



Glen Eira City Council Elections 2020: Questionnaire to all candidates.

Given the current COVID environment, electioneering by candidates is extremely difficult. *Save Glen Eira* believes that ratepayers would welcome candidates' views on numerous issues currently confronting our municipality. We therefore are inviting all candidates to fill out this questionnaire to provide residents with some insight into their future councillors. All submitted questionnaires will be published on our website.

1. Name: Simone Zmood

2. Glen Eira Ward: Camden Ward

3. Why did you decide to run for Council?

I am running for Council to give back to our community and the place we have made home. Over the past year and a half, I have attended many Council meetings and seen the dissatisfaction of residents expressed during public question time and through the submission of petitions. It seems that the current council has lost sight of the people who elected them to represent residents and ratepayers. I would like to help Council become more collaborative and focused on serving the needs of residents and business owners. I will work towards bringing the community back together through the stresses of COVID and the divisive actions that Council have initiated in recent times.

4. What local activities are you involved in?

On a daily 'people-focused' basis, I help with efforts to prepare and deliver food and groceries to local people in need. When my children were younger, I used to be involved in local sports clubs and was often the team manager and provider of oranges.

On planning and infrastructure, I have been involved in campaigning for a better outcome for residents of Inkerman Road/Street and supported many other local campaigns.

5. What do you see as your strengths/skill set to be a Councillor?

I have extensive experience in governance, strategy, finance and risk management through my work as a management consultant and on various board and committee. I am good at listening and thinking outside the box to come up with solutions that address people's needs, and good at negotiating to reach positive outcomes. I ask probing questions and am committed to transparent and accountable local government.

6. Are you a member of a political party? If so, which one

No. I have never been a member of a political party and I have no political affiliations.

7. What do you see as the current important issues facing Glen Eira?

Based on the many conversations I have had, listening to residents and business owners, I think the current important issues are:

- Dealing with the impacts of COVID on residents and business owners, both in terms of stress, illness, and reduced income
- Supporting local businesses with initiatives to help them survive and recover from COVID
- Protecting the amenity and neighbourhood character that drew people to the area in the first place by quickly addressing issues such as heritage protections and development

- More appropriate development by setting planning standards that ensure development is sensitive to the impacts on surrounding residents and does not reduce amenity, privacy, solar access through windows and for PV, accessibility, etc.
- More open space (this has become even more critical during COVID)
- More trees and greenery across Glen Eira, including beautifying our streets
- Improving pedestrian safety by proactive maintenance of footpaths
- Improving safety around schools by prioritising separated safe cycling paths alongside schools and longer car drop-off zones
- Bringing back world-class shopping strips with revitalised infrastructure and better security

8. How would you evaluate and take into consideration residents' views on topical issues?

I am a resident and have a great deal of empathy for fellow residents and local businesses. When residents' express concerns, I listen and don't dismiss these concerns. My guiding philosophy is to always strive for outcomes that are win-win. A really simple question to ask is how I would feel if the issue was happening to me.

9. Would you support and lobby for mandatory formal oversight committees with community Representatives to help ensure greater accountability of council actions?

Yes. Sadly, it seems like this is needed in the current environment as some Councillors appear to be defaulting to personal or party ideologies, rather than properly representing the people who elected them. I support better quality community consultations and more accurate reporting of community feedback, as well as more transparency and accountability overall.

10. Would you support the banning of political donations from developers, as in NSW?

Yes

11. Our planning provisions require Councils to balance important and often competing issues How would you prioritise the following issues? (Rank: High/Medium/Low)

- Prioritise purchase of new open space in areas of lesser open space. **High**
- Protection of residential amenity. **High**
- Economic activity through construction and development. **Low**
- Heritage conservation. **High (as long as the criteria are justifiable)**
- Housing affordability and social justice. **Most of this is driven by federal and state decisions.**
- Medium rise infill in low rise streets abutting low rise residences. **Medium, with input from residents**
- Protecting communities, small local businesses & shopping strips. **High**
- Sustainable initiatives **High, where supported by financial and environmental analysis.**
- Protecting fauna corridors and biodiversity. **High**
- High-rise development in Activity Centres. **Once mandatory height controls are in place that are community supported.**
- Increasing the tree canopy. **High**

- Support for council initiative cultural events. **Low in the short-term but facilitate local community groups running events. Medium in the longer-term once the community has recovered from COVID.**
- Inclusion of affordable/social housing in new developments. **Medium, housing costs are an issue for everyone and are driven by state and federal decisions.**
- Support for new bike or pedestrian paths through Glen Eira. **Medium, needs to be done strategically to create a network and design should be sensitive to the impacts on residents.**
- Support for Council initiatives to reduce carbon footprint (Council & Residential) **High**
- Support for creation of deliberative community panels for all major projects/budgets. **High**

12. Is the current residential development adequately making provision for affordable housing?

Probably not, but this is a reflection of federal and state failures related to housing affordability generally, the provision of public housing for vulnerable community members, and the inadequate salaries paid to our essential workers such as nurses, teachers, and police.

13. How happy do you think the residents of Glen Eira are with the current level of development?

Those directly impacted seem to be very unhappy.

14. Some zoning types eg Activity Centre Zoning (ACZ) can result in no later appeal-rights for residents. Do you think this is fair on residents?

No, residents should always have the right to appeal.

15. Do we need tighter planning controls and added scrutiny to protect residents in or nearby to mixed-use zones?

Yes, local council is the closest level of government to the people and should have full control over planning for the local area.

16. What changes would you like to see implemented by the Glen Eira City Council? Eg planning scheme, local laws, meeting procedures, other changes

- More cohesive strategic planning for the municipality
- Fiscal responsibility during our COVID lockdown and recovery
- More transparent strategic and financial reporting provided to the community with clear responsibility and accountability
- Council meeting procedures to be updated to prioritise resident input and ensure that public questions are answered fully and in clear language
- Supporting local residents by minimising rate rises until the economic impact of COVID has passed
- Supporting local businesses with initiatives to help them survive and recover from COVID
- Planning schemes that preserve amenity and the neighborhood character, including mandatory height limits, bulk and street impact guidelines, setback requirements, site permeability, retention of significant trees - so that residents and developers have more clarity and waste less time/money in appeals
- Ensure high building standards (e.g., environmentally sustainable, energy efficient, water efficient, properly waterproofed to prevent water ingress and mould)
- Immediate action protecting heritage and significant trees

Meet the Candidates Forums (on zoom):

Camden Oct 6th

Rosstown Oct 7th

Tucker Oct 8th

Registration details to follow