

Community Development Reports

Committee Consideration – 12 August 2014
Council Resolution – 26 August 2014

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| Committee | 12 August 2014 |
| Council | 26 August 2014 |
| Applicant | City of Nedlands |
| Officer | Marion Granich – Manager Community Development |
| Director | Mike Cole – Director Corporate Services |
| Director Signature |  |
| File Reference | CD-000216 |
| Previous Item | N/A |

Executive Summary

This report is presented to Council as it proposes a change of name for a City service that is well known to and utilised by the local community.

Recommendation to Committee

Council agrees to change the name of Tresillian Community Centre to Tresillian Arts Centre.

Strategic Plan

KFA: Community Development

Background

Tresillian has operated as a community centre at 21 Tyrell Street Nedlands since 1978. Since that time, it has variously been referred to as Tresillian Community Centre or simply Tresillian. The history of European ownership of the site is as follows:

Site ownership

In 1903, the block bordered by Thomas, Tyrell and Edward Streets was owned by Richard Abraham from New Zealand. It was then subdivided into smaller lots, with lots 218 and 219 (where Tresillian is currently sited) being transferred to James Durrant. In 1919 Eliza Jacks bought lots 218 and 219. In 1920, she applied for a building permit to construct a four bedroom villa, facing Tyrell Street, with verandahs on both sides.

In 1929, lots 218 and 219 were purchased by Beverley Bennett of Grant Street Cottesloe. Beverley Bennett's sister Millicent Bennett and her nursing associate Sabina Hayman had already been operating a small cottage hospital at 7 Edward Street Nedlands for some years. Following Beverley Bennett's acquisition of 21 Tyrell Street, the two nursing sisters moved their hospital to the larger site. In August 1929, the property was transferred into their names. Nursing sisters Bennett and Hayman applied for various building permits in the 1930's, including a permit for a new wing, constructed in 1933 for use by maternity patients.

In 1954 the WA State Government purchased the hospital. Its use as a maternity and general hospital continued. The site was also used as an annex to Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital.

In 1974 the State Government planned to use the building as a residence for people with disabilities, intending to transfer residents from other institutions. However, this did not occur due to community controversy over the issue. Eventually the situation was resolved with the proposed residents being moved to a facility in Innaloo and the Tresillian Hospital subsequently closed.

On 27 January 1978, the City of Nedlands purchased the site from the State Government for \$125,000. On 26 September 1978, the Finance and Welfare Committee of Council recommended that the site be used as a community centre. This recommendation was adopted by Council at the next Council meeting.

Name

The current-day use of the name Tresillian dates back to the name of the Tresillian Hospital, which operated from 1930's to the late 1970's. Even then, it appears to have been widely known to the community simply as Tresillian, rather than as Tresillian Hospital.

Records do not show why the hospital adopted the name of Tresillian. However, it may be related to the name of a similar cottage hospital that operated in NSW at the time Tresillian Hospital was being established in WA.

In 1919, the Royal Society for Mothers and Babies purchased a house in the Sydney suburb of Petersham for use as an infant health training centre. The house was purchased from the Langdon family and had been their family home. The Langdon family came originally from the village of Tresillian in Cornwall and had named their new family home in NSW after their village of origin. The NSW hospital continued to use the name Tresillian, first given to it by the Landgon family. It is possible that nursing sisters Bennett and Hayman knew of the NSW Tresillian hospital for mothers and babies and may have adopted the name Tresillian for their hospital in Tyrell Street because it provided similar services. However, this explanation is speculation only.

Council Services at Tresillian

Today Tresillian provides a wide range of non-accredited recreational courses for enrolment by community members. Tresillian also provides school holiday classes for children, art exhibitions, a café and artist studios available for rental at commercial rates. Revenue is generated from a combination of membership fees, course fees, exhibition fees and commission, as well as rental income from studio artists and the

café tenant. There are over 1,000 current members of Tresillian with approximately 50% of those members being City of Nedlands residents. Non-residents are charged higher membership than residents and in this way, help to subsidise the service provided to City of Nedlands residents.

