

TRANSCRIPT EXCERPTS

**Sydney City Farm Public Meeting, 12th July, 2008.
Kirkbride Building, Callan Park, Rozelle.**

This is the first public presentation by the Sydney City Farm committee of our vision for Callan Park.

There are 2 vital issues that have motivated us to invite you here today

First, I imagine you, like us, are passionate about this beautiful site and want to keep it intact and alive for the people of Sydney.

Second, Sydney, Australia and indeed the world is in environmental crisis. It's imperative we act now, on all levels, to create change or there will be dire consequences. While our initiative appears small – at the most a 6 hectare farm and education centre in a 60 hectare site - local, community initiatives like the Sydney City Farm, will play an vital role in educating you, the community, in initiatives you can take to heal the planet.

So, for many reasons, your presence is important. Thank you for coming.

I'm going to give you a quick, big-picture vision of what we see for the site.

I'll then hand you over to our architect, Rod Simpson, well known as one of the principal consultants to the 'Sustainable Sydney 2030' Project... the man with not only the vision, but the skills to make it happen. As do all our committee members. I suggest you check our website to learn more about them. Our committee members have name tags on. Don't hesitate to ask questions.

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

At this stage, we're very much caught in the politics of the situation while we wait for a decision to be made about the site. We believe the State Government is about to announce their decision on the fate of Callan Park, based on a report being written by the SHFA – the Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority.

We have personally presented our ideas to SHFA 3 times and to a Cross Bench Briefing at state parliament with positive responses. However up to now, the government's masterplan process has neither been open nor inclusive of community wishes. As a consequence, we, along with others, have been ignored by the Planning Minister.

It seems, from media reports, the most likely outcome is for Sydney University to take over the whole site.

We have been very careful to this stage, to run a positive campaign. However, this is our comment on that outcome.



WILL WE BE IGNORED AGAIN?

If we are, the fight will really begin, and for this we will need your help - the best way to show Frank Sartor we are serious, is to show him we have the larger community behind us. If we are left off the draft plan – we will be calling, along with our friends at Friends of Callan Park, for a proper and open, public masterplan process.

We must have Callan Park for the community!

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Write a letter to Verity Firth

Become a member

Sign up for our newsletter

Send information about Sydney City Farm to your friends

WE ALL KNOW CALLAN PARK

Beautiful...



...and empty



WHY SYDNEY CITY FARM?

- The perfect solution to the issue of abandoned space and buildings. It will increase use, access and safety
- It will increase ecological awareness and provide hands-on education in sustainable practices for us all. Particularly for children, they will learn about where our food comes from, healthy eating, natural life systems
- A project that creates an environment for positive cooperation between all the interested parties at Callan Park We expect a strong synergy between the NGO's already on the site as well as any on the site in the future. It will provide therapeutic support for the mentally ill, youth, unemployed
- The farm will be partly staffed by health clients – grounds, farming, café staff
- Will provide training in sustainable farm practises, life skills
- That includes, not excludes, the WHOLE community - not just single interest groups
- That has enormous community support.
Over last 6 weeks we've had a 400% increase in members to nearly 900 people

AND AT NO COST TO GOVERNMENT!

All we need is the land to create the farm and education centre.



Photo courtesy Mitchell Library

Amazingly, Callan Park was in peril once before. It was subdivided into housing lots and about to be sold in 1873. It was saved literally at the last minute by the Colonial Secretary, Sir Henry Parkes stepping in at the insistence of the colonial Architect, to purchase the whole subdivision for the Rozelle Psychiatric Hospital that existed on the site until it's recent closure. It cost \$110,000 pounds for the whole 58 hct!

Callan Park has a long history of farming and magnificent gardens, both during the time it was owned privately and later when it was a psychiatric hospital

These images show the magnificent gardens at the main building of the psychiatric hospital, Kirbride, and the farm.



Photo courtesy Mitchell Library

EXISTING MODELS

There are 2 particular city farms in Australia that we are basing our ideas on.
CERES in East Brunswick and Collingwood Children's Farm

CERES

4.5 hectares (10 acres)

150 staff, equivalent of 70 full time staff

110 volunteers on regular placement

270 schools across Victoria with 75,000 half- day visits delivered last year.

Education, enterprises and memberships contribute to 80% of CERES' running costs. 20% of funds gained through grants and philanthropic organisations.



Ceres, East Brunswick, Melbourne



Collingwood Children's Farm, Melbourne



Islay, Scotland



Eden Project, Cornwall UK

There are city farms in most major cities – London, New York, Chicago...
Why doesn't Sydney have one?

SCOPE OF PROPOSED ACTIVITIES

- Organic fruit and vegetable production, fruit orchard, bees
- Animal pens and poultry, including a cow for milking
- Organic café with menu sourced from own produce
- Sustainability education centre with the design of farm an example of best practice - compost toilets, sustainable water use, alternate energies, organic methods
- Garden centre, nursery
- Village green for farmer's markets and other community activities
- Organic waste processing for all of Callan Park

SUPPORT FOR THE PROPOSAL

Leichhardt Council Mayor Cr Carolyn Allen said,

“ In June 2006, Council unanimously called for the City Farm proposal to be included when considering any masterplan for the Callan Park site. The City Farm proposal has a lot of merit and should be looked at by SFHA as part of the current land use plan process as a way of protecting public access and sustainable uses for the site into the future”

Greens Councilor, Kate Hamilton stated

“I’m totally in support of the proposed Sydney City Farm and was the first councilor to express my support. I believe it is an inspired idea and hope the state government gets behind the farm and sustainable living centre to make it become a reality for the community.”

Independent Councilor, Maire Sheehan said

“Be part of the solution!

Do you know how the food you eat is grown and processed before you put it in your mouth?

As we all try to understand and deal with climate change knowing how our food is grown - from seed to harvest - and what happens to it on its way to our table will be essential knowledge for all.

A city farm providing a learning and experiential space is part of the solution for empowering us – the consumers.”

FOCP Hall Greenland said

“The failure to include the Sydney City Farm in the proposed plans for Callan Park is another example of the State Government not listening to the community’s vision for the future of Callan Park.

This is an excellent project with strong community support that has the potential to be a leading centre for sustainable urban living for all residents of Sydney.”

Other NGOs on site

We expect a strong synergy between the NGO’s already on the site as well as any on the site in the future

- the farm will be partly staffed by health clients – grounds, farming, café staff
- will provide training in sustainable farm practises, life skills, healthy food

Do you want your kids to think milk comes from here...



...or here?

