

Tenants Consultative Forum

Thursday 8 December 2016 at 1.00pm
Salon, Convent Building Salon, Convent Building



ATTENDEES:

Charlotte Allen, Catriona Black-Dinham, John Bradshaw, Collette Brennan, Joseph Connellan, Sal Cooper, Ujval Goble, Wendy Golden, Sharon Grigg, Graham Hardy, Eugenie Kawabata, Jo Kennedy, Delphine Laboreau-Ormancey, Kate Mair, Felicity Mark, Michael O'Hanlon, Tom Rendell, Jennifer Whitten, Caroline Williams.

APOLOGIES

Jo Saunders

Item 1: Update from previous meetings

Background

Cleaning of Common Areas: The Abbotsford Convent Foundation (ACF) has dedicated an extra shift each week for the site coordinator to focus solely on cleaning the common areas of the Convent building. For regular cleaning queries, rather than new and systemic concerns, the tenant community is invited to speak directly to Facilities Coordinator David Toma, rather than reporting through the Tenants Consultative Forum (TCF). David is managing the cleaning contract and the site coordinator team, and can be contacted by email for specific concerns.

Wayfinding / Signs

The ACF acknowledged this was a longstanding issue. This will be addressed in an on-going manner. The ACF will continue to make quick fixes and work with tenants in the interim should they have suggestions.

Action

The ACF will continue updating the TCF regarding signage.

Item 2: Tenant Participation & Consultation

Background

Tenant community member Michael O'Hanlon raised the topic of tenant representation on the ACF Board.

Discussion

Charlotte Allen (Deputy Chair) spoke on behalf of the ACF Board. Charlotte noted the ACF Board was established at the request of the State Government at the conception of the Foundation to govern the Convent and its future.

The ACF in conjunction with the State Government established the Convent as an Arts & Cultural precinct with an independent non-representative Board. This well established not-for-profit model allows the ACF Board to facilitate financial sustainability and to provide a secure governance structure to lead the future success of the Convent within a skills matrix.

The Tenant Consultative Forum was designed to be a direct forum of information updates and discussion to create balance within the community and Foundation relationship.

Action

The TCF structure can be reassessed to evolve with developing needs of the community as required.

Item 3: Open Spaces

Update from CEO

The ACF thanked the tenant community for their part in making Open Spaces 2016 a highly successful event. Audience attendance increased from an estimated 7,000 people in 2015, to 9,000 people in 2016. The event built on the successes of the 2015 program, with a number of the successful additions:

- Programming which enabled audience engagement grew, with the number of hands-on events and activities doubling from 2015 to 2016
- A design market in the Industrial School
- A strong Indigenous program which included walking tours, a meet and greet with Elders and a large participatory mural.

Post-event activity for Open Spaces 2016 includes:

- Delivered audience and artist surveys, seeking external evaluation of the event
- Developing a major event traffic management plan that will not only serve this event in the future, but all ACF events of scale
- Extending the event – Open Spaces 2017 will be held from 10am – 6pm, and from 2018 onwards Open Spaces will run for two days
- Commencing curatorial and logistical planning.

Please start pitching your big ideas for Open Spaces 2017 from now on.

Feedback and acknowledgment from the TCF tenant attendees was positive and encouraging in regard to future development and participation.

Item 4: Convent Building WiFi

WI-FI:

The ACF sent out a campaign email to all lead tenants with detailed information about the new complimentary 10GB per month WiFi. This is a trial complimentary period to determine the average usage per tenant and its reliability. Please contact Tom Rendell if you have any specific questions. The ACF will assess the WiFi feedback, usage and limitations in February 2017 to determine if it will remain a complimentary service.

Item 5: Sacred Heart / Laundries Update

Sacred Heart

Sacred Heart drawings have been submitted to Heritage Victoria to assess the proposed treatment of the building refurbishment. The project has now moved into the costing phase (tendering) with the build scheduled to commence in February 2017. The ACF are awaiting finalised plans and costings. Tenant movement to the Sacred Heart building from the Main Convent building was raised. It was noted that the ACF will run an EOI process that will be open to all, including existing tenants who wish to transfer to the Sacred Heart building. The process will be transparent and designed to identify the best fit for the tenancies available.

Laundries

The ACF have engaged in a stage-one concept development process with the hope that the project can begin in 2017.

Item 6: Creative Tenants Community

Update from the CEO

The ACF invited the tenant community to engage with the ACFs new 'Creative Tenants Community' concept. The ACF aims to reinvigorate and encourage both internal and external relationship development opportunities for the community and to act as a program facilitator.

The key principles will be to:

- Work collaboratively
- Share networks and relationships
- Development opportunities – to use the skills and talent of the Community for cross pollination
- Brokerage network activities – meet & greets with VIP's and people of interest to the community.

The ACF will also seek new tenants who align to the future program and who can collaborate and contribute to the 'Creative Tenant Community' with a high standard of practice and enable the ACF to facilitate fruitful community connections. Early ideas at this concept stage include:

- Petcha Kuchas
- Talks / forums / workshops
- Professional development ideas / focused revenue / strategy

Collingwood Arts Precinct (CAP)

A tenant raised a question about how ACF is connecting to CAP. The CEO noted that the ACF has already been in discussions with CAP and is brainstorming ideas for the establishment of a mutually fruitful relationship. For example, early relationship building concepts include ideas around audience engagement, for example, venue hire usage, cross promotion of our communities and offerings and highlighting both our foundations as destinations within Melbourne for the arts and creative industries.

International Residencies

The topic of residency opportunities within the ACF was raised by a tenant and discussed. The ACF is very open to the idea of establishing the ACF as an international and outward facing institution for creatives to come and develop work in a site-specific manner. This is a subject that will be explored in the future to solidify a development program that could provide mutual benefit to both the residents and the ACF community.

It is expected that the ACF would potentially operate a creative lab style environment rather than the typical artist's residency program, and focus on facilitating open collaborations that have a cross-disciplinary scope.

Other Agenda Matters / Matters Arising:

Artwork in Breakfast Parlor

The ACF noted feedback about the new white walls and effect of the lighting in that room. ACF said that artwork would be hung in the Breakfast Parlor in the New Year.

Annual Review

The ACF 2015-2016 Annual Review has been hand delivered to the tenant community.

Staff updates request

It has been suggested that the community would like staff updates. While this is already achieved through the E-news as a welcome note, it was suggested a Q&A could be beneficial with a photograph to help the community identify new staff members and their place within the organisation.

Next meeting: March 2017