

NIMBIN COMMUNITY BUYS ANOTHER PROPERTY

Long-held dream of Aquarius Park to become a reality

by Diana Roberts

Back in 2009, local resident of four years Monika Boenigk had a vision for a “proper park” for Nimbin.

She wrote: “I discovered that there is currently a lightly treed, level 5-acre lot on offer, right in the centre of town... essentially a wetland-haven for birds (that) would lend itself perfectly to all sorts of passive recreational pursuits.”

The idea for this use of the same block was first proposed by long-term local carrier and store-keeper Eric Bazzana in 1986, which came to nothing at the time as Council was hostile towards the project.

Ms Boenigk canvassed community opinion, receiving enthusiastic support from locals, including the Chamber of Commerce, and qualified support from Council, resulting in the formation of a steering group, Friends of Nimbin Village Park.

As Council money was not available to purchase the block, the group explored avenues for the community to work out a way to raise the funds, a process that continued after Monika left the region in 2013.

Councillor Isaac Smith pointed out at the time, “Nimbin looks very well after itself. As a community they have pulled off substantial fundraising projects which put many a Council to shame, and if they want a park they will make it happen.”

Now at last these aspirations have come to fruition.

In December 2020 the community successfully negotiated the purchase of 11a Alternative Way, a 2.29ha property bordering Rainbow Power Company, the Headers’ sportsfields,

the Alternative Way subdivision and Nimbin Caravan Park.

The vacant land, which will be purchased for \$350,000 (plus acquisition costs) under title to Nimbin Community Centre Inc., encompasses a significant section of the Rainbow Road walking track.

The purchase of the property facilitates a community vision to create a parkland – tentatively named Aquarius Park – which will serve as a retreat and experience for visitors and locals alike.

Its acquisition will add depth to the walking track experience, providing opportunities for bird-watching, picnicking, education and socialising.

The Chamber has agreed to contribute \$20,000 to the purchase from funds collected by Lismore City Council for economic development in Nimbin.

Rainbow Power Co. is contributing \$165,000 plus a 50% share of acquisition costs, in return for a boundary adjustment that will deliver a bigger buffer between their operations and neighbours, while providing opportunities to explore subdivision into the future.

Other community groups contributing are Nimbin Hemp Embassy (\$30,000) and Jungle Patrol Street Cleaning (\$30,000).

The organisation carrying the weight of responsibility is Nimbin Community Centre. They have dug deep into reserves set aside for major repairs and are keen to recoup some of that investment through community donations.

Following an appeal in last month’s *GoodTimes*, four donations have been made (thank you) but many more are needed.



A seasonal creek meanders through the block

The Chamber urges local businesses (especially those that benefit from tourism) and community members to make a donation, no matter how small, to a dedicated account at Summerland Credit Union, BSB 728728, Nimbin Community Centre Project, account number 22269890.

The Rainbow Road project has now had the grant application submitted by Lismore City Council, which was a mammoth exercise.

The updated feasibility study for Rainbow Road (an attachment to the grant application) is available on the nimbinaustralia.com.au and the nimbincommunity.org.au websites.

A New Park for Nimbin?


by Monika Boenigk

Virtually every town and village in Australia has a nice, large park for people to walk

surrounding hills drive 10-15 minutes, even longer, to get into the village. I for one don't want to drive home straight after taking my mail to the post office or getting my shopping, nor do I necessarily want to spend money in the cafes every time I visit. But what else is there to do outdoors? How can one remain in the village for a good while without feeling "a little flustered" by the ongoing theatre of main street?

Over the four years I have lived here, I have "pushed" my way into the Showground, doing the rounds there, after getting permission from

atmosphere. There is even the odd wedding to be seen. Even if a park is not used to capacity, the mere fact that it is there — right in the center



First steps, NGT November 2009

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