



Kawhia Community Board

AGENDA

9 December 2016

1.00pm

This meeting will take place at the Kawhia Community Hall

Members of the Kawhia Community Board

Mr CE Jeffries (Chair)
Ms A Gane
Mrs DM Pilkington
Mr AJ Rutherford
Mr DM Walsh

Meeting Secretary: Mr CA Tutty (Governance Supervisor)

KAWHIA COMMUNITY BOARD

9 December 2016

Notice is hereby given that an Ordinary meeting of the Kawhia Community Board will be held in the Kawhia Community Hall, Jervois Street, Kawhia on 9 December 2016 commencing at 1pm.

2 December 2016

DC Clibbery
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

AGENDA

ORDER OF BUSINESS:

ITEM	PRECIS	PAGE
	PRESENT	1
	IN ATTENDANCE	1
	APOLOGIES	1
	ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED IN GENERAL BUSINESS	1
	CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES – 21 OCTOBER 2016	1
	DECLARATION OF INTEREST	1
	REPORTS	
ITEM 9	REQUEST FOR FUNDING – CREATIVE HUB DESIGN	2
ITEM 10	KCB MATTERS REFERRED FROM 21 OCTOBER 2016	8
GENERAL		8

PRESENT

IN ATTENDANCE

APOLOGIES

ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED IN GENERAL BUSINESS

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES – 21 OCTOBER 2016

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

REPORTS

ITEM 9 REQUEST FOR FUNDING – CREATIVE HUB DESIGN

To: CHAIRPERSON AND MEMBERS

Kawhia Community Board

From: Chief Executive

Date: 9 December 2016

Relevant Community Outcomes

- Ensure services and facilities meet the needs of the Community
 - Promote the local economy and opportunities for sustainable economic development
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Executive Summary

The request made by the Kawhia Art Group in respect of the proposed creative hub and the associated public submissions received are discussed.

Staff Recommendation

That the report be received.

Report Discussion

At the Board's meeting of 30 September 2016 representatives of the Kawhia Art Group (KAG) presented a proposal for the development of a Creative hub facility located behind the Kawhia Museum, and made a request to the KCB for funding towards the cost of obtaining an engineer design for such a facility, to be based on the use of shipping containers.

The Board subsequently agreed that because no such activity or funding had been previously indicated in any Council plan, community feedback on this request should be sought through an invitation for written submissions on this matter, with submitters being given the opportunity to speak to their submissions at a future meeting of the Board.

Whilst the question that Council was posing to the community was in relation to the specific request of KAG for funding of a design, it was recognised that that the responses received from the community would probably also reflect a broader range of aspects of the proposal, and that these too needed to be given consideration in reaching a decision on both the Board's overall support for the project and the associated funding of a design.

It has also been previously noted that the proposed location for the hub facility is on land administered by the District Council rather than the Kawhia Community Board, but that whilst Council is the final decision maker in respect of the use of this land, it is unlikely that it would not be strongly guided by the views of the KCB.

It would appear that for any decision to be made on the granting of funding towards a design exercise decisions will also have to be made by KCB on their broader support for the proposal.

Submissions Received

50 submissions were received by the closing date of 1 November. Copies of these have been provided separately to members. This is a very large number of submissions for the size of the community and obviously indicates a high level of interest.

The submissions received were varied, with some having mixed views on different aspects that made it difficult to classify them as being supportive or opposed overall.

A larger number of submissions were generally supportive than generally opposed, but some of the opposing submissions reflected the views of a number of people, and on the basis of the numbers of people, the views expressed were fairly evenly balanced. It is suggested that it would be unwise to use either numbers of submissions or persons represented by submissions as a significant influence on the decisions made on this matter.

A petition has also been received well after the closing date for submissions that carries the signatures of 49 people who '*object to the placing of containers on public land between the Kawhia Community Hall and the Museum*'.

Certain key issues were reflected in many submissions. Some of these are identified in the following sections, together with some comment on that matter from a Council staff perspective.

