



Minutes

New Event Feasibility – New Year’s Eve 2020 – Stakeholders Feasibility Meeting

Date: 01/09/2020

Time: 11:30am

Location: Meeting Room 1, Level 0 (306 Cameron Road), Tauranga City Council

Attendees:

Mount Residents, Retailers and Ratepayers Association:

Jan Wilson, Mike O’Neill.

Tauranga City Council:

Kelly Schischka, Jenna Quay, Gareth Wallis, Nicole Banks, Reena Snook, Carlo Ellis, Chloe Roper, Rachel Taylor, Steph Bougen, Kezia Goodhue, Michelle Fraser, Sam Kemp, Samantha Pottage, Brenna Roband.

Apologies:

Mount Residents, Retailers and Ratepayers Association:

Keegan Miller.

Tauranga City Council:

Gareth Young, Dean Flavell, Tye Tahuriorangi, Warren Aitken.

Other:

Calum Nicholson (Foamhand).

1. New Year’s Event Sub-Committee introduction/overview

- Jan Wilson and Mike O’Neill introduced themselves as members of the Mount Residents, Retailers and Ratepayers Association (MRRR). The association has in excess of 350 members, all with a passion for Mount Maunganui. Members of this organisation have formed a New Year’s Eve Sub-Committee.
- Jan and Mike acknowledged that the Mount New Year’s Eve (NYE) events of the past were iconic but they are now interested in moving from an “outrageous to placid” event format. Not interested in a loud/noisy event, want to focus on an arts, cultural and light experience instead, with some of the lighting elements to come from the Albert Park lighting show in Auckland.

2. Event overview

- Initial concept:
 - Three to five days in length.
 - Lighting show and outdoor cinema at Hopukioire (Mt Drury).
 - Closing Mt Mainstreet for social interaction and entertainment. Bars and restaurants to extend their trading areas out onto the street.
 - Countdown clock projected onto Mauao, along with lighting effects.
 - Flat deck truck stage with amplified music (NYE night only, possibly 5pm to midnight)
- Reasons behind staging the event:
 - The Mount has missed out on NYE celebrations for the past few years.

- Residents want to return to an event where locals and holiday makers can gather.
 - They want to put the Mount back on the map.
- Late last week Keegan Miller (one of the event organisers) advised that they were interested in exploring a shared operational delivery model with TCC, rather than delivering the event solely themselves. TCC staff advised today that given the timeframes (four months out from NYE), it would be highly unlikely that TCC staff (and/or their sub-contractors) would have the capacity or financial resources to support this request.
- Gareth Wallis expressed concern around the inability to control who attends the event, despite the best of intentions, and how that can be effectively managed, communicated etc. NYE is a challenging night of the year to stage events.
- Gareth encouraged Jan and Mike to start small and grow the size and scale of the event organically over time, to help ensure its longevity. Mike and Jan appreciated that this may be the best way forward given the condensed timeline. They are keen to sew a seed for the future and ensuring the event eventually becomes iconic.
- Jan commented that they would be open to looking at moving to another event date that wouldn't pose as many challenges, perhaps piggy backing on a re-started annual Mount Mainstreet Buskers event.
- 2016 NYE Mount Maunganui event cancellation:
 - Gareth advised that since the cancellation of the Mount NYE event in 2016, TCC's intention was to always bring a NYE, family-friendly community event back to the Mount area and NZ Police were aware of these aspirations.
 - TCC staff explained that the cancellation of the 2016 NYE event at Mount Maunganui was in response to escalating serious criminal behaviour including sexual assaults, particularly against women. It was noted by Mike that none of the criminal behaviour posited by Police and/or TCC staff in the years since had been proven in court.
- 2020 Council-delivered NYE Mount Maunganui event:
 - TCC staff have been planning a 6.30pm – 9.30pm community NYE event at Blake Park in 2020, featuring fireworks (budget of \$75k). This is still to be approved by Councillors later this month. If approved, TCC staff will seek feedback from the MRRR as planning progresses. The MRRR was also encouraged to attend the event (if it goes ahead) and provide feedback afterwards to inform the future direction of a Council-delivered community event at Mount Maunganui.
 - Mike/Jan commented that the type of community event currently run by Council in Greerton, Papamoa etc. wouldn't really meet their expectations for 2020; they would prefer a more “sedate, arty event” for Mount Maunganui instead. Mike/Jan also mentioned that fireworks weren't of interest due to the noise they would create and the impact that they have on wildlife such as penguins, however this might be a non-issue at Blake Park as it's a reasonable distance from the Mount CBD and the coastal reserve.

3. City plan and noise management considerations

Any event that operates in public open space is required to operate under the temporary activity provisions in the Tauranga City Plan. If it is not able to operate under these conditions, the need for a resource consent is triggered.

