

We're fighting to protect what you value in Hunters Hill

The Weekly Times 30 August 2017

The Mark Bennett and Justine McLaughlin team for Hunters Hill have entered the final weeks of the council election campaign with a firm commitment to defending the municipality's heritage and environmental protection plans.



Deputy Mayor Mark Bennett and Cllr Justine McLaughlin are true independents representing Hunters Hill. TWT on-the-spot PHOTO

Hunters Hill has one of Sydney's strongest Local Environment Plans and Development Control Plans which stop ugly rise from being built in residential areas and significantly devaluing property values.

Criticised by property developers for preserving Hunters Hill as a "museum" and a "relic of the past" both plans have the full backing of current deputy Mayor Mark Bennett and Justine McLaughlin.

Both candidates are acutely aware of just how close Hunters Hill recently came to losing these plans as part of a proposed forced merger with Ryde, pushed by a State Government that imposed development quotas on every council.

“A loss of Hunters Hill’s planning controls in an amalgamation with Ryde or by a new council would be devastating,” Cllr McLaughlin said.

“As the Chairperson of the Council’s Conservation Advisory Panel, our key heritage body, I fully understand that our planning controls must be protected.

“It is also absolutely essential we keep our public open space and as councillors we will continue to fight for public open space with our children marching in the streets beside us!”

To emphasise the point, supporters of the Bennett/McLaughlin team point out the rampant development on the Ryde Council controlled side of Gladesville and the perceived lack of consultation with neighbouring residents.

Mark and Justine have both stressed the “critical importance” of involving local ratepayer’s in the planning process, especially when property developers push for more high rise, more often.

“I’ll commit too and action a community survey of every resident in the municipality, every year,” Cllr Bennett said.

Councillor McLaughlin took up the point.

“One of the reasons we fought so hard against amalgamation is that it would have left one councillor to represent Hunters Hill on a mega council.

“One of the great strengths of our ticket is that we have candidates who represent residents from all backgrounds and from right across North Ward and South Ward.”

The Independent Bennett/McLaughlin team also have the endorsement of popular Mayor Richard Quinn, who is retiring and spoke at the Bennett/McLaughlin team campaign launch.

“There are two outstanding candidates in this election, Mark Bennett and Justine McLaughlin,” Mayor Quinn said.

“Mark has brought to the council business experience and common sense while Justine has been an outstanding networker.

“They are the best leadership team in Hunters Hill and they’re not running for election, as others are, for self interest.

“They are here for the right reason .. for the good of our local community.”

Mayor Quinn further noted the Bennett/McLaughlin team comprises experienced male and female candidates – like Elizabeth Krasso – who have earned a reputation for organising community events and for volunteering.

“In every respect, this is an exceptional local team.”

<http://www.weeklytimes.com.au/council-election-feature/>