



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

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**STANDING COMMITTEE ON PLANNING, TRANSPORT AND CITY SERVICES**  
Jo Clay MLA (Chair), Suzanne Orr MLA (Deputy), Mark Parton MLA

Submission No 21 -

Mr Phil Rabi

Inquiry into Giralang Shops

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
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Dear ACT Legislative Assembly

### **Submission on Giralang shops**

My late wife and I bought a block in Giralang in July 1975, and moved in in December 1975. So, I have lived in Giralang through the entire saga. From this relatively close perspective I have three main to make:

1. Initially the shops were quite a thriving little complex but as consumer habits changed, and the range of shops declined, they became quite run down and unattractive. There is no realistic way the site can once again support a thriving shopping centre. Every possible avenue has been exhausted in trying to find a formula for that. In my view there never was a chance that people would invest their money in such a risky venture as a small suburban shopping centre when there is a much larger centre in Kaleen just 2km away, and other small shopping centres in surrounding suburbs.
2. Every proposal put forward by the developer has fallen foul of either the law or the market. The developer should have recognised the legal and market realities from the beginning and sought to work with the Government to vary the lease purpose so that it could become a small scale housing development. Instead, he repeatedly put forward proposals at odds with the lease purpose and/or market realities. In seeking to change the lease purpose, the developer should have had the courage to stare down the lobbyists opposing a housing development.
3. Top of the list of the lobbyists to ignore is the Giralang Residents Action Group. GRAG has continually claimed to speak for the Giralang community. If GRAG wants to speak for the wider Giralang community they need to be accountable back to that community. But I cannot find any evidence to show GRAG is accountable back to Giralang residents. I have asked GRAG live on ABC Canberra to explain things like how they came into being, how they consult the community and how I might stand for election to a position on GRAG. They will not answer such questions. They appear to have appointed themselves to the status of spokespersons for the community. The GRAG Weebly web presence says their sole purpose relates to having shops in Giralang. Given everything that has happened over the past 17 years, anyone who continues to promote the fantasy that shops can be economically viable in Giralang is part of the problem, not the solution.

Sincerely

Phil Rabl  
[REDACTED]