGS PER YEAR BY DISSOLVING WARRINGAH COUNCIL

Warringah Council spent \$56,892 of your money campaigning for an increase to your rates and made application to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal for a special rate variation to increase your rates by approximately 26%. I voted against this and rallied residents to object to IPART. The Tribunal rejected the 26% increase but granted a cumulative increase of 19.7%. In the last Financial Year 2014/15 Warringah Council's Annual Report and official documents indicate where your rates have been spent:

- Warringah Council's greatest expense (40%) was on staff salaries and benefits amounting to \$62,366 million, an increase from the previous year by 5.6%.
- Warringah Council's General Manager, Rik Hart and his two Deputies cost ratepayers \$1,046,390.17 million and Mr Hart's employment package amounted to \$421,215.85 - he is one of the highest paid Council GMs in NSW.
- Warringah Council ratepayers paid \$1,676,098.27 million on the Council's Marketing and Media Unit - even the Premier's media people don't cost that much!
- Warringah Council's car pool consisting of luxury vehicles like Mercedes, Audis and BMW amongst other luxury vehicles cost \$2,590 million. The Council previously purchased Mayor Michael Reagan a Jaguar.
- Warringah Council spent \$454,955.75 of ratepayers' money on advertising in the Manly Daily.

725 Pittwater Road, DEE WHY NSW 2099 Tel: 0408 650 651

Email: vincent.deluca@warringah.nsw.gov.au Web: www.vincentdeluca.info

A WIN FOR DEE WHY RESIDENTS AGAINST HEIGHT INCREASE TO 15 STOREYS

Mayor Michael Reagan and his fellow members of his registered political party voted to increase the height limit at the corner of Pittwater Road and St David's Ave, Dee Why from 9 storeys to 15. This could have set a precedent for greater height limits in Dee Why. The developer offered to pay Warringah Council \$250,000 in cash and give the council a retail unit and floor space and funds for a public toilet under a voluntary planning agreement. Together with local residents, I lead the campaign against this proposal. Fortunately, the State Government's Regional Planning Panel refused the application stating "the variation of permissible height from 24m to 51m is excessive". The developers appealed the Panel's refusal, however, the Land and Environment Court also agreed the proposal was excessive and refused the appeal.

CROMER BOARDING HOUSE APPROVED DESPITE RESIDENT OBJECTIONS

Nearly 800 residents objected, and the great majority on sound planning principles, against a proposed Boarding House for eight units. The Development and Assessment Panel voted 3-1 to approve the development, with only the community member panellist dissenting concluding "Of principal concern is the fact that the proposed development will position up to 16 persons on a single residential lot; most of whom will almost certainly be 'transient', with little or no long term commitment to the established community. If the business model proves successful in terms of client demand it could give rise to similar developments nearby, with the further erosion of the existing community fabric".

Community and welfare groups have raised concern that the policy for Boarding Houses is not serving those that actually need to use such facilities. The Australian Housing and Urban Research Institutes state that the policy should include that "Where possible buildings should conform to existing planning controls and not 'pioneer' a building type" and the NSW Law Society wrote that the planning policy "ought to be amended so as to ensure that such incentive schemes are only implemented after appropriate consideration is given to the types of development permitted in the particular zone as well as issues such as density, location, and design. This will ensure that development is suitable for that area and that the amenity of neighbouring properties is not adversely affected".

Accordingly, on 15.12.15 I moved that Warringah Council call upon the State Government to review the Affordable Housing policy which governs boarding houses and amend the legislation so that appropriate consideration is given to local planning controls, the types of development permitted in the particular zone as well as issues such as density, location, and design and adverse effects on adjoining residences and local communities. Unfortunately, Mayor Michael Reagan and his fellow members of his registered political party voted to defeat my call for review and amendment of the legislation. Have your say by writing to the Minister for Planning at office@stokes.minister.nsw.gov.au or post your comments to the Minister for Planning at GPO Box 5341, Sydney NSW 2001.

About Vincent De Luca OAM

Vincent has worked extensively in youth affairs, youth suicide prevention, drug and alcohol prevention, domestic violence prevention and child protection, giving a helping hand to some of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable people in our community.

He was appointed a Delegate to the National Peoples' Convention on Youth Suicide Prevention in 1997 and tasked with developing a youth suicide prevention strategy for Australia with community leaders from across the country. In 2014 and 2015 he attended the National Convention on Suicide Prevention. Vincent was also appointed to the Executive Committee of the National Peoples' Council on Drug Prevention - High on Hope, attended the National Cities Against Drugs Summit and he co-founded GAPS youth suicide prevention and support Association.

In recognition of his outstanding voluntary service to youth welfare, charitable and sporting organisations in 2004 he was named in the Queen's Birthday Honours List and awarded the Order of Australia (OAM).

He has been admitted as a Solicitor of the Supreme Court of NSW, and is a Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Laws and holds a Graduate Diploma in Legal Practice and previously was an officer in the NSW Attorney General's Department.

Vincent is a passionate Ambassador for the White Ribbon Foundation for the prevention of violence against women. He has served as Chair of the Curl Curl Youth & Community Centre since 1996 and was formerly the President of the Friends of Warringah Residents' Group against over-development. He has also fundraised extensively for cancer research, and support services for cancer patients and their families and has raised significant funds for the Australian Gynaecological Cancer Foundation, Cancer Council NSW, Cure the Future Foundation which is focussed on stem cell research and the White Ribbon Foundation for the prevention of violence against women.