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MR FLUFFY SUBMISSION

Is this a planning disaster for the future making of Canberra ...
all 1021 "Mr. Fluffy" blocks rezoned RZ2?

My name is Simpson, I unfortunately have a Mr. Fluffy home in |
When we went to the open day to look at the house, the real estate agent advised that the house had been part of a loose fill asbestos removal program, there was a certificate to say that it was safe and would pose no problems. This was the only reference to the asbestos made to us. We had never heard of "Mr. Fluffy" as we were not from Canberra, access to the internet is not what it is today and because we received a receipt from the Government, we thought that the asbestos was properly removed and no longer an issue. This could be no further from the truth.

I ask the opening question because I am concerned for children that will be calling these small blocks home.

Most new homes being built in the "new" estates i.e. Gungahlin, Molonglo, Macgregor and Crace are built on 450m² – 550m² blocks - these houses are designed for much larger blocks. My concern is that children are missing out on valuable lifelong lessons and their health is potentially being compromised. A large block allows for a backyard where children can explore 'til their hearts content; they are active in mind and play, in a safe environment. The play is spontaneous - as opposed to being structured because of lack of space..- *"Types of housing were important – kids living in houses or flats on small blocks of land were less active than other children"* quoted from www.today.ninemsn.com.au/healthandbeauty/172280/kids-and-physical-activity

A large back yard allows a child to make his or her own play rather than having a parent create structured play due to the child being bored or not knowing what to do.

Let's talk about the reason for these smaller blocksIs it to create viable building land where previously land did not exist? Is it to enable more people to live in a city? - ... I think not, I believe this is how governments are able to increase income to their budgets - by releasing land parcels, by making available smaller footprint blocks - thereby giving no choice to the first homebuyer. The developers purchase parcels of land and sell a house and land package - Mr. and Mrs. First Home Owner can only purchase a small block to put their first home on - they start a family and their children know no different. *"the building of large houses on tiny blocks, with narrow footpaths and roads (because of excessive land prices), allows little room to plant trees or veggie gardens. It also means that homes are so close together that many do not contain roof eaves or verandahs and have poor air flow, thereby requiring greater air*

conditioning in the summer. The lack of backyards and open space also encourages children to remain inside playing video games and watching T.V. which of course uses more energy."
www.macrobusiness.com.au/2011/07/block-sizes-shrinking-blame-government-policy

Houses on small blocks of land do not encourage a child to play outside!

1. How do you play backyard cricket on a small patch of grass.... (That's if you have grass)?
2. Children may be lucky enough to own a small dog - definitely no chickens!

Small blocks of land inhibit children from playing outside. Therefore it is detrimental to their wellbeing! Some identified issues include:-

1. Obesity
2. Lack of Vitamin D.... potentially harmful to them in their early adult life increasing the risk of developing Multiple Sclerosis *"Children who spend more time in the sun have a lower risk for developing multiple sclerosis as adults. Something in relation to sunlight and/ or vitamin D exposure during childhood may play a protective role."*
www.raysahelian.com/multiplesclerosis
3. No space to have a swimming pool, so no choice but to use public swimming pools; children run the risk of exposure to a plethora of infections.
4. There is very little space for play equipment so children have to use the public park areas. Parents don't always have time to take children to a park to play on swings. At the park, parents become "helicopter parents" because of the parental supervision required due to fears of. A) injury, B) stranger danger and C) potential bullying. Eventually going to these amenities becomes too difficult as most parents are time poor and thus are unable to take the child every day, they stop taking their child.

There are too many multi-dwellings (apartments) that have been built. Still more are being built in areas such as Molonglo – in Wright. Apartment living only suits a small percentage of the population (mostly investors and renters). Eventually the renter will want to be a homeowner and buy their dream home. Shame that when they do, all they will be able to do is put a huge house on a very small block and have no back yard as their sanctuary....

"...Redevelopment of the highest quality here should be a no-brainer; the site and the city deserve no less. But the Territory plan has only vague design criteria about reflecting residential scale, privacy and solar access. The Plan provides no overall picture of how it could all hang together, no plans for what neighborhoods might be found there, no urban structure and no enhanced infrastructure. There is a real risk that we will wake up one day to a second or third rate result and a paradise lost." www.manningclark.org.au/papers/australian-quarter-acre-block Roger Pegrum 2/4/2011 speaking directly about Canberra.

