

Minutes of Green Point Ratepayers' and Residents' Association

Annual General Meeting

Date: 19 September 2024 at 18:00

Venue: Hamilton Rugby Club, Green Point 1

1. Opening and welcome

As MC committee member James Look (JL) thanked those attending and stressed the importance of standing together as a community. He appealed for support for the small group of volunteers on the Green Point Ratepayers' & Residents' Association (GPRRA) who look after the interests of the Green Point community. GP is lucky to have such a group of thoughtful committed citizens, headed by Management Committee chair Liz Knight (LK). JL also urged those in attendance to encourage neighbours to participate in future events reminding all of the GPRRA's 'borrowed' motto:

'Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has' – Margaret Mead

Guest speakers introduced:

- Councillor Ian McMahon (IM)
- Heritage specialist Dr Antonia Malan (AM)
- Councillor Francine Higham (FH)

Special guests welcomed:

- Alderman Matthew Kempthorne (Chairperson, SubCouncil 16)
- Gershwin Fouldien (Manager, SubCouncil 16)
- Marc Truss (GPCID & OKCID)
- Col Engelbrecht (SAPS)
- Jane Meyer (Mouille Point Ratepayer)
- Graham Louw (Green Point Neighbourhood Watch)
- Michael Bracale (SRG Security)

2. Acknowledgements, Attendance register, Approval of 2023 Minutes, Membership fees

Thanks to Hamilton Rugby Club for making their venue available for the AGM, as well as to Sandak-Lewin Trust and Ultra Liquors who generously funded the AGM.

Attendees were reminded to sign the register.

Minutes of the 2023 AGM were approved by Steve Massey and seconded by Glynis Johnson.

The very reasonable membership fee of R250 (per annum per household) to remain the same.

3. GPRRA Management Committee

JL introduced the GPRRA Management Committee (MC) members:

Liz Knight (LK) – Chairperson / HEC

Steve Massey (SM) – Vice Chair / Events

Stuart Burnett (SB) - BEC & Treasurer
Paige Nick (PN) – Events
Sanet Tattersall (ST)
Glynis Johnson (GJ) Secretary

What does MC do for the community?

Engages with Councillors, heritage groups, CoCT Social Development, CoCT Parks, SanParks, Law Enforcement, SAPS to represent the interests of the residents and to fight for our rights.

Year in review:

The first major success is the nomination of the Common as a heritage site. In 2015 it was becoming evident to two visionary women on the ratepayers - Dr Antonia Malan and Jenny McQueen – that it was essential to protect what remained of the original historic public landscape from further commercialization. After seven years of lobbying they have achieved victory. Dr Malan will discuss in detail.

Another significant event was the 200th anniversary of the Green Point Lighthouse (built between 1821-1823, first lit on 12 April 1824).

The GP Urban Park continues to be well maintained and is a popular venue for residents of Cape Town as well as visitors. A recent article in *Daily Maverick* highlighted its stark contrast to many other parks which lie in ruin.

The Strand St Quarry on the GP border has long been a problem site. Cllr Francine Higham will share news on positive developments for this heritage site. (Closure for comments in the public participation process was 11 October).

July marked the first anniversary of the launch of the GPCID. Marc Truss and his team Marius Swanepoel, Dolf Venter and Ray McMaster were applauded for reaching the challenging goals that were set, in terms of crime reduction and environmental impact.

Members of the Green Point Neighbourhood Watch have also recently introduced patrols on our streets along with SAPs and Law Enforcement.

Challenges:

Being an international tourist destination is beneficial for the economy and for employment, but with GP often being at the centre of activity, this has an impact on traffic and pressure on building development (some good, others less so). It's essential to preserve the area's natural beauty. Residents are encouraged to use the MyCiti bus service, to be responsible drivers and pedestrians, and to walk where possible.

LK will talk about SafeSpaces and the homeless - important for both residents and homeless to have quality of life. Also greening GP - LK and team have done sterling work on greening the lanes. The vision is also to plant more trees along Main Road.

4. Ward 115 Update - Cllr Ian McMahon:

Ward 115 comprises Three Anchor Bay, Green Point, V&A Waterfront, De Waterkant, CBD, Lower Gardens, District Six, Woodstock, Salt River, Port of CT, Marion & Prince Edward Islands.