Benefit of Hub adding vibrancy to the community, forming a much needed visitor attraction in the CBD.

Many submissions referred to the current lack of attractions or activities in the CBD area, and the belief that the creation of a creative hub there could help address this, enhancing the potential for Kawhia to be seen as a destination for visitors. This seems very difficult to dispute.

Contributing to Sense of Community and Inclusion

In addition to a number of submissions identifying this as a particular benefit, no submissions suggested that have some form of creative hub at some location would not be a positive thing for the community if it was operated in an inclusive manner. Reference was made in some submissions to the significant proportion of the Kawhia Community who are currently engaged in artistic activities.

It is considered unfortunate that a concept that appears to have potential to help bind together the social fabric of Kawhia currently seems to have become a focus for division within the community.

Use of Public Monies to Support Commercial Activities

A number of submissions stated a belief that the Creative Hub as a place from which art was sold would be a commercial activity, and that the use of public monies to support commercial activities was not appropriate.

Whilst extended discussion might be conducted as to whether the Hub is of a commercial nature, it is suggested that it is easiest to accept that it has a commercial component, and then consider how this would fit in to the existing framework.

Whilst it can be argued whether or not it is appropriate to do so, Council or Council funded bodies (in particular the Otorohanga District Development Board) have on occasions provided financial support (direct or indirect) to individuals or groups that sell services or products, where it is believed that the those activities offer broader benefits to the community.

Examples include support of the Otorohanga Kiwihouse and (to a much lesser extent) medical services.

Whilst Council or Council funded bodies have previously engaged in such support of commercial activities, really sound business cases for doing so have not been established, and for this reason it is suggested that caution needs to be exercised in considering extensions of such support.

Thought also needs to be given to the fact that the establishment of a Creative Hub selling art would arguably be in competition with an existing nearby business that sells craft objects. Council and Council funded bodies need to exercise extreme care in respect of potentially giving one commercial enterprise an advantage over another.

The development and promotion (including some limited commercialisation) of the arts in Kawhia is however suspected to be one of the very few readily achievable things that might be done to attract more visitors to Kawhia and economically strengthen that community. Whilst a lack of viable alternative options is not a substitute for a sound business case, the apparent lack of other economic growth opportunities in Kawhia does perhaps need to be considered in decision making.

It should also be recognised that Council has expressed willingness to provide financial support for sport within the district, and that it might be unfair to be much less generous in the support of the arts because of the fact that some money is made from its conduct. Top sportsmen in the Otorohanga District (in particular rugby players) may go on to make money out of their sporting activities, but nobody has expressed a view that Council should be less financially supportive of local sport because of that.

It is considered that art in Kawhia is first and foremost a recreational activity; that some limited amount of income may also be derived from it does not fundamentally change this.

Use of Public Land for 'Commercial' Purposes

A number of submissions expressed the view that the operation of a creative hub where art was sold would be a commercial activity, and that it was not appropriate for public land to be used for commercial purposes.

The fact is however that this does frequently occur, with current examples of commercial businesses operating on public land in Kawhia including the medical centre, the tree nursery and the camp site on Moke Street. In all cases a rental is paid to the Council for the occupation of these properties, at a level that is considered to be fair and does not confer an advantage to a business on that site relative to other competing businesses.

Allocation of 'Reserve Land' to Particular Parties

A somewhat different issue to the previous one is that the suggested location of the Creative Hub behind the museum would represent the allocation of land intended for the use of the general public to a relatively limited group.

Firstly it needs to be noted that if the area behind the museum was classified as Recreation Reserve like other adjacent areas of the Omimiti Reserve, the Reserves Act 1977 would probably preclude the Hub being located there, as doing so would be contrary to the permitted use of such land as set out in section 17 of the Act, which focusses on sport, physical welfare and recreation, and the natural environment.

The land on which the museum building is located is however not reserve, it is an unencumbered freehold title. As such there is no legal barrier to establishment of the Hub on that site.