- If a resource consent is required, the overall impact of the event is also considered, such as– traffic, parking, hours of operations, extent and placement of temporary structures.
- TCC staff can't confirm at this stage if a resource consent is required for the proposed NYE event without knowing the finer details, but staff are happy to work through the city plan rules with the organisers once their event concept is more developed to provide greater clarity. Under the temporary activity provisions in the City Plan, amplified noise is required to cease no later than 10:30pm on a Thursday night, so if these rules apply and amplified noise for this event is desired beyond this time it would trigger the need for a resource consent. Processing timeframes under the Resource Management Act is 20 working days, but it is very unusual that TCC would process a resource consent in that time as it is heavily dependent on the quality of the application that is submitted. Planning staff prefer to work with people in a pre-application stage to make sure the application is as robust and comprehensive as possible. Depending on the level of affected party or public notification required the timelines can also be much longer.
- Noise – at minimum, a noise management plan would be required and possibly noise monitoring.
- Jan and Mike confirmed that Mount Maunganui resident Gareth Morgan is on board with their preliminary plans. Jenna suggested that attaching a letter of support from neighbors to a resource consent application if required could be beneficial if they end up going down that path but it all still needs to go through the regulatory/resource consent process.

4. Traffic management and proposed road closures

- TCC confirmed that NYE general road closures for Mount Maunganui this year are still a work in progress, but it is anticipated that the impact will be less than last year (e.g. Marine Parade closures overnight between 29-30 Dec and 1-2 Jan, no parking on Marine Parade on 31 Dec, concrete barriers at the end of Grace and Commons Avenues to support traffic flow).
- It is likely that some form of road closure would be needed based on the current event proposal.
- There must be a 42-day public advertising period, objections may be raised, then the application is submitted to a regulatory committee. If rejected there'd be another 42-day notice period required. As such, the timing is now becoming critical if a second round of advertising/feedback was needed.
- Organisers would need to engage a traffic management company to develop and implement their traffic management plan.
- Traffic management can have significant costs and we would suggest you start working with a traffic management company as soon as possible to understand the potential costs.
- Organisers indicated at this point that they may just consider closing Mt Mainstreet for 2020, rather than holding any activity at Hopukio (Mt Drury) etc.

5. Participant and public parking

- Time constraints meant these matters were not discussed at this early stage of planning.

6. Participant bus transport

- Event organisers are considering a park and ride service, with a 'transport hub' based at Coronation Park. Jenna Quay advised that organisers would need to be mindful of people pre-loading with alcohol elsewhere then using the park and ride service to get to the Mount. This was one of the problems observed prior to the cancellation in 2016.

7. Crowd management

- It was suggested that event organisers should engage with a crowd management specialist around seeking crowd management advice e.g. how many people can safely be accommodated in the event space, how intoxicated persons add an extra layer of complexity, crowd flows, emergency egress etc. There is a locally based crowd management specialist in Tauranga, Calum Nicholson (Foamhand).
- It is possible that event organisers could experience 18,000 attendees on one single day of the event rather than the 18,000 across 3 days as proposed. Any event plans would need to be designed to be responsive to large numbers of people arriving, how would you know how many people will arrive etc.
- Maybe consideration should be given to making it a free-ticketed event for both Hopukiore and Mt Mainstreet, to manage capacity.
- NZ Fire and Emergency and St John will want to know what the evacuation plans are and have input into these plans.

8. Health and safety planning

- A comprehensive risk assessment is the key document that will need to be developed for this event.
- Event organisers have a legal responsibility under the Health and Safety at Work Act to identify and mitigate risks to ensure a safe and successful event.
- COVID-19 must also be a primary consideration as event organisers develop their health and safety documentation.

9. Waste minimisation and management

- Event organisers will need to complete a waste minimisation plan, including an external environment plan.
- At a minimum TCC requires event organisers to provide rubbish and recycling options at events on council's public open space.
- Public litter bins will need to be covered as they become an issue if overloaded.
- Glass collections over the New Year's period increase in frequency, along with kerbside collections.
- The only challenging aspect is the increased collections around this time, up to twice a day emptying bins. Any road closures will still need to enable contractors to carry out their collections.
- It would be useful to have waste receptacles at any park and ride facilities, if these eventuate.

10. Parks/venue (site layout)

- Mike has been in contact with Turi Ngatai re. projection/activities for Mauao. Carlo advised that the event organisers will need to liaise with the Mauao Trust and relevant hapu in the first instance. Carlo will provide the contact details of the hapu mandated contacts to Kelly Schischka for her to pass on. Hopukioire (Mt Drury) – consideration needs to be given to any activities that may impact on the burial caves. The maunga itself and the caves will all need to be protected as wahi tapu or sacred areas.

11. Facilities/utilities

- Time constraints meant these matters were not discussed at this early stage of planning.

12. Resident, business and event attendees communications

- Time constraints meant these matters were not discussed at this early stage of planning.