. These are my reasons why I want my family to stay on our block:-

I want my children to come home with their friends, swim in our pool and have a meal together in our gorgeous BBQ area located in our very own sanctuary called our backyard. The friends get to know us as the parents and we meet our children's friends.

We know where our children are and who they are hanging out with. As our children grow into teenagers, it becomes more important to be a part of their lives - more so than when they were toddlers.

Our backyard means more to us than the house.... We didn't make the house but we have made the backyard into something very special.

Location was a major influence when purchasing 22 years ago. My husband and I would not be able to afford to buy in [redacted] if we sold to the ACT Government.

Our neighbours are family; we have formed friendships with neighbours around us. As we are a Weston Creek family, our lives were changed forever because of the 2003 bushfires. We all rallied around each other. Making long lasting friendships in a new neighbourhood just doesn't seem possible. Our children will miss the children in our street. They play in the front street with their mates - soccer, cricket, they riding their bikes.

There have been many tears and conversations trying to explain to our son and daughter why we have to leave our address. When trying to explain to them, I am left wondering why the ACT government's scheme is the only option available to us.

The house we can replace, but we can't replace what we have created outside our back door.

As victims of this situation, we feel we are being victimized even further.....

We bought our house because we could see the potential of what it could be - which has taken 22 years to achieve. Our pool was a gift from my late uncle's Estate, so it is going to be extremely difficult to see it demolished. We bought our house after being told by the Real Estate Agent that it previously had asbestos as insulation, but that this was addressed in the removal program. As this program was signed off by the Federal Government, we thought it was safe to purchase the home as our 1st home together as a married couple in our early 20's. We followed all the criteria (i.e. to advise tradesmen of the presence of asbestos). We only learnt of "Mr. Fluffy" in the last couple of years. It was a total surprise and if we had been fully informed of the situation at the time of purchase then we wouldn't have touched the house.

My husband and I and our children would like to propose the following as an option to the ACT Government:-

We want to stay at our address.

We would like the ACT Government to provide a "one off" payment to us as the homeowners to enable remediation of the house footprint only.

Our backyard has been completely transformed from when we purchased the house in 1992; there is no opportunity for the remains of any asbestos fibres. As assessors need to check at all demolition stages - the backyard could be tested prior to demolition to determine the presence of asbestos.

We are prepared to finance the cost of rebuilding our home. This was our initial plan but the plan was placed on hold in August this year until the Government announced its "remedial actions". This plan was formulated following advice given to us at the "FORAG Town Hall" meetings. My husband and I feel we were misled by listening to advice that was obviously incorrect.

It is very difficult to swallow the fact that prior to the announcement the cost of remediation and new build was going to be compensated by the ACT Government but after the announcement, if we choose to follow our original plan then we will get nothing. This just doesn't seem fair.

We are only asking the ACT Government to finance the remediation of the house footprint on our behalf. We believe this is a cost saving to the government of hundreds of thousands of dollars. The Asbestos removal companies are charging whatever they like now that the announcement has been made; it is difficult to finance this cost ourselves as it would financially ruin us. These businesses have to be regulated they should not be allowed to profit from our situation and nor should the Government.

We would also ask that the Government undertake to remove the block from the "Mr. Fluffy" register once remediation is complete.

As at all times in the process since 28th October 2014, we are the victims of the ACT and Federal Governments' lack of compassion – showing no remorse for the situation that we, as owners of these homes have found ourselves in.

Not all of the 1021 homes need to be rezoned and divided. Please think long and hard about the Government's current proposal - think about the effects these small parcels of land will have on the lives of children. I ask that the Government be directed to negotiate with myself and my husband personally and not just use us to grab our land for profit.

"Once upon a time, Canberra led the country with imaginative planning and high standards for design and construction. It's times for us to take the lead again."

www.manningclark.org.au/papers/australian-quarter-acre-block Roger Pegrum 2/4/2011

I do hope you can offer assistance in having the Government look into studies completed regarding the effects small blocks can have on children.

Thank you for your time.

Simpson Homeowner of a Mr. Fluffy Home