Key Relevant Previous Council Decisions:

N/A

Discussion

Tresillian Community Centre is the full name of the Council service provided at 21 Tyrell Street. However, the service is generally widely known at a community level simply as Tresillian, with the full formal name of Tresillian Community Centre generally only used in Council documents and publications.

It is proposed that full name of Tresillian Community Centre is changed to Tresillian Arts Centre. The main rationale for this is that incorporating Arts Centre into the formal name of the service will make it more attractive to exhibiting artists, and therefore strengthen Tresillian's capacity to generate revenue from art exhibitions.

Tresillian has an established reputation as a venue for teaching and learning arts practice. While a wide range of other recreational courses is also provided at Tresillian (e.g. language, yoga etc.) the core of the Tresillian's term program has long been art classes. While demand for non-arts related courses fluctuates, there is a constant, steady demand for learning traditional art skills such as drawing and painting. Art classes attract high enrolments and are the Centre's most cost-effective category of classes.

Tresillian operates at approximately 50% cost recovery. This means that revenue streams from membership fees, course fees, exhibition fees charged of exhibiting artists and rental income are essential to the cost-effective provision of the service. While the centre is at capacity in terms of providing courses, there is some capacity to increase revenue from exhibitions.

Admission to exhibitions is free. However, Tresillian earns revenue from exhibitions in a number of ways. Exhibiting artists can choose to either:

- hire rooms at Tresillian and run their own exhibition; or
- have their exhibition curated and promoted by Tresillian staff.

Either way, income is generated for Tresillian. If artists hire Tresillian rooms, they pay a room hire fee which provides revenue for Tresillian. If artists have their exhibition curated by Tresillian staff, they pay an exhibition fee (\$1,324) as well as a 25% commission on all sales. In return for this, their exhibition is promoted to Tresillian's 1,000 members and professional advice on the hanging and curation of their exhibition is provided by Tresillian staff.

In recent years, the local arts industry has become increasingly professionalised, with artists becoming aware of the importance of the exhibition venue as a factor in sales. There is strong competition between exhibition venues, as they strive to attract

exhibiting artists. Since the GFC, art sales generally have declined, further sharpening this competition between exhibition venues.

If Tresillian is to continue to attract exhibiting artists, then it must maintain its existing advantages as an exhibition venue and improve its disadvantages. Tresillian's existing advantages include access to an arts-literate, affluent community and a significant membership list for marketing purposes. However, feedback from artists is that a community centre is not as prestigious for an exhibition venue as an arts centre would be. Artists consulted feel that a simple change of name to Tresillian Arts Centre, without changing anything about the way Tresillian operates, would make the venue more attractive to exhibiting artists.

There would be no change to the services provided by Tresillian and it would continue to function as a meeting place for community members. Most users would be unlikely to notice the difference, as the short-hand way of referring to the service as Tresillian would continue. The main change would be that on Council documents, such as the Exhibition Agreement signed by exhibiting artists, and on promotional material, Tresillian would be referred to as Tresillian Arts Centre.

Consultation

| | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| Required by legislation: | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Required by City of Nedlands policy: | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

The idea of a name change to Tresillian Arts Centre has been generated by exhibiting artists.

Legislation / Policy

N/A

Budget/Financial Implications

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| Within current approved budget: | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Requires further budget consideration: | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

There are no immediate budget impacts from changing the name from Tresillian Community Centre to Tresillian Arts Centre. However, the name change is proposed on the grounds that an Arts Centre is more prestigious and attractive to exhibiting artists than is a community centre. Therefore the proposed name change will increase revenue generated from curating exhibitions for artists and will assist in ensuring that Tresillian continues to generate revenue from exhibitions in an increasingly competitive environment.

Risk Management

There are no significant risks identified, since the proposed name continues to include the name Tresillian and therefore continues to reflect the strong historical link with the local community.

Conclusion

It is therefore recommended that the name of Tresillian Community Centre is changed to Tresillian Arts Centre. This will support Tresillian's capacity to attract exhibiting artist and therefore generate revenue to off-set the cost of providing the service.

Attachments

Nil