Whilst this land may be a freehold title, it does however have the general 'feel' of being a reserve area, being surrounded by other land that is classified as reserve.

As such regardless of its legal classification it is considered understandable that people may feel that granting use of part of this area to a particular group and purpose is inappropriate. Kawhia only has a very limited amount of readily useable public open space, with a number of competing uses – in particular the extension of parking – having been previously suggested for the central foreshore area.

This relative shortage of public open space in the centre of town is reflected in the fact that there have been previous discussions – albeit relatively short lived because of the very substantial challenges involved – in respect of further coastal reclamation to increase the area of the Kawhia foreshore reserve.

The fact is that additional useable public open space in the foreshore area cannot be realistically created, making that which exists particularly precious; too precious it would be suggested for it to be used for additional parking. Whereas there are many other places where vehicles could be parked in Kawhia if the occupants were willing to walk a few hundred metres, the same cannot be said of good quality space for public recreation.

The same argument can of course be used against the establishment of a Creative Hub there, as this too has a greater range of potential alternative locations.

A factor that should however be considered is that the proposed hub building would occupy an area of less than 100m², out of an existing useable open space area of over 7000m², representing only around 1.5% of that area.

Furthermore this particular area – immediately behind the museum is probably the single part of the foreshore / Omimiti Reserve area that is currently least utilised for any purpose.

The area was of course occupied for many years by the fire station, and no particular objections were raised in relation that building being there, despite it not being a very attractive structure.

As such the potential loss of this part of the foreshore area to the general public appears to be one of the less compelling arguments against a development there.

Container Based Structure

On one hand it is believed that many of the people expressing objection to the construction of a facility using shipping containers do not appreciate how attractive structures build from such items can be, with a product that bears no resemblance to the perceptions of containers as ugly, rusting industrial items (typically in similarly unattractive settings) that many people may have. These opposed submitters do not appear to recognise that a well designed and finished container-based structure behind the museum could potentially offer a very attractive contrast to the traditional appearance of the museum.

That there appears to be such widespread opposition to the use of containers seems somewhat surprising given that the KAG has produced a model that clearly shows that the envisaged structure bears no resemblance to the raw shipping containers than can be seen being used for storage at various locations, and has attractive architectural aspects.

On the other hand it is however suspected that it may be very easy to underestimate the difficulty and cost of transforming containers into a building of such quality.

Members of the Kawhia Arts Group have sought guidance from Council's Senior Building Control Officer as to what is required from a regulatory perspective for a potential container-based building at that location, and the officer has identified those requirements, but it is suspected that those KAG members may not have fully taken on board the message that the officer was trying to give, which was that whilst there may not be any insurmountable barriers to such a development this is not a simple or straightforward project, and that the requirements identified may not be easily or inexpensively met.

Those who have watched television programs such as 'grand designs' will be familiar with the challenges and uncertainties of cost that are associated with the construction of unconventional buildings (or using unconventional materials) to high standards, and that often the real costs only become apparent as the work progresses.

For a private individual or entity with relatively 'deep pockets' and/or the ability to wholly own and accept any compromises – functional or aesthetic - that may be required this may not be a great problem, but that is unlikely to be the case here.

For a Kawhia Creative Hub there are likely to be significant limitations of available funding, and that if costs are higher than expected then compromises in the quality of the building might have to be made, that could impact on the broader community in a way that is not acceptable.

In such an event Council might be placed in an extremely difficult situation of having to choose between providing financial assistance to enable a partially constructed project to be completed to a high standard, accepting a compromised building and the associated dissatisfaction of elements of the community, or making the even more difficult decision that the structure must be removed. None of these are likely to be easy choices, and it is therefore considered imperative that if a container based structure proposal is to be advanced further it is based on a substantially larger cost figure than is currently being suggested by the KAG, and probably greater than the cost of a more conventional structure of comparable size.

