

The Ryde Society Minutes

23/07/18

1. Welcome to the second meeting of The Ryde Society. The aim is for this to be a society serving all the community.
2. Planning in Ryde is the RS's priority at the moment.
3. The minutes from the previous meeting have been cleared.
 - 3.1. John keeps emailing Bob Seeley but he has not responded to several communications. Stella asked for the Society to write to Lee Byrne about Actionpoint 1 from the previous minutes.
 - 3.2. Members also need to fill in an enforcement form, found under planning section.
 - 3.3. Jonathan has asked for Lee Byrne's resignation, due to the state of several buildings in Ryde.
 - 3.4. Stella's husband could be the treasurer, and Paul will be second signatory.
 - 3.5. Maribel Boyd offered to take minutes for some of the future meetings.
 - 3.6. Stella has considered membership, but an entity and a bank account must be set up. This will cover money for printing, etc.
 - 3.7. Marius has set up a simple and free website, where there will be an easily accessible discussion group. The link is: <https://rydesociety.wordpress.com/> All suggestions that members, or anyone else has should go through this online discussion group.
 - Actionpoint 1 Stella will put the links on the new website, so members can fill out the form.
4. Helen gave a quick update on the Island Regeneration Conference.
 - 4.1. This was an opportunity to hear from the council regarding their first consultation. There were major stakeholders from the Island in attendance. The Council noted that the plans for Ryde had "ruffled some feathers". The team now want to change the ideas. Wightlink disclosed their intention to redevelop the Pier head, and showed concept plans of a mixed use development.
5. Mr Moody from Ryde Town Council's Planning Committee discussed the Ryde Town Council Position Statement, confirming that the Council did not want aggressive redevelopment.
 - 5.1. The overriding aim for the Isle of Wight Council (IOWC), is to generate income to sustain services, which is different to RTC's aim. The Position Statement will include data from work already commissioned, including the existing drafts of the Ryde Area Action Plan, the Master Plan, the Island Planning Core strategy, and others.
 - 5.2. The Island Planning Strategy Planning Group has now been established. This working group is where those wanting to provide input should send documents and statements.
6. Rob Hemper has been involved with Ryde Arena, and the Marina, and felt strongly that regeneration isn't building on the seafront, and was concerned about the state of both. The children of Ryde have lost an opportunity.
7. Zoe asked Mr Moody for clarification of the Place Plan. The outcome of Newport's consultation was that a wide range of people were consulted.
 - 7.1. Mr Moody felt that the situation with the Ice Rink was a disgrace. RTC already clean the beaches, and look after flowers in the town, but the Ice Rink sits with the IOWC.

- 7.2. The main reason that RTC did not want a Place plan was that it would exclude RTC from criticising the County Council, and that it would not benefit Ryde any more than a Position Statement.
 - 7.3. RTC want to more thoroughly involve Ryde, and have a greater level of engagement.
 - 7.4. This does not discount other planning tools or Neighbourhood Plan in the future.
8. Paul Martin wanted local council tax to go toward the town hall, as Ryde pays high rates compared to the rest of the Island.
 - 8.1. Mr Moody noted that due to central government reorganising local government, there is very little that we could do to address this. As a council, RTC can only do anything that a private individual can legally do.
 - 8.2. However, in future there could be buildings operated by RTC, as at the moment everything must be funded by IOWC.
 - 8.3. The regeneration needs to be done in order to keep services that are the legal minimum running.
 - 8.4. RTC town council is investigating the possibility of borrowing money in order to better Ryde.
9. Zoe, from the Ryde Business Association felt that good ideas from the High Street had been produced but that businesses have seen many multi-million pound plans that have never got off the ground, resulting in apathy from the business owners.
 - 9.1. Transport was difficult for those not from Ryde to navigate, and this could be improved by practical changes, such as clear sign posting.
 - 9.2. Zoe felt that pedestrianisation could really improve Ryde.
 - 9.3. Mr Moody said that for some years RTC has pushed for pedestrianisation. Programmes to promote this have slipped, in part due to the Bakery needing access. He also noted that the street furniture should be uniform.
 - 9.4. Councillor Love from East Cowes, informed the RS that East Cowes is facing a similar problem. RS needs to have an information officer. He also reminded the RS that the Council will provide multiple options, and the real plan will be somewhere in the middle. Ryde needs to make clear that there should be n flats on the seafront.
10. Chris Simmons told Chris Ashman that he is new to the Island, and was positive about the regeneration for Ryde, but was very quickly disappointed in plans for the seafront. In March, RTC were presented with options from IOWC. One seems to have emerged as the preferred option. The preferred option was never properly explained, why?
 - 10.1. Chris Ashman noted that none of the options were viable, and did not achieve the objectives discussed. Viability and return provides us with the income to achieve the aspiration.
 - 10.2. The Regen team ran a number of workshops, where it appears that some time around March they were presented with options that were later released to the public. One seems to have emerged and been preferred. It was never explained why this option was preferred, and who selected it. If the regeneration had been real what should have been put on the table was different.
 - 10.3. Chris Ashman confirmed that now none of the options were viable, there would be a rethink, which RS appreciates, and would like to feed into.
 - 10.4. Chris Ashman also confirmed that it was the Regen team looking at professional practice and testing.
 - 10.5. Chris Simmons noted that all options seemed large scale, and that the approach taken was not the kind of approach that breeds trust. More transparency is needed.
 - 10.6. It was never actually explained at any point that none of the options were viable. At what point did the IOWC realise that none of these options were viable?

