

The emotions of *fear* (of change) and *hope* (that change can improve our lot) underlie so much of our day to day urban life, but the underlying causes are so often clouded by fake news, misinformation and misunderstanding – and this mix leads to divisions in our community where different expectations are not met.

Political journo Chris Uhlmann's recent commentary on the choice in our Federal election (that will now have been decided - for better or worse depending on your political persuasion), posited that the Coalition based its election platform on managing *fear* in uncertain times, while Labor pushed its wagon of reform agendas as makers of a vehicle for *hope* in the future.

A similar dialogue has been running on what should be done to Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris, with arguments for traditional restoration of the symbolic past on one hand - based on *fear* of loss of the spire's religious and gothic heritage significance - versus promoters of change and *hope* that the fire might be a catalyst for making an inspired contemporary replacement, as an expression of faith in a future facing so many challenges.

In Lane Cove the path between *fear* and *hope* has been a meandering one over the past decade. Urban renewal has changed the village in ways that many are concerned would see loss of its familiar charm, while growth in density has added new potential for revitalisation that I and many others expect might create the fabric for a more multi-dimensional and cosmopolitan community.

The Canopy (new name for the former Rosenthal car park site) development presents an interesting dilemma in managing the impact of its insertion into the heart of Lane Cove village. Provision of a massive new car park for around 500 vehicles and supermarket servicing will generate much more traffic in and around Burns Bay Road, and I *fear* this may create mayhem on a road system already overloaded. The Lane Cove Structure Plan (that Council undertook with the advocacy of Lane Cove ALIVE a decade ago) identified this challenge, along with the *hope* for a new centre linked by multiple arcades and a rejuvenated Birdwood Lane. One major ambition of the Structure Plan was a widened Coxs Lane link from Sutherland St to Epping Rd as a way to reduce the traffic pressure around the village, and it must be hoped that necessary land acquisition can be finalised for this to avoid Burns Bay Road itself becoming a car park.

Traffic increase is also creating adverse impacts at the Longueville Road – Epping Road intersection, and 'rat runs' such as in Karilla Ave between Parklands and Centennial Ave. I *fear* lack of action over 10 years means *hope* for maintaining the peaceful natural environment that many residents sought in moving to Lane Cove is being eroded by RMS vested interests in car commuters.

Unfortunately it appears Lane Cove Council has limited powers to intervene in the big traffic picture - but could the recent appointment of Rob Stokes MP as Minister for Planning and Public Spaces raise our *hope* with his background as an academic in environment and planning law, and interest in environmental land use planning, heritage and sustainability.

*We have long battled over our environment: we have sought to explore it, to subdue it, to conquer it and, all too recently, to save it. Now the battle is about our collective consciousness and sense of justice for our environment.*

Hon. Rob Stokes MP – inaugural speech 31 May 2007.

But I *fear* that Andrew Constance MP, now Minister for Transport and Roads, might present a major obstacle on that front. Even though he commented "*Errr, why are we building this rubbish?*" in connection to WestConnex, the way local community interests were sidelined does not offer much *hope* for good urban design and environmental quality to win against politicians influenced more by engineers and toll operators.