There is something of a 'chicken and egg' issue here, as the KAG has requested funding from Council towards the technical design (and presumably a detailed cost estimate) for a container-based structure, but it is possible that the cost estimate that comes from that process might be considered to make that option unaffordable, in which case the investment in the design (which would probably be at least \$5,000) would have been wasted.

It is suggested that a container based structure should only be explored further if the KAG considers itself able to source at least \$100,000 for such a project, rather than the \$60,000 currently being referenced, and even then there are perhaps greater risks than would be associated with a more conventional structure or materials.

A possible approach would be to retain the a design concept similar to that which has been proposed by the KAG, but construct it with other building materials which offer greater flexibility of design detail than is achievable when working around the fixed structure of shipping containers. It is suspected that this approach could result in lower (and more predictable) costs for both construction and long term maintenance. Council's Environmental Services Manager has indicated a willingness to discuss these potential alternative construction materials and methods with the KAG, and given the level of community concern that clearly exists around the use of containers it would be strongly recommended that the KAG takes up this offer.

Other Potential Locations

A number of submissions have suggested that there are other sites away from the foreshore where a Creative hub might be more appropriately located, in particular the Kawhia Domain. Whilst there may be some merits in the suggestion of establishing the hub at the Domain it seems very difficult to argue that doing so would not compromise the potential to add vibrancy to the community – and in particular the CBD - from a visitor perspective.

Whilst signage could be erected in the CBD directing tourists and other visitors to the Domain, going there will require additional effort that seems likely to deter many, and it would do little to create a perception of Kawhia as a vibrant community.

Funding Sources

Whilst the submissions and this report have covered a broader range of issues, sight should not be lost of the fact that the request made to the KCB was for funding of the preliminary technical design of a container based building.

That funding is being sought for preliminary design work (which may not necessarily lead to anything physical being created) is also considered to pose a challenge in respect of justifying such a contribution from any party. That the KAG may not have any financial 'skin in the game' at this point also weakens the case for support.

All branches of Council or Council funded organisations have some obligations to ensure that their expenditure results in good value being obtained for the community, and in this case the uncertainty of what will ultimately be delivered would make investment in design a somewhat speculative exercise.

The KAG made its funding request to the KCB, as it was entitled to do, but currently there is no KCB budget allocation that could be used for such a purpose, and indeed that purpose is outside of the scope of delegations that have been given to the Board by Council.

It is understood that the KAG may also be considering approaching the Otorohanga District Development Board (ODDB) for funding, but this would have to be contingent upon KCB and Council giving their approval for the use of any Council land involved. Even with such approval it would be expected that the ODDB might be similarly challenged by the uncertain value of an unconventional design exercise, and the potential to be advantaging a group that is to some extent in competition with an existing private business.

It is suggested that the most appropriate funding source (if it existed) would be from something established for the support of the arts, at a District level. Such a source would have some similarity to the 'Sport Support Fund' that has recently been put in place.

Regardless of which source funding is sought from It would appear easier to make a case for such funding if this was towards the construction of a more conventional structure, for which costs could be relatively accurately estimated at an early stage.

Dave Clibbery
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

ITEM 10 KCB MATTERS REFERRED FROM 21 OCTOBER 2016

To: KAWHIA COMMUNITY BOARD MEMBERS

From: Governance Supervisor

Date: 9 December 2016

1. CHIEF EXECUTIVE

21 October 2016

- i. To have discussion with Council's Finance and Administration Manager regarding Kawhia Wharf Berthage fees, who is being charged, when billed etc.

2. ENGINEERING MANAGER

30 September 2016

- i. To investigate safety and risk management controls in regards to a relocatable house on a property at the end of Rosamond Terrace.

21 October 2016

- i. To check on the matter of power meters located on the Kawhia Wharf.

3. COMMUNITY FACILITIES OFFICER

30 September 2016

- i. To report back to the Board on matters relating to the disposal of green waste at the Kawhia Refuse Transfer Station

GENERAL