Waimāero
Fendalton-Waimairi-Harewood Community Board
MINUTES ATTACHMENTS

Date: Monday 13 May 2019
Time: 4.30pm
Venue: Ōrauwhata, Bishopdale Community Centre Hall
        13P Bishopdale Court, Bishopdale

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Submission Colin Fussell to Community Board Meeting 13th May 2019

Your recent meeting deferred decision regarding new bus stops near Sawyers Arms & Gardiners Roads. At that meeting I opened submissions by congratulating the various authorities on their vision to introduce the new 28 service running from Northwood through Sawyers, Gardiners, Papanui, Cranford, City to Lyttelton for the following reasons:

- It offered residents a direct service to the City and City South (like the well patronised route lost in earthquakes) without the need to wait in Papanui for a connecting bus on both inward & outward “legs” of any trip. A time wasting, unappealing exercise particularly in inclement weather!
- It complemented the services predominately running via Papanui Road allowing wider access choice & giving better service to those through Cranford area.
- It also allowed better frequency on Harewood Road which had been cut back drastically after earthquakes. With the City now being restored this can rekindle much of the patronage lost over recent times. The connection to the efficient Orbiter service through Harewood/Greers has appealed. The spectacular success of Orbiter revealed the public will use if service caters!

After my congratulations I was aghast at that last Board meeting to hear an organised group from Gardiners Road objecting in tandem to any bus stops in the “top end” of Gardiners Road.

- Every conceivable objection was dredged-up to the point of absurdity: litter, noise, security, nuisance, access, etc. A scan of many bus stops in the City would prove these are completely frivolous & unfounded problems overall!
- The buses, today, are clean, quiet, well-maintained, etc. The public using the buses will be from their own suburb which, overall, reflects as a caring one! Even in the “less discerning suburbs” bus stops tend to be no different “to the norm” elsewhere.
- A half hourly infrequent passing service constitutes NO problem in spite of their claims.
- The number of people likely to use the stops would be little more than modest – even with anticipated growth. Given bus cards, etc the buses would be at the stops less than 30 seconds IF that bus even had to stop!
- It is far too easy for one or two residents with a conceived gripe to pressure or persuade other residents to sign objections with a short “coloured” presentation. Most will not wish to get “offside” with a “driven” neighbour intent on generating support. Most, also, would currently be unlikely regular bus users at this point in their lives.
- **Important: the 1km distance separating St Ives & Working Men’s Club stops is ridiculously too far apart** and is a gross impediment to gaining custom. Bear in mind the public could well have that distance to walk on top of any other to their residence! This is unappealing for many people under present conditions for a variety of reasons!

We are at a time where the need for public transport will have to be better considered, indeed visionary. With due respect, the Board’s decision to assess, for six months, a service in a “crippled state” was never likely to achieve an accurate indication as to what patronage potential. The public in that wider area is unlikely to be attracted into using the service unless it’s convenient. What are we “selling”? A lengthy “route march” to or from a bus stop is a “tough sell” especially to the young, elderly or partially incapacitated who will tend to be the greatest users.

I have to tolerate constant parking outside my home since the popular Copenhagen Bakery recently joined our suburb. Backing onto a busy four lane highway does have real hazards - it is a far greater annoyance but it “goes with the territory” when living in a City. Many have to accept such impost – if the authorities had to plan on the basis of the carriageway being seen as “private parking” most bus services would be curtailed. A few vocal residents pushing frivolous claims cannot hold sway in impeding an essential service. Most of the objectors will slowly accept the fact their fears were groundless and, like me in retirement, use a great service nearby to enjoy a hassle-free few hours in a great “new” city and its environs!

Lastly, I do have an excellent knowledge on bus operations – prior to my employ as a senior bank officer I drove on the former CTB for 9 years while I was studying through the 60’s & 70’s. Thus I have a sound knowledge of the system, the needs of the public and what “colours” their attitude to regular & continued bus use. They were a joy to work with – and they responded in kind. It is ironic that there are the detractors of a public service, & I could give examples, but as they, for example, slip into old age &/or circumstances change, surprising how many rethink their attitude – witness certain rest homes seeking a service right now! Being nearly 80 years old I can now better understand why, too – can you?