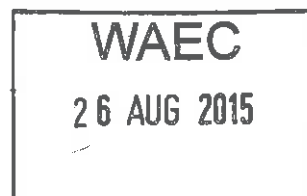

From: Len Kosova <Len.Kosova@vincent.wa.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 26 August 2015 4:59 PM
To: 2015 Electoral Boundaries Review
Subject: Electoral Boundary Review - Submission

Importance: High

By email to: boundaries@waec.wa.gov.au

Executive Officer
Office of the Electoral Distribution Commissioners
Electoral Boundaries WA
GPO Box F316 PERTH WA 6841



Dear Commissioners

Electoral Boundary Review – Proposed change to Perth/Mount Lawley Electorates

Council at its meeting last night considered your proposed changes to the boundary between the Perth and Mount Lawley electorates and resolved to object to that proposal and recommend that an alternative boundary change be explored to minimise or avoid fragmentation of the City of Vincent. Council also noted that the plan depicting the proposed Electoral Boundary for the Mount Lawley electorate erroneously omitted the City of Vincent's local government boundary and may have been misleading for the purpose of inviting comments or objections.

I acknowledge that the submission period for the electoral boundary proposals officially closed yesterday (the day of the Council meeting), but prior notice was given to your office that this submission would be forthcoming and it was accepted that it could still be considered in the submissions received, notwithstanding that it is being lodged the day after the close of submissions.

The following commentary provides important information and advice in support of Council's objection to the proposed boundary change.

The proposed boundary change will unnecessarily fragment Vincent's small, vibrant and tight knit community, through excision of the south Mount Lawley area from the Perth electorate and its transfer to the Mount Lawley electorate.

This proposal appears to primarily rely on an assumption that the suburb of Mount Lawley (by name) is the unifying and defining characteristic to justify the proposed change. The City of Vincent assert this assumption is incorrect, as:

- Mount Lawley does not share a community of interest other than a common name;
- Mount Lawley is divided by local government boundaries;
- Mount Lawley is divided by a significant physical boundary – Walcott Street; and
- Mount Lawley is divided by clear and different zoning and development guidelines.

In further detail, this submissions asserts that:

Walcott Street is a major geographic and local government boundary between city and suburban communities

The current proposal ignores Walcott Street as both a clear geographical separator, and local government boundary that creates a clear divide between North and South Mount Lawley precincts.

As noted in the City of Vincent's submission to the local government reform process, Walcott Street has been a logical boundary between more inner city oriented communities and wider metropolitan Perth, and historically has been a delineation point as the far northern boundary of the City of Perth from 1914 until the restructure of the City of Perth in 1995.

This division is also reflected in the significant zoning variation between properties south and north of Walcott Street, which have come to define both local communities. The south precinct of Mount Lawley within the City of Vincent enables higher density and diversity of land use, while the north precinct of Mount Lawley in the City of Stirling has significant restrictions on the type and aesthetics of development, along with substantially lower density zonings.

Separate communities of interest – north and south of Walcott Street

This submission argues City of Vincent residents have a strong sense of shared identity and community of interest – established around five town centres in Mt Hawthorn, Mt Lawley (South of Walcott Street), Leederville, North Perth and Perth (William Street) and have demonstrated their clear desire to remain and be represented as a small, vibrant and united community.

The shared sense of 'communities of interest' and identity was formally recognised and supported by our local community in the key *Vincent Vision 2020* plan – an ambitious project which developed a long range community vision to guide the strategic direction of Vincent, into the future. The plan identified key vision statements and aspirations for the whole community, as well as the five identified key places (town centres). *Vincent Vision 2020* has been recognised at a state and national level for its excellence in community planning.

This shared community of interest was most recently articulated during the State's local government reform initiative, where Vincent ratepayers were recognised as the most vocal and active in their demonstration for Vincent remaining united, rather than being split under proposed changes by the WA Government. In response to the Government's proposal, a plebiscite was held in October 2013 and an overwhelming 89.89% of voters opposed any splitting of the community between two different local governments. There was also strong and overwhelming opposition to Vincent merging (either in part or in whole) the City of Stirling to the north. In addition, a petition opposing the splitting of Vincent and containing more than 7,500 signatures was tabled in the Parliament.

It should also be noted that separate community and precinct organisations exist for north and south precincts of Mount Lawley, which again reflects the clear divide in the communities of interest. The Mount Lawley Society represents the lower density and character area of Mount Lawley suburb north of Walcott Street – while the urban place making organisation Beaufort Street Network represents businesses and local residents to the south of Walcott Street. This difference is also physically represented in the urban landscapes of the main Beaufort Street retail and café strip, with a clear distinction in streetscape and urban design north and south of Walcott Street.

For the above reasons, residents in the southern Mt Lawley precinct below Walcott Street clearly identify and share a common community of interest with their neighbours in Vincent, as opposed to the Mt Lawley residents in the City of Stirling.

Alternative proposals

There are a number of alternative combinations which could assist in reducing the number of electors in the current electorate of Perth. These variations would see electors in the City of Perth and City of Vincent being ceded to alternative electorates rather than the City of Vincent community solely ceding electors to a neighbouring electorate.

For example, the Electoral Distribution Commissioners could consider a combination of the following – rather than one or the other, as proposed by previous submissions:

- 1) Ceding West Perth – west of Mitchell Freeway – to the neighbouring electorate of Nedlands. As noted by Dr Mark Muclair in his submission (21 April 2015), this is a neat and reasonable adjustment, given the significant geographic barrier presented by the Mitchell Freeway. In addition, this change recognises there is likely a stronger connection for the West Perth community with the close and neighbouring Subiaco/Hay Street precinct, rather than with the CBD and East Perth precincts in Perth.

- 2) Ceding a smaller proportion of Vincent to the Mt Lawley electorate – for example transferring only a smaller part of the Mt Lawley locality east of William, Beaufort or Lord Streets. While it is not the preference of the City of Vincent for any of the Vincent community to be ceded, if further electors are required to be removed from Perth, each of these corridors (as major roads) would appear a fair and reasonable geographic border to the new proposed electorate of Perth.
- 3) Recognising the current proposed Perth/Mount Lawley boundary of Norfolk Street makes little sense, as it is not a major geographic boundary, major transport corridor or identified by local residents as the distinct boundary between the North Perth and Mount Lawley localities in the City of Vincent.
- 4) In fact, the total area bounded by Fitzgerald and William Streets has for the past 20 years been referred to as the Norfolk Precinct for planning and development purposes in the City of Vincent (and enshrined in Policy) rather than as a Mount Lawley precinct. This is also recognised in that the Norfolk Precinct Group of residents represents this area, rather than the Mount Lawley Society.

The City of Vincent thanks you for your consideration of this submission.

Please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned if you require any further information.

Yours sincerely



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