



21st.September 2012

The Research Director,
Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE Queensland 4000

Dear M/s Kate McGuckin,

The writer is a subscriber and at present a former Hon. Secretary of the *Gardens on Lindfield* Retirement Village's Residents' Forum Committee at Helensvale on the Gold Coast.

The submission which follows has the full and complete support of the above described committee and to the best of my knowledge, the President of the Association of Residents of Queensland Retirement Villages (ARQRV), Mr. Les Armstrong as well.

Please refer to the Retirement Villages Act 1999
Part 4 Section 85 Residents access to certain documents.

Problem Section 85 (4) virtually negates the intent of the section because village residents would already have been provided with both the documents referred to when they occupied their property whether it be freehold or leasehold.

Solution Delete Section 85 (4).

In our opinion, Section 85 needs to be amended, to the effect, that a resident must first ask an elected committee member to request a copy of any specific document in the scheme operator's possession or control.

For example, a Local Government Council's General and Water Rate Notice and Insurance Policies. (S 107 Expenditure items in the main.)

Such a course of action should reduce the likelihood of any frivolous requests being made.

Consideration should be given to increasing the penalty applicable in Section 85 (3) because our experience has not been a favourable one here in our village when it comes to seeking a copy of, for example, Council Rate Notices.

Due to the escalation of some costs which village residents cannot avoid, every effort should be made to ensure they are not disadvantaged as compared to residents who are living on a separate block of land in suburbia.

It has been the writer's unfortunate experience over recent years to have been denied, by the scheme operator through the village manager, being given a copy of Council Rate Notices together with, whatever, enclosures the council considers of importance to each ratepayer.

GA

2.

Enclosed please find some examples of what is meant by the previous paragraph.

Also enclosed for your inspection, are copies of how difficult it is to just take notes of what is contained in a document such as a Rate Notice.

Things are changing all of the time and those "footing the bill" need to have access to any relevant document in the same way as those who reside outside of a retirement village or likeness, to enable them to contain their living costs as their life expectancy declines.

It is also the case, some matters need to be dealt with urgently and it may well be appropriate to consider a reduction in time referred to in Section 85 (2) (a).

Other enclosures illustrate their importance to every ratepayer – not just the scheme operator.

Please note that personal friends of mine have allowed me to copy their personal Rate Notices so that I could insert 'the numbers' of *Gardens on Lindfield's* Rate Notices which I was allowed to peruse BUT NOT COPY.

They do not mind their rate notice being distributed as I'm doing here!

That was a lot easier to do than what I've had to do in the past.

Finally, would it be possible for the Parliamentary Draftsperson and the Committee to come up with some means of ensuring village residents "get a fair go" when it comes to paying only that part of a scheme operators Rate Notice which is in proportion to the percentage of units completed as compared to its 100% when completed.

For example, this village is only partially completed – there are 163 occupied but there will be approximately 311 when completed. Just one parcel of land and residents are lessees.

We've only been able to get the scheme operator to agree to paying only 16% of the rates whereas our committee considers it ought to be much, much more than that.

What can the Committee do to help us out because we think we're paying too much?

Thank you for the opportunity to proffer some amendments as we see it.

Please reply to the writer if an elaboration is required.

Yours faithfully, *George Hannaford*

George Hannaford