- 10.7. Chris Ashman said that the Regen team collectively made the decision. Options were tabled in March, with work leading up to that point. This work started at the end of the summer 2017.
 - 10.8. The feedback was to clarify priorities that could help delivery response. The decision on viability was made a week or two before workshop.
 - 10.9. They were shown to demonstrate transparency. The first workshop said that the two priorities were Nicholson Road and The Esplanade.
 - 10.10. Jonathan noted that there was a great deal of anger at these plans, they seem to show blocks of flats on the seafront.
 - 10.11. Chris Simmons noted that Reniera O Donnell
 - 10.12. has said that there is "nothing like controversial development options to get people involved". This does not appear to include real regeneration?
 - 10.13. A member of the audience was concerned that this has demonstrated that a few people are making decisions affecting everyone on the island, and that the decision will be a choice made behind closed doors, without true consultation.
 - 10.14. RS hopes to work as a community. Earlier, some members looked into the executive plan, and there were some key lines, including a pro-development approach to planning, increasing the council tax base, and large scale regeneration projects. There is concern that this will amount to selling off assets.
11. RS identified the priorities for the Society, including the beach, the green space, youth work, and listed buildings.
 - 11.1. Mike Fitt noted that Appley Park is no longer properly managed, and a Green Space strategy is needed.
 - 11.2. RS could focus on the beach, and go to the Council with a scheme.
 - 11.3. Councillor Love suggested that RS have 3 priorities: no cost, low cost and high cost, with redevelopment on the seafront the big priority.
 - 11.4. Chris Ashman noted again that Ryde had been the best represented town on the island, and that in workshops the beach was not identified as a priority.
 - 11.5. RS feel that a longer view needs to be taken, such as a 50 year view, considering the commercial impact, and moving cars away from the seafront.
 - 11.6. Jonathan felt that the issues that were most discussed at the meetings were amenity spaces for the kids, green spaces and the seafront.
 - 11.7. Chris Simmons suggested that if a group could put money into the Ryde Theatre, would the IOWC match this funding pound for pound. Money invested in Ryde could kick start the rest of the Island.
 - 11.8. There will be two conversations at the Ryde Regeneration meeting on the 5th September ,Chris Ashman will include the beach in these.
 - 11.9. IOWC needs to invest money in the island, not in Manchester, as there was no reason that investment could not have been done on the island. The council should explain why they have made those decisions, and what is the strategy.
 - 11.10. Mike,thought that a green strategy,is needed, a plan for Appley Park.
 - 11.11. Jonathan suggested that the RS should go on the IOW chamber of Commerce website, and view what Ryde could look like, which was published in 2015.
 12. The next Regeneration Workshop will be at the Ryde Castle 5 September 2018, 7 o'clock. The RTC Planning Committee is the 2nd Tuesday of every month.