

Request to Community Board

4 June 2024

By Ian Holyoake on behalf Whangamata Stormwater Action Group

Subject: Stormwater Master Plan 2024

Title: Stakeholder representatives on the Stormwater Master Plan 2024

Request: The Community Board accepts this request and moves to seek council approval to establish a stakeholder's group to formally represent the interests of the wider Whangamata community for the preparation of the Stormwater Master Plan 2024. This group will report back to the Community Board.

Background: It is widely accepted stormwater improvements are required. There are a lot of unanswered questions like what needs or can be done, where will work start and what are the priorities, how much will it cost and over what time frame, what impact will it have on existing infrastructure and what needs to be built, how will community have its say and how much will the work reduce flooding?

Stormwater is not just one project. It will evolve into dozens of micro projects over many years and has no finite costs.

After the 2023 cyclones the master plan was started. Council invited stakeholders from the stormwater action group to contribute and bring ideas. Council has described this stakeholder participation as a model it wants to pursue to the wider communities. It is accepted it has not got off to a rosy start.

Proposal: I have been asked by council whether we (the stakeholders) would feel more supported and be able to work more effectively if our appointment came at the request of the Community Board rather than the informal way mentioned above.

How this would Function: On approval of this process the Community Board would select the stakeholders authorised to attend council meetings including workshops. The stakeholders independently of council would provide regular reports to community board meetings. These reports will include relevant documents and information the stakeholders believed were useful to add to the minutes so the wider community could be as informed as they want.

Benefits: At present the stakeholders are not formally recognised within councils structure like the Significance and Engagement Policy or within the existing consultation processes. As stakeholders represented in the current informal way we have no 'chain of reporting' or 'understanding of our authority'. The benefits of formalising the arrangement, with councils permission, would include:

1. Stakeholders would be selected by the community board not just from pressure groups
2. Stakeholders would have limitations of responsibilities
3. Stakeholders would better understand what is expected of them
4. The Community Board meeting minutes would hold relevant information to keep the community engaged and informed of progress
5. Less trial by media

Responsibilities would pass to the Community Board: By officially sanctioning the stakeholders this would go some way to reduce the confusion and frustration currently being experienced by the

current Stormwater action group members. I attach Robert Boston's email to council as an example. I agree with Rob. It would assist us immensely if:

1. If the project was not progressing as expected the stakeholders would present to a community board meeting why and what they believe can be done to correct the issue. It would be the responsibility of the community board to take that up with council and to then formally present that back to the stakeholders.
2. Likewise with any formal dispute or disagreement. The stakeholders do not need to take responsibility for any actions they disagree with. These would pass to the community board to resolve.

Wider benefit: One element of the proposed stormwater master plan is improvements are expected to satisfy many existing RFS. Some of these are likely repetitive over time like Island View, Williamson Pond, Kiwi Rd, Mooloo, Port Rd, Chartwell etc which will have existing unresolved RFS. This process should extend to allowing these to be formally brought into the Community Board meetings and made into projects under the stormwater master plan project to officially record these issues. This way the current staff and stakeholders will be less likely to omit important background problems. The Master Plan project can be inclusive and not miss these historical issues.

Other councils' models: Western Bay of Plenty District Council and Auckland Council have similar types of groups. They are both called SWAT (Stormwater Action Teams) and started in a similar way by community initiatives then formalised by council. They may be able to assist how those structures work. The Waihi SWAT was formed in 2012 but work stalled and then they got worse flooding. That is also good learning.

Thank you:

Attached Rob Boston email

From: Robert Boston <rob.boston50@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, May 28, 2024 3:54 AM

To: Ian Holyoake <ian@moisturedetection.co.nz>

Subject: Fwd: Public Open Day to discuss the proposed works at Williamson Park Pond

Hi Ian

As we discussed, I am not prepared to consider going back on the "team" under the present set up. I have spoken to Terry about it and briefed him with how we think it should operate.

Are your thoughts still the same? I will email Brett and let him know my stance.

Rob

Sent from my iPhone