

Kuaotunu Residents and Ratepayers Association
Notes from Public Meeting
held at the Kuaotunu Hall
3/2/2019

Meeting opened: 3pm

Committee Present: Brent, Kathy, Alastair, Luke, Keith, Carolyn, Kate

Guests: Heather Bruce & Scott Summerfield, TCDC; Dean Allen, WRC; Paul Kelly, Rehka Percival, Deli Connell, MB Community Board

Public: approx 90 members of the public

Apologies: Scott Simpson, MP; Alaine Holden DoC; Liam Ryan, NZTA. Public: Tim & Elizabeth Walsh, Chris Twemlow, Jannine Verner, Ian Ready, James Muir, Brian & Judy Dixon, and Waling & Jose Kakebeeke

Brent opened the meeting with a welcome and an introduction of the KRRRA Committee members and the invited guests, and outlined the purpose of the meeting and how it would run.

Purpose of this meeting: to agree as a community on some concrete action plans for the top six priorities from the 2009 Community Plan, as identified by the community through the CP Update Survey. There are approximately 400 rateable properties (not all with dwellings) in the area from Kuaotunu Hill to Blackjack Hill to the Burma Hill; we had 210 responses from an estimated 170 properties. As the TCDC is about to embark on a review of community plans for the District, in which Kuaotunu will be aggregated with Matarangi and Whangapoua as part of MB North, we wish to establish a strong clear unique community voice.

To do this, we will go through the six points one by one and discuss, in small buzz groups and collectively, what we, the community and the KRRRA, can do to further those aspirations.

Scott Summerfield spoke briefly about the TCDC Community Plan process.

Purpose of community plans:

- set out communities' values and aspirations, which will inform district long-term planning
- give direction on community's future
- help Council understand their role as advocate with other agencies, eg NZTA

Why now? Most Community Plans in the district are about 10 years old; times, districts, demographics, environments have changed. There are currently approx 28 disparate community plans; the Council wish to aggregate these into 7 or so, finding commonalities and aligning plans, while respecting differences between communities. (Commonalities may include, for example, a medical centre; roading; footpaths; speed limits. Differences may include, for example, development.)

Process of the review:

- focus groups (Ratepayers' Associations, libraries, kindies, etc) will be invited to blue-sky thinking meetings at the end of February
- community surveys will come from these meetings and be sent out in May

- draft plans will be endorsed by current Council in July/August - before the next local-body elections in October - with the hope the following Council will adopt them.

Scott assures us that our survey and the outcome of this meeting will directly influence the TCDC survey, and our action plans will go into the TCDC plan. The more *actions* we come up with, the better.

The top six *very important* and *important* issues from the Community Plan Update Survey, with discussion points and action plans:

1) Urban, commercial, and rural development to be controlled and appropriate for the area in order to retain Kuaotunu’s existing “small beach village” atmosphere and bush/farm backdrop (97% support)

The kick-off action suggestion is to **register the community’s strong wishes against changes to existing zoning regulations** - *not* making more restrictions but requiring current regulations be enforced;. This point generated a huge amount of discussion:

- we wish to be considered “affected parties” to any zoning change; however this requires a change in law; we should try to work within the system
- community initiatives like the library, playground, encourage permanent residents, which gives the community its feel and “keeps Kuaotunu, Kuaotunu”.
- our view of “progress” doesn’t have to be the same as other views of progress; a different mindset is required (bigger, faster, more isn’t always better).
- this document (our revision of the CP) is going to be used *only* as a reference by decision-makers
- climate change may affect current zoning regulations; nature is in charge, not us
- we need to balance managing development with allowing for the flowing-in of new, young, residents
- a greater proportion of permanent residents may require greater commercial activity? (People need jobs.)

ACTIONS

Support existing zoning regulations

Actively seek to have a Kuaotunu resident on the Community Board

Actively develop projects to encourage and maintain a high level of permanent residents

Maintain a very active watching brief on all agencies’ policies of TCDC, WRC, DoC; this is a core function of the KRRRA; sub-committees could be co-opted to spread this load.

Provide submission to every plan and policy change

2) Support for environmental considerations such as ongoing protection of our nature reserves, increasing predator control, and ecological restoration projects (97% support)

ACTIONS

Organise expert-led workshops in predator/pest control

Find volunteers to maintain current projects

Establish a central repository of information on the Kuaotunu website, including

- names and contact details of the many local environmental groups already working in the community
- lists of projects underway and what volunteers are needed, when & where
- information for non-permanent residents on how to deal with pest problems
- where to borrow traps (KEA has some available)
- advertisements for community workshops
- links to other useful sites, eg Predator-free NZ

Make liason with landowners along waterways to discuss planting riparian strips - plants provided by WRC, labour provided by community (Kelly points out that they are already doing a lot of planting; it's the lower stretch of the KT river that needs attention.)

Other points:

Hahei has an environmental group similar to what we're discussing; Deli will send a link.

Dean Allen: WRC has money available to contribute to fencing, planting, restoration; also can provide traps and training how to use them; pest control is really property-owner's responsibility, but WRC can provide expertise: "tell us what you want." He recommends GPS co-ordinating private trap-lines for maximum benefit.

An umbrella group could be purpose-specific, rather than general (eg a peninsula-wide predator-control umbrella group).

3) Support for measures to make Kuaotunu more cycle & pedestrian friendly (94%support)

ACTIONS

Lobby NZTA & other relevant agencies to:

- reduce speed limit from 70 to 50 south towards Whitianga
- put more flashing speed signs in - a double-sided one by tennis courts; another one south of village (fundraise for a sign ourselves? \$10,000)

Keep lobbying for footpaths, Waitaia to Bluff Road

Make our own footpath from Waitaia to village: not *instead* of NZTA, but as an interim measure to make it safer for children walking to the school bus. Roimata volunteers to do this!

Make a shared traffic zone through the village, to slow traffic down: to remind through-traffic to respect our village. This is especially important as the Optio development will bring hundreds more cars. Local artists could be involved. The design could be uniquely Kuaotunu and beachy, not urban and sanitised.

Extend the shared traffic zone to the tennis courts

4) Improved monitoring of local streams to manage water quality, supported by specific initiatives eg stormwater control, maintenance of drains/stream outlets; plan for sewerage treatment where small plants may be viable (94% support)

WRC reports that contaminant levels in the KT stream for 48 hours after heavy rainfall are too high for safe swimming. DNA sequencing shows some traces of human-generated bacteria, as well as some possums, gulls, and other animals, but the majority is from cattle. WRC's solution is for landowners to change their practice.

The Community Board is fighting hard for improved water quality; sooner or later it will come down to property owners upgrading septic systems. Composting toilets are not disallowed by Council but they come under building consent requirements.

Kawhero Drive has had a communally-owned self-contained sewerage system since 2000 and it works well.

The number of toilets per person depends on the type of system installed.

ACTIONS

Keep lobbying local groups/agencies for change (“where the Hobbits go, the eye of Sauron looks” - or, be the squeaky wheel)

Look into neighbourhood communal systems similar to Kawhero Drive’s

Take individual responsibility for the guardianship of our land- all landowners agree this is an important issue; we have to put our money where our mouths are and fix it. **Set a date** and expect properties to meet a standard.

Points 5 (bush tracks) and 6 (Civil Defence Plan) were not discussed for lack of time.

In summary, our community needs to

- **stay engaged**
- **keep vigilant**
- **be involved**

Thanks, everyone, for your ideas and discussion and passion. Remember Ratepayers’ meetings are open to the public and anyone is welcome to speak on any issue during the Public Input sessions at the beginning of each meeting.

Meeting closed about 5:30