

2.4 MEMORIAL SEAT PROPOSAL AT MGA GALLERY PLACE PARK

(JR:ARTS 12)

Responsible Director: Julie Salomon

RECOMMENDATION

That Council approves the installation of a bench seat in the MGA Gallery Place Park featuring a memorial plaque, in memory of the late Geoffrey McMaster, that will be fully funded by the McMaster family.

INTRODUCTION

Council has received a request to have installed a bench seat, consistent with other furniture, in the MGA Gallery Place Park. The seat is proposed to feature a plaque in memory of Geoffrey McMaster, whose parents George and Therese McMaster were the first residents of Gallery Place, Wheelers Hill.

BACKGROUND

In early 2017, Council received a request from George and Therese McMaster of Gallery Place, seeking to have installed a seat featuring a plaque. The seat is proposed in memory of their late son Geoffrey, who passed away at 52 after an illness in 2014.

DISCUSSION

The McMasters have proposed this installation as a memorial to their late son, with the intent of providing a serene space for community overlooking the lake and mountains. The cost of purchase and installation of the seat and the plaque are proposed to be personally met by the McMasters.

Geoffrey McMaster was a pilot with a distinguished flying career with Qantas, Ansett and the Royal Flying Doctor Service. The McMasters have made the request as an expression of appreciation of the park and its importance in their lives and that of their late son.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Discussions regarding this proposal commenced in April 2017 and continued over an extended period. In July 2017, Council adopted Council's Plaques and Memorials Policy (see attached). The current policy requires that plaques and memorials will only be considered where it relates to the commemoration of an individual that is/was strongly linked to the City of

Monash and/or who has made a substantial contribution to the Monash community.

This request is recommended by Officers as the discussion on the proposal precedes the introduction of the current policy and as such, does not present a precedent. The proposal meets a low key, dignified request by long term residents, the first residents in Gallery Place and supporters of the Monash Gallery of Art. The proposal meets the aesthetic requirements of the policy, as the seat proposed will be identical to those currently in place in the park and would feature a small metal plaque stating:

*In loving memory of a wonderful father, son, husband, brother and friend
Geoffrey James McMaster
11.03.62 – 16.04.14
Achievement through Dedication*

As a pilot of the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) and international pilot, it is considered that the late Geoffrey McMaster has made a significant and outstanding contribution to the community through his work with the RFDS.

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The social implication of the proposal is the provision of an additional seat at the MGA Gallery Place Park. It provides a place for reflection and contemplation, a mark of respect for a distinguished person. The community benefit of more seating is offered at no cost to Council.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

There are no Human Rights considerations informing this report.

CONSULTATION

Should Council support this proposal, Gallery Place residents will be advised of the installation of the seat.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

All costs associated with the procurement and installation of the seat and plaque will be met by George and Therese McMaster. The maintenance costs of an outdoor bench seat of timber and steel, designed for all weather, will be minimal and can be met within Council's current budget.

CONCLUSION

Council has an opportunity to meet the request of George and Therese McMaster to install a seat at the MGA – Gallery Place Park as a low key memorial to a son, whose passing occurred at the relatively young age of 52, after a distinguished flying career. This proposal does not present a

precedent for Council, as discussions preceded adoption of the Plaques and Memorials Policy.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Plaques and Memorials Policy