

14/05/16 - debate on the prospect of elevation of the Frankston line occurring Seaford Community Centre – 3pm

To the best of my ability I have transcribed the comments that were made by various community representatives below.

NINA SPRINGLE MP, THE GREENS – was not available but left a statement and commented on the consultation process, with the view that a, “genuine consultative process” had not been undertaken on the Pakenham line.

CR AITKEN – stated that the Frankston City Council had not adopted a view and that personally he had concern for the heritage listed Cheltenham and Mentone stations. He did not want to see them “trashed.” Cr Aitken believed that elevation of the Frankston line would be a “disaster” and would see Bayside “industrialised.” Later during question time Cr Aitken said that the images proposed during consultation were inaccurate.

DAVID DAVIS MP – suggested that the Government had a preference to elevate the Frankston line and believed that the project was “environmentally unsound.” David did believe that the Government had a mandate to remove the level crossings but not at all costs, and went on to say that it would be less than suitable to, “resurrect ideas out of the 50s” in relation to the skyrail design. David also informed the audience that Jacinta Allan had refused to rule out a skyrail design on the Frankston line.

CHRIS CEWETHER, LIBERAL CANDIDATE FOR DUNKLEY – declared that he was, “personally opposed to skyrail, as is the Liberal Party”, and that research had suggested that where the level crossings removals were concerned, “it would only cost about 7% more under a cut and cover method.”

GARRY SPENCER, LIBERAL CANDIDATE FOR ISAACS – voiced that the Government had, “no mandate for skyrail” and went on to say that, “we don’t want a blight on the landscape.” Garry believed that this decision would see infrastructure erected that would serve for a century and a half.

CR SPELMAN – believed that the community’s opposition to skyrail was, “very very strong” and that it was vital that the, “elected representatives [did] not remain complacent.” Further to this Cr Spelman commented that a skyrail design would be, “detrimental to our communities” and urged the LXRA to, “take their time to do a business case and show us all the options.” Cr Spelman will be moving a motion at the Council’s next meeting for Frankston City Council to adopt a formal position and, “fight for our communities.”

CR TAYLOR – informed the audience that at the Carrum Drop-In Session that LXRA staff were removing feedback that said “no skyrail”, but he had intervened and the comments were put back in place. Asked the crowd to make their voices heard at the next federal election.

TAMSIN BEARSLEY, KINGSTON CITY COUNCIL MAYOR – stated that the Kingston City Council had not adopted a stance, but after seeing the “terrible job” that the LXRA had done with consulting on the Pakenham line, had put

measures in place to ensure the consultation was conducted properly. Tamsin told the audience that Jacinta Allan was unaware of the proximity of the Park Road and Charman Road level crossings in Cheltenham, and also, “didn’t realise [that] diesel [trains were] run on the Frankston line.” This information came to surface after Kingston City Council had the opportunity to meet directly with Jacinta. Tamsin also said that Council were working very closely with the LXRA, and declared that the LXRA should “remove the skyrail option completely” so constructive discussions could be conducted.

JUSTIN SCOTT, FOUNDER – explained that they did, “invite every single representative from each and every party.”

CR PEULICH – firmly stated his opposition to a skyrail design, that he wanted Kingston City Council to adopt a formal position, and that, “councils have the resources to represent you.”

NOEL TUDBALL, SEAFORD COMMUNITY COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN – shared his personal view that they should complete sound engineering or “not do it at all”, and also expressed his concern that the LXRA and Vicroads priority lists for the level crossing removals differed considerably. Asked the crowd, “why is it even an option” and strongly declared that if the, “cut and cover method [is] 7% dearer [then] why not spend the extra money and do it properly”, which was met by applause by the over 200 attendees.

JAMES DOOLEY, FRANKSTON CITY COUNCIL MAYOR – explained that he was keeping an open mind and would wait for more information to come to surface, however said that he would like to see a more efficient and reliable service on the Frankston line. James also mentioned that he would like to see the third line used that is currently a space utilised for train stables. Following the debate and when pressed, James said that he did have concern for how the project was being conducted and was aware to the community’s views. He does not believe that the Government will take the political risk in moving ahead with a skyrail design, as, “the election is won on the sandbelt.”

SIMON JOHNSON, CO-FOUNDER – stated that this would be an, “intergenerational project” and believed it was important that the Government “invests in the community and does it right the first time round.” Simon went on to ask the crowd to raise their hand in support of Daniel Andrews removing skyrail as an option, which was met by a unanimous result.

DIANNE HUNT, LOWER OUR TRACKS INC – expressed concern for the overall environmental impact and believed that the Government had been “sneaky”, as the skyrail design would not have 40m gaps between each pylon but instead would be much closer to 20m.