IM shared a barcode for access to the wealth of information discussed (herewith the link):

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/15yhZaBlmndDhiWjhbpA7wk6F9jq4Nlow/view>

Includes topics for public comment in Ward 115 on pp 3 & 4 – many have expired but some have deadlines in late Oct:

Proposed amendments to City's municipal planning bylaw

Reviews of City's Organization Performance Management System

Comments on draft Cape Town CBD local spatial development framework (important to take time to read and submit comments)

Draft code of conduct/ permissible activities at the Witsands aquifer

Draft contract related to construction of MyCiti

Contract related to data link services

City's intention to incur long term debt (grant loans)

City's draft waste strategy

Safety & Security statistics:

IM briefly discussed highlights from slide presentation - 100 day report for Ward 115 dated 14/8/2024 on crime/service requests in the form of a heat map showing focus areas - CBD, Fan Walk, around Traffic Dept, Kloof St into east city, down to Woodstock area.

Total of 1,7101 service requests were logged, 4,168 (around 25%) by residents and remaining by Law Enforcement (LE) or traffic officers. Most relating to Traffic, followed by LE, Metro, Emergency, SAPS, then Social Development.

Also presented crime stats specific to GP: the heat map activity highlighted along Main, High Level and Cavalcade roads, around Granger Bay Circle and Mano's. GP residents contributed 1,268 (of the 4,000) service requests.

Social Development (DSD) / Street People Unit:

DSD and LE responded to 128 complaints. LE taking initiative to actively patrol. Most requests in GP related to street people (123) and parking (85).

IM also focused on the homeless institutions in close proximity:

- SafeSpace 1 Culemborg (230 beds)
- SafeSpace 2 Culemborg (310 beds)
- SafeSpace 3 Ebenezer (300 beds)
- Salvation Army (114 beds for elderly men)
- Hope Exchange Roeland St (40 beds for adult men)
- Streetscapes Woodstock (55 beds)
- Haven shelters offer the following:
 - Moira Henderson Chapel St (120 beds)
 - Woodstock (129 beds for elderly only)
 - Napier St (156 beds)
 - District Six (90 beds)

A significant total of 1,544 beds

1,173 homeless people were screened to date this year. 537 were placed in shelters; 6 reunited with families; 3 given medical assistance; 12 referred to other organizations.

Slide shows that of 20 wards, Ward 115 has the highest number of homeless with 862. However, actual numbers are far higher, reasons being financial opportunities (tourists, affluence, residents handing out food etc). Recommendation is to direct them to the many facilities that offer feeding schemes, clothing, laundrettes, ablutions, etc. The longer people stay on the street, the less chance they have to enter the programs. Handouts don't help; they prolongs their time on the street.

Haven Night Shelter does sterling work, offering 1,300 beds across Western Cape. In their past financial year they checked in 3,300 clients, of which 331 were reunited with families, 452 reintegrated into society, 356 went through rehabilitation programs, 866 found work. Important to rather support organizations like these, than to give handouts.

C3 service requests: approx. 900 requests from Ward 115

Financials - examples of capital allocations within our area:

Some of the future plans – repairs & equipment at Cape Town and Athletics stadiums; CCTV cameras at Green Point Urban Park; Granger Bay parking access control; GP marine outflow (R40m); rehabilitation of High Level Road; social housing at Founders Garden where ZipZap used to be (R40-50m); new lighting; new parks; traffic calming measures.

Area North, which GP falls under, will get significant funding. (Can peruse on pp 31-38:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/15yhZaBlmndDhiWjhbpA7wk6F9jq4Nlow/view>)

Operating budget for our SubCouncil 16:

R24m budget produced close to R1,700 jobs.

Citywide R1.4b for community services and health which includes HIV program; primary healthcare for clinics; R189m for street people; substance abuse; arts and culture; lifeguards.

R5.1bn for safety budget; R37m for low cost transfers of 2,500 rental units; social packages increased from R4.3bn to R4.8bn, etc.

Urban waste R444m, area cleaning R578,000.

Traffic and Transport:

GP Main Rd safety plan (diagram on p 49 in link shared above) working to improve visibility from side streets. Many accidents and speeding on Cavalcade / High Level (HL) Rd - plan to move pedestrian crossing to intersection and add traffic lights there. York Rd intersection - adjusting signalisation helped, looking at ways to make two lanes at traffic light to ease congestion.

Three road safety audits done by outsourced company- suggestions for Ocean View Dr (OVD), HL, Beach Rd.

Residents requested bollards outside Hillside House – done.

Variable speed signs - 2 cameras on High Level decreased speed by 66%. New one on OVD will be operational soon. Please note that speed signs only start working 2 months after installation (to collect data and have stats for comparison once it goes live). As many roads are not suitable for speed humps, these speed signs are a measure to use instead. Another 2 signs budgeted for in ward allocation - one each for High Level and OVD. Next year another will be installed on Main Rd (Ultra Liquors to Glengariff).

