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The Real Issues...No-one Is Discussing!

Dunstan By-Election Forum

The Dunstan By-Election has exposed a weakness in our political system whereby the major political parties Labor, Liberals, and Greens, take for granted that people are happy with the level of political discussion and the strategy adopted by the candidates in this electorate.

A quick perusal of social media in Dunstan sees lots of smiling on The Parade, token red dresses, or bopping with the former premier and gym workouts. Many of us despair at such orchestrated snapshots.

Whether Labor takes back its prized seat or whether the Liberals hold on by their fingernails there are many in the community who want none of it.

A vox pop in the suburbs might reveal that some individuals are cynical about the outcome and how it will benefit the community or lead to better representation or better decision-making.

Following the depressing mudslinging by both major parties and the inability of candidates to speak 'freely', or to front up to the media, then it is up to local residents to raise issues of significance to this community.

The issues are complex and have not been addressed in the campaign. High rise urban development in historic suburbs isn't going away and then there is the continuing loss of historic built heritage and significant trees.

No-one has discussed in Dunstan the issue of housing affordability and social equity and fairness.

What about the important issue of climate change and environmental management of our resources - stormwater runoff from new development in the electorate is impacting on the ecology of the River Torrens.



A walk along the Linear Park raises the vexed question of increased building close to the River Torrens' cliffs and escarpments in Dunstan.

One might speculate about the looming issue of cliff stability and encroachment, and the role of State and Local Planning authorities in contributing to this situation. Will the taxpayers have to pay the costs if an embankment slips?

The City of Norwood, Payneham & St Peters in a recent audit committee report spoke of forthcoming rate rises in the next financial year of 8% over two years and then 7%. What is the true cost of major council projects such as the Payneham Swimming Pool in the Dunstan electorate? Can ratepayers afford a doubling of council rates?

All of which begs the question of why isn't this information in the public arena and being discussed? Will the State Government cover the 'supposed cost blow out' of the Payneham Pool redevelopment and is this dependent on the election of a specific candidate?

Do the major political parties really understand what the electorate cares about. We are not talking about push polling but tapping into key issues of safety, of adequate mental health facilities, of our social responsibility to the aged, to youth, to the dispossessed, to the homeless and disenfranchised.

Beware the lessons of history.

**The Dunstan Forum,
Wednesday March 20th 7.00pm, Banquet Room, St Peters Townhall, St Peters**

The Dunstan Forum is being presented by SPRA the St Peters Resident Association, a and is supported by the Kensington Residents Association.
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