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# Rally Call for the Cross

🕒 Posted on February 28, 2018 by Jade Morellini in City Hub · 1 Comment



Five councillors stand in the foreground with protesters holding banners behind about the master plan for kings cross. Photo: Roslyn Sharp

by John Moyle

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brought around 300 people to the Rex Centre to hear local MP Alex Greenwich, Councillor Prof Kerry Phelp and Councillor Angela Vithouklas speak on the development plan that threatens the existential existence of the area.

Also in attendance were City of Sydney councillors Christine Forster, Craig Chung and Linda Scott.

“The event was a triumph and brought people together as part of a real community,” rally organiser Andrew Woodhouse said.

The development plan by Iris Capital to demolish all the buildings from the Blake’s Chemist through to the Empire Hotel will not only destroy the community and heritage fabric of the Cross, but will also have a terminal impact on around 30 local small business operators and put local residents through four years of noise, dust and stress.

Iris Capital chief executive officer Sam Arnaout has spent \$66 million buying up the strip and may have to fork another \$20 million or so too, but the Lido Hotel in Roslyn Street which is holding out for a bigger pay day.

Not only will Sam have to dig into his pockets for more folding stuff, but he will have the first real fight in his twenty something year career as a developer as the proposal has united the community, a State MP, five City of Sydney Councillors and even the Lord Mayor in opposition.

“It is clear that the scale of the proposed development and its potential impact on local heritage, streetscape and amenity would irrevocably change the character of the area,” Lord Mayor Clover Moore said in a press release issued this week specifically addressing the development.

State member for Sydney, Alex Greenwich spoke off the cuff about his concerns about the planning process and the way the State Government has imposed unelected Local Planning Panels on Sydney Councils and why they are undemocratic.

Undaunted by a sun shower City of Sydney councillor Angela Vithouklas voiced her concerns for the many local business that would face closure

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Local residents are the guardians of the spirit of the community.”

She also said that between 2004 and 2017 Potts Point has had 1,462 DAs determined that has included 376 new apartments/units and over 100 car spaces.

Councillor Phelps added “All of this without a master plan but rather a reliance on toothless development guidelines.”

Earlier in the day the residents of nine storey Kingsley Hall overlooking Fitzroy Gardens unfurled a three storey banner calling for action from the Lord Mayor.

The even opened with a sax solo of “My City of Sydney” by Janet Levy and later Vashti Hughes was joined by Robert Susz and Brendan Gallagher for a rousing version of Tom Petty’s “I Won’t Back Down.”

No Sam, Kings Cross and Potts Point won’t be backing down.

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