13. Regulatory licensing/consents

- Time constraints meant these matters were not discussed at this early stage of planning.

14. Special licences/alcohol management

- Mike confirmed that they would leave the special licensing up to the bar owners to coordinate. Also confirmed that there would be no one wandering around in the street with alcohol, it would be contained to the bars.
- TCC staff confirmed that the individual bars would need to apply for a special licence to extend their areas out onto the street, and the event organisers would still need to coordinate an operational overlay for the site featuring security, waste management and traffic management (as per the annual National Jazz Festival). The District Licensing Committee may look at this potential application slightly differently than the Jazz Festival, both given the time of year and the time of night that it is proposed to finish (the Jazz Festival concludes at 6:00pm). The risk factors around alcohol harm increase significantly as the night progresses and consumption occurs.
- With only four months until NYE, it would be challenging to get those special licenses in time.
- A comprehensive alcohol management plan would be required.
- Jenna suggested that the event organisers could speak with Marc Anderson (Jazz Festival Director) about how the Jazz Festival coordinate their special license arrangement with The Strand bars.
- Mike comfortable to let the MRRR know that a large-scale event is probably not achievable for 2020, but they are still interested in having some small community event on NYE.
- A comprehensive event management plan will be required in order for any special liquor licenses to be considered.
- Event organisers haven't yet spoken to local businesses about extending their licensed areas.

15. Security

- Time constraints meant these matters were not discussed at this early stage of planning.
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16. Police

- NZ Police were unable to attend today's meeting, however, provided some written feedback which Gareth shared verbatim:

Like any event, proposals for new ones must be self-sustaining and able to stand on their own merits without reliance on other parties, agencies or organisations.

Proposals must be well researched, evidence based, and science backed, preferably benchmarked against other comparable events able to withstand the scrutiny of all interested parties.

On what I have seen to date, at best we have a concept which may be fine to take to an Event Consultant to start the development of an event proposal, but it in no way offers any opportunity to engage in any meaningful conversation on the merits or otherwise.

Planning for this event needs to get to a stage where it at least meets the "in principle test", that is in principle it can meet the above requirements before engaging other interested parties in discussions over a well-reasoned and thought out plan.

If there is a need for the Events Team or Council to contact Police to ascertain any of the technical workings of any part of the plan, prior to its meeting the "in principle test", then more than happy to assist where able.

- TCC staff advised that Hopukioire has traditionally been an area of concern for the Police.

17. Medical support

- Time constraints meant these matters were not discussed at this early stage of planning.

18. Accessibility

- Time constraints meant these matters were not discussed at this early stage of planning.

19. Round table

- Event funding:
 - Reena Snook (Event Development Manager at TCC) advised that funding may not be possible for a 2020 event as the event funds closed on 30 August (funding evaluations/decisions are in progress), however conversations about funding options for 2021 are encouraged sooner rather than later. Keegan Miller is welcome to contact Reena at his convenience. reena.snook@tauranga.govt.nz or 557 6595.
- General conclusions and/or commentary:

- All in agreeance that 2020 isn't the year for a large-scale event as outlined in the concept sent to TCC staff, predominantly due to tight timelines, concerns about risk mitigation and the health and safety of event patrons.
- TCC staff were supportive of the event concept, closing streets, street food, festoons etc. but there were concerns once you overlaid the NYE factor – it presents much more of a logistical/operational challenge and increasing the risk profile of the event substantially. Staff suggested that event organisers consider holding the/an event at a different time of the year as that may still meet their objectives and create less obstacles in terms of regulatory and consenting requirements, and risk to the event organisers.
- Gareth advised that event feasibility discussions are usually undertaken at least 9-12 months out from the event date to allow enough planning time.
- Mike was encouraged by the level-headed approach to today's meeting.
- Jenna advised that the TCC City Events team prefer to build capability and capacity within the industry to deliver events through their event development and event facilitation functions, rather than delivering events themselves.
- It was suggested that a NYE event (or non-NYE event) focused around the mainstreet area at Mount Maunganui could/should be something delivered by the Mount Mainstreet organisation, as a mandated representative for those businesses, however without a dedicated event manager at Mount Mainstreet this seems to be a challenge. Mike shared that the two organisations were still working through how they should work together at this point.
- Jenna advised that a large-scale, public event in public open space required an experienced event manager who had previous experience delivering similar events.
- Next steps:
 - Pending Council approval, TCC will organise a 2020 family-focused event for Blake Park and will seek preliminary feedback from the MRRR to help inform event planning.
 - The MRRR will need to make a decision relatively quickly about what size event they could confidently undertake for NYE 2020, and/or whether a revised date is required.
 - Kelly Schischka to liaise with TCC stakeholders (e.g. city planning) and compile an overview of what would be required from event organisers in order to work through the event approval process for a 2020 event.