

Redfern Waterloo can not just trust in Frank

Frank Sartor is Minister for Redfern Waterloo and the sole Government spokesperson for all issues relating to Redfern, Eveleigh, Waterloo and Darlington. He is also responsible for any NSW Government involvement in building on The Block in Redfern and now for deciding what will get built there.

Frank has responsibly for the Redfern Waterloo Authority (RWA) which will take control of all Government land (about one third of the area) including the Australian Technology Park, North Eveleigh, the railway corridor, public housing land and disused sites such as Redfern School, Rachael Foster Hospital, the Redfern Court House and the old police station. The RWA is not funded from the NSW budget. It is expected to fund its own activities from property sales, land developments and other sources. The RWA has had some areas declared state significance and the government can set up their own development controls for such land.

The Authority will be responsible for development projects like a new Redfern railway station and for employment creation programmes. The Premiers' Department Redfern Waterloo Partnership Project (RWPP) was to continue reorganizing all government and non-government human services in the area but this now is also absorbed into the RWA giving the RWA control over all human services as well its initial functions.

A 10 year public Redfern Waterloo Plan to provide direction for the Authority will be prepared by the Minister. The shape of Community involvement in the formation of this Plan and their role in the ongoing decisions about the Authority is still unclear. All such RWA matters are at the discretion of the Minister. To date government policy in the area has been made in response to a community snap shot taken by consultants and the community has been left out of subsequent discussion about possible directions and responses. The community needs a more dynamic consultation process where plans are developed in an on going dialogue and partnership with the community and the government is held accountable for what it delivers.

The RWA is now blending together infrastructure development, human service delivery and urban regeneration in an as yet undefined model which gives massive power to the Minister. If the development corporation and the human service elements are not well integrated the fear is that government's property interests will dominate the RWA's priorities at the expense of the community and social agenda.

Redfern Waterloo is being asked to trust in Minister Sartor and his successors to look after our "urban renewal" for the next 10 years with little up front information, little legislative constraint and no guarantees of real community involvement in the processes.

REDWatch is a residents and friends group covering Redfern Eveleigh Darlington and Waterloo (the same area covered by the Redfern Waterloo Authority). REDWatch monitors the activities of government activities such as the RWA and seeks to ensure community involvement in all decisions made about the area. REDWatch meets on the 4th Sunday of the Month at 2pm at the Factory, 67 Raglan Street Waterloo.

Only with a strong community voice can we ensure that the changes that will be made in Redfern-Waterloo will benefit the community and not just the Government. If you are concerned - become involved!

Further Information visit www.redwatch.org.au or email Geoff Turnbull at turnbullfamily@stassen.com.au Phone (02) 9318 0824 or write to: REDwatch, C/- PO Box 1567, Strawberry Hills NSW 2012

A free Redfern Waterloo email update service is also available by emailing turnbullfamily@stassen.com.au