



Proposal for the MDCA for creating a participatory planning process for the Māpua Masterplan

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Attn: Jim Vause, Chair MDCA

From: Zola Rose of Common Ground and Chris Ferkins of Gecko Trust

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Purpose of the proposal:

Support MDCA with a participatory planning (AKA collaborative community engagement) process for the purpose of the Māpua community having a greater contribution in shaping future development of housing, neighbourhoods, and infrastructure in Māpua.

Challenges the MDCA has with the currently Masterplan engagement process:

Non-empowering engagement methods: “MDCA are trying to encourage the TDC to be more interactive in the planning of the Māpua Master plan. The process with the Council to date is as per their website under the Māpua Masterplan. They have had drop in sessions and plan another round in February. The MDCA has offered facilitated meetings with the Council planners but it was only once the MDCA organised a brainstorming meeting that the Council engaged.”

Uncertain outcomes using current masterplan: The Masterplan is currently designed using the zoning approach related to density which lacks any clarity as to the type and density of housing and could result in housing built by developers that does not match the culture and character of Māpua.

Environmental concerns: There is concern about development impacting on ecological conservation and wildlife corridors and not creating enough connective green spaces.

The prospect that Fast tracking of development in Mapua may occur, community engagement in housing design may be the only opportunity for development to reflect the values of the people of Mapua.

Proposed engagement structure and process

There are a number of participatory planning tools and methods that could be used. As we go through the participatory planning programme, the facilitators will determine the appropriate tools and methods to reach the desired outcomes. These tools result in improved understanding, and shared experience. As an example, we have experience with an established and successful participatory planning programme called “Curious” that we could use. (A case study for this can be made available)

In addition to these participatory planning methods to get input from the wider community, a structure we are proposing to set up is a community design board (review panel) similar to the Hobsonville Point Masterplan

development¹. This would be made up of a combined grouping involving key staff from Council plus appropriately skilled and interested community members - a combination of content experts and context experts. Our understanding of 'Community' in this sense is broad spectrum including business, institutions with research capability etc.

Guiding principles/values:

- Guided by the core values of the International Institute for Public Participation (IAP2) and participatory planning--see Appendix
- The power and decision-making for development doesn't get handed over from community to developer but stays as an ongoing collaborative process. The development is in service to the community alongside the development serving the developer's economic benefit.
- Ecological stewardship and preservation

Beneficial outcomes of participatory planning for the Māpua community

- Shift from zoning approach to a form-based code² approach to be more in alignment and coherence with the culture and character of Māpua.
- Creating ecological corridors
- Increased ecological services (nature-based structures that provide services such as swales that capture, spread, and clean water, trees that provide shade, cleaner air, and food, etc)
- More commons areas
- People-friendly transport systems
- Lower-stress environment
- Community-friendly development. Housing (built environment capital) that doesn't come at the expense of other capitals (social, cultural, ecological)

Outcomes would involve not just the hard infrastructure but also engagement of the community in their place. This will have long-lasting community wellbeing benefits and be critical to delivery of the green infrastructure including a livable environment and landscape wide ecology integrity - a term that describes the functionality of the landscape that benefits both the ecology and wildlife as well as the health of the place for residents.

¹ <https://www.hprs.co.nz/> and

<https://hobsonvillepoint.co.nz/public/assets/Uploads/Hobsonville-Point-Buckley-design-guide.pdf>

² Simply put, these codes regulate the form of the buildings, not their use, as the current system of land-use zoning does. A form-based code is a land development regulation that fosters predictable built results and a high-quality public realm by using physical form (rather than separation of uses) as the organizing principle for the code. A form-based code is a regulation, not a mere guideline, adopted into city, town, or county law. (Form-Based Codes Institute, <https://formbasedcodes.org>)

Challenges and benefits for TDC to engage with this participatory planning process:

Challenges for TDC

- Ongoing community concern or opposition to the Masterplan creates a barrier and risk for TDC
- A collaborative process could be unfamiliar for staff and could require a change in thinking and operating—a shift from a regulatory process focus to a greater focus on outcomes and community empowerment.
- Ability to access funding and resources to support this process
- Staff capability and time to do these processes in-house

Benefits for TDC

- Less resistance and greater commitment and ability of community to implement decisions and strategies
- More innovation and local wisdom: greater insights into problems, new solutions, and breakthrough strategies
- A common framework for and more efficient decision-making
- Increased local initiative and responsibility for implementation and outcomes meaning less responsibility for TDC over time
- Ability to reach and include minority voices and “harder to reach” community members
- A more effective feedback loop
- Through collaboration, funding and resources could be more readily available
- Staff capability is built into the process, meaning it is developmental
- Greater alignment between the different departments within council

Key milestones of this process are:

- Alignment of council and community needs and expectations in shaping future development of housing and neighbourhoods in Māpua. This creates shared will and buy-in to the project and ability to work together (council, stakeholders and community).
- Increased, and shared, understanding of the qualities and uniqueness of the place of Māpua. On this is built a joint understanding of the roles Māpua needs to perform: a place that provides for the social, cultural, economic and environmental aspects of life and that provides housing and infrastructure. This participatory planning process works best when we maximise on the unique/special qualities and character of Māpua.
- A joint understanding of the capabilities and responsibilities of Council and community parties respectively to contribute to the delivery of the desired outcomes.

- Empowerment of all stakeholders to deliver on the above responsibilities and development outcomes, coordinated by the community design board or similar overseeing entity.

Proposed action steps to find funding, get-buy in from key stakeholders, programme outline

- Discussion with MDCA on this proposal which leads to an agreement to proceed
- Putting together a budget for the participatory planning process
- Discussion with key senior management, Māpua Masterplan lead planner and TDC climate advisor, and elected members of Council on this proposal which leads to an agreement to collaborate in and allocate resources to this process
- Secure funding
- Put together a project outline and timeline for the roll-out of activities with milestones

Possible sources of funding and resourcing;

- Tasman District Council
- Local environmental conservation groups
- Crowd-funding
- In-kind valuation of community member donated expertise
- Philanthropic entities
- Central government
- Gecko Trust

Council conversations and relationship-building to date as related to community-led housing/participatory planning

- Anna Pryde and Paul Gibson, TDC Planners
- John Ridd, TDC Services and Strategy Manager and Barry Johnson, TDC Environmental Policy Manager
- Trindi Walker, TDC Counsellor
- Anna McKenzie, Tim O'Connell, David Arseneau, TDC Planners with Māpua Masterplan
- Barbara Lewando, TDC Senior Climate Change Policy Advisor
- Ian McComb, TDC Engineer



Bios

Zola Rose

Zola is an expert in community-led and regenerative development with 25 experience. She is passionate about housing systems change, participatory planning, conflict transformation, and communication that builds connection. She has a Masters in International and Intercultural Management, a BA in Sociology/Anthropology, and certificates in Permaculture Design, Ecovillage Design Education, and the Regenerative Practitioner. She is a member of the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2).

Zola founded the social enterprise Common Ground in 2019 to enable and catalyse collective, community-led housing development that increases the social, cultural, ecological, and economic wellbeing of communities.

Her housing work includes: Four years working with Habitat for Humanity in South Africa and in Aotearoa, she has served on two committees working for housing policy change, written two research reports on innovative housing solutions, helped establish the Waikato Community Lands Trust in partnership with Hamilton City Council for perpetually affordable housing, led two Women Revolutionising Housing hui, and assisted the Whakatāne District Council with housing solutions and strategy.

Christopher R. Ferkins

Chris has been described as an innovator, and community facilitator and broker, with a “gentle” (empowering) community leadership style. Chris has been a leader in community engagement for over fifteen years. He has worked with many communities in NZ and presented overseas.

He has developed tools and approaches that enable communities to engage and succeed well beyond what they thought possible – one example being a group that grew from 4 people to several thousand participating, representing 65% of the households in the community.

A key part of Chris’ approach is consideration of both the community and the environment or landscape of which they are a part. Chris is co-founder of Gecko Trust, the community-led North-West Wildlink, and Ōrākei Wildlink in Auckland, and has been a trustee with a number of community trusts.



Appendix:

Core Values for the Practice of Public Participation (IAP2) as taken from
<https://www.iap2.org/page/corevalues>)

Principles of Participatory Planning (taken from
<https://tcat.ca/bringing-planning-to-the-people-participatory-planning-in-peterborough/>)

Quotes on the benefits of Participatory Planning (as found at
<https://communityplanningprocesses.wordpress.com/>) **Choose 1-3**