Previous election stats:

Ward 115 main parties: DA won 61%, ANC 5.9%, EFF 13%.

Large percentage of voters were registered but didn't vote.

Highest voter turnout was in 2014, declined after that.

Registered voters increased from 15,000 to 18,000 in the past few years, yet turnout was lower.

In the 2014 NPE the EFF featured strongly - large increase since 2019, possibly due to growth in student numbers in the area.

Results at CT Civic Centre: DA 45%, ANC 73%, EFF 32%.

EFF (student numbers) made similar gains in Gardens where voter turnout had also decreased.

The growth in student accommodation has a clear impact on election results.

Woodstock: DA results were influenced by Palestine effect

Chapel St Primary: DA only got 5%, also Palestine effect

Ellerton Primary: DA 88.2% but only 65% of registered voters voting, which is of concern.

5. GP Common Nomination – Dr Antonia Malan (AM)

Dr Malan recalled early discussions with J P Smith, Jenny McQueen and James Look to protect the Common. Their objective was to monitor, comment on and object to the Stadium. There were trade-offs for the areas, such as the fantastic Urban Park.

AM came across a plan where bits of the precinct had been demarcated for construction of a building close to the Stadium, and realised it was time to take action. It was decided to use the National Heritage Resources Act whereby a place or building can be nominated as a provincial heritage resource. The purpose was to elevate its importance to provincial status (Heritage Western Cape), preventing local government from further developing an area which was given by the King to the people of Cape Town.

After eight years and many challenges, the Government Gazette announced on 20 September that the Common is now a Provincial Heritage Site.

The Common has significantly evolved and is intricately linked to the cultural and natural landscape, and the adjacent urban scape.

6. Strand Street Quarry – Cllr Francine Higham (FH), Ward 77

Developments at the Strand St Quarry are relevant as the area also impacts communities of De Waterkant and GP. Situated at the bottom of Signal Hill, edge of BoKaap, bordering De Waterkant and CBD, it dates back to 1666 when stone was extracted to build the Castle thus significant provincial heritage. The vision is part of the Foreshore Gateway project to better connect and utilise open spaces. The consultation process with BoKaap, De Waterkant and GP communities was initiated in 2023 to identify and create a concept design. It is now at design phase and the aim is for a multi-use sports facility. It is already being used informally by BoKaap football club for practices. However, as the pitch is not a full size field, it will serve primarily as a training ground. Alongside will be a clubhouse, restaurant, picnic areas, recreational facilities, historic walk and possibly a cricket pitch. (Negotiations ongoing to accommodate Metro Police currently there.)

Slide presentation showed present and future layouts including proposed cableway to link to Signal Hill and further. Parking under discussions as well as concern about geography of area and protection of the natural vegetation and rock face.

Living Heritage Project: grew out of necessity to recognise the history (Muslim, slavery, colonial, political exiles) and the significance of the site. Also consideration for local artists and ensuring site is low maintenance.

Following the public participation process with the community (March-June 2023) and with input from stakeholders, statutory process is in progress. Legal issues relating to the Washroom/Kraal and Main Quarry as well as homeless are also being addressed. Meantime ongoing negotiations with Recreational & Parks to ensure safety around site (fencing, lighting, cleaning).

Timeline 5-10 years to completion.

(The public participation process closed on 11 October - see link www.strandstreetquarry.co.za)

7. Events Committee - Steve Massey

Positives in 2024:

100's of event applications processed so far this year

No events with amplified sound that do not have Noise Exemption Permits

Fewer music events on the Shared Fields and Club Fields; most moved to the A Track

Concerns going forward:

Traffic flow, to and from the Stadium, during big events continues to be a problem, but has improved

There is an ongoing problem with the screaming of Sports Announcers at the Finish line that needs to be resolved

Parking during events in the Mouille Point and Green Point areas remain a major issue

The loss of Sigmund Badenhorst as an ally in the Health Department means that we now have to insist that Independent Sound Engineers be used

8. Human Environment Committee (HEC) - Liz Knight

SafeStreet Collective: comprises a team of three previously homeless with a daily routine of maintaining our public open spaces. We continue to benefit from funding under CoCT's Public Employment Program (introduced by Cllr Ian McMahon). The focus is on skills development but studies suggest that transforming the some 30 lane gardens on the slopes of Signal Hill will likely increase our property values! The lanes are used by hikers, dogwalkers and those who work in our hood (MyCity bus stops are strategically placed at begging and end of routes).

New projects include planting around the Granger Bay Boulevard Circle as well as transforