

Mapua and Districts Community Association (MDCA) Annual Report August 2015 - August 2016

Executive Summary

Tena koutou katoa - ngā mihi nui ki a koutou; ngā mana whenua ratou ko ngā mema ko ngā hoa ō tenei rohe! Greetings to all iwi, members and supporters of this region and THE Mapua and Districts Community Association.

A great thankyou to all who have worked for, contributed to and supported the significant range of projects and issues we have been involved with and addressed this year. Special thanks to our 3 TDC Ward Councillors for their regular attendance at our meetings and especially for their willingness to receive feedback and follow up many diverse queries and concerns in a very busy year.

Executive Committee members have shared the tasks of resourcing and running meetings, disseminating information, presenting MDCA viewpoints, lobbying the TDC and envisioning important community changes. Sincere thanks to you all for a great year and to those who are standing down, take our appreciation with you. We hope that you will stay involved as members!

Special mention needs to be made of several general members who make major contributions on a volunteer basis. Marion Satherley of Mapua Auto Centre willingly provides and subsidizes a photocopying service; David Mitchell, Kate Mitchell and Gillian Pollock keep us well informed of current community concerns (especially in relation to the TDC) and provide detailed background information to enable MDCA to form knowledgeable policy positions. Jane and Neil Smith from *Chocolate Dog* actively support us with resources and suggestions for effective communication processes. We also value the connections and relationships with a range of other community-focused organizations such as Mapua and Districts Business Association, the Mapua Community Hall Association and the Mapua School.

A wide range of speakers have formally presented at our monthly meetings including Mayor Kempthorne, TDC councillors and staff, Te Tiakina Taiao, DOC, Civil Defence, and representatives from other community Associations. Input from individuals and other community groups keep our membership abreast of current thinking, strategies and affairs.

Projects covered this year include:

- Relocating the Boat Ramp
- Restoring and caring for Wetlands and Estuaries in our rohe
- Mapua Waterfront developments including buildings, landscaping, parking, safety, the Park
- Retaining ownership of the Mapua Causeway
- Subdivisions, new and planned, including impacts on neighbours
- Footpaths and roading, safety and landscaping
- Establishing and developing a Website and Facebook presence

These as well as the regular areas of our work are reported on in the rest of this report by those Executive Committee members responsible for each particular portfolio.

Treasurer's Report (by Neville Bibby)

Environment – Dominion Flats (by Helen Bibby)

This has been another good year for the planting and beautification of Dominion Flats even though it was such a dry summer. The growth on the plants during the autumn and early winter has been fantastic and plantings are really showing up amongst the tall grass.

The project continues to track along the path of intensive planting for the first five years, to be followed by five years of secondary planting, with an end vision of a patch of easily accessible native bush that is a haven for birds and other fauna, with a stream meandering through and that is a peaceful sanctuary for the community.

We have been successful with grant applications again and have received another \$10,000 from Rata Foundation and another \$4,500 from Pub Charities. Do you know that since this project started we have had over \$43,000 in grants from Rata Foundation, Pub Charities, Network Tasman Trust, Deloitte, Sargood Bequest, Greenwood Trust, Mapua/Ruby Bay Trust, MDCA, Fonterra Grassroots Fund, JS Watson Trust, World Wildlife Fund, Waimea Intermediate School, and Coastal News?

It is wonderful to see organisations and people willing to help make our country green again and we are extremely grateful. We have had practical assistance from many locals organizations including Waimea Intermediate, Crombie Lockwood, Tamaha Scout Group, Whenua Iti, Mapua School, Jonathan Kennett and friends from Wellington, and NMIT DOC cadets. We have had a large kahikatea from The Big Plant Depot, plants from Nelmac, large numbers of plant protectors passed on to the project and plants grown from locally sourced trees given by community members. All this adds up to a huge amount that cannot be given a dollar number.

A very small group go each Tuesday morning to work, mostly freeing up plants and keeping the tracks useable. Anyone is welcome to join in as it is a huge job although some of the latest grant money is specifically to help with this. We have good interaction with the TDC and get our share of money, help and advice from them, particularly from Richard Hilton who is always enthusiastic and keen to help.

Roads and Footpaths (by Wayne Chisnall)

Projects and accomplishments:

- The Mapua Drive footpath from Higgs Road down to the corner of Aranui Road was completed to the Tavern site.
 - The TDC are considering options for making the boardwalk section safer in frost conditions.
- The Higgs Road roundabout with a safe crossing from the Mapua Rise subdivision pathway to the Mapua Drive pathway was completed.
 - Planting has been completed and a Community Group led by Graeme Stradling is working to develop “Aquarium Garden” sculptures.
- Developing a safe passage for pedestrians from the foot of Mapua Drive around to the proposed Aranui Road crossing to the Mapua School.

- MDCA worked with Andrew Palmer, Chair of the School Board, David Mitchell, representing the Aranui Park Wetlands Group and Gary Clark of the TDC to determine whether a path through Aranui Park might offer the safest route for children.
 - Gary Clark rejected this and undertook to agree to a plan with the owner of the Tavern Property to develop a safe pathway around the corner to the proposed crossing.
 - At the time of writing this has not been achieved as the owner of that property has existing user rights. An interim solution is being sought and a bridge has just been built into Aranui Park, presumably to steer children safely around the Tavern site.
 - A pedestrian crossing on Aranui Road in the vicinity of the telephone exchange is budgeted for 2016 and TDC will work with the School to determine the exact location. The crossing will have a refuge island and will be managed by the School at the beginning and end of the school day.
- The path from Stafford Drive along the realigned Seaton Valley Stream to the back of the School was completed and planted.
 - MDCA is now working with the TDC Project Leader, Russell McGuigan, to develop the link between this path across the Old Mill Pathway, around to the estuary and across the northern end of the 102 Aranui Road subdivision to Moreland Place. (Devin Gallagher is acting as the MDCA point of contact)
 - Completion of the Higgs Road footpath to Mapua Drive is now the focus for 2016-17.
 - The TDC has given it a high priority for 2016-17 but funding is tight and it will more likely be constructed in 2017-18.
 - MDCA has asked that the TDC planner keep in contact with the Higgs Road residents' advocate so that planning can be completed in 2017 and the best outcome can be achieved.
 - The Seaton Valley Road footpath is no longer on the TDC 10 Year Plan but the Mapua Rise developer will provide a path from the northern exit onto Seaton Valley Road to Mapua Drive
 - The Jessie Street – Aranui Road Pathway has become a possibility with the recent purchase of the 2.3ha Thawley property by K&H Drake. It is their intention to build on and develop the site and they would prefer to link an Aranui Road cul-de-sac to Jessie Street by a walkway/cycleway. This is strongly supported by the community.

Communication Systems (by Tim Hawthorne)

MDCA launched their very own Facebook page on February 4, 2016. Since then, the MDCA has posted dozens of messages, photos and videos on issues ranging from the Mapua Causeway sale to beautifying the Mapua roundabout to the Harakeke housing development to Mapua Wharf cost overruns and fencing.

Videos of Mayor Kempthorne and Councillor Tim King addressing the Association meetings have been especially popular. And dozens of locals have taken the opportunity to comment on the posts, and voice their opinions.

Starting very modestly with post readership in just the dozens, some MDCA's post are now seen by nearly 3000 people within 48 hours. The posts haven't been without controversy though, leading the MDCA adopt a set of Facebook management guidelines, which can be viewed at: www.facebook.com/mapuacommunityassociation.

Additionally, under John Fountain's leadership, a new MDCA website has been established. Still under construction, this site will be a permanent repository for current and past MDCA

documentation, communication and issue information. Stay tuned for more news about www.ourmapua.org.

The Association is also investigating how to speed up the introduction of UFB (Ultra Fast Broadband) to the community. With the high cost of bringing fibre to the home, the Association has invited speakers to introduce alternative systems such as www.kiwiwifi.co.nz - a provider of low-cost, high-speed, wireless Internet services. The Association has significant research remaining before it endorses any particular service or solution, but is strongly supporting the widespread need in our community for faster, more robust internet services.

Appreciation

Thank you again to all those who have been involved in these projects and all the voluntary time and thought you have given. Much of this work is “underground” and often not acknowledged. Without you all we couldn’t do what we do!! There will be a new Executive Committee for the next year and no doubt new challenges as well as satisfactions with a job well done. We look forward to that.....

Noho ora mai ra koutou

Elena Meredith
(Chairperson on behalf of the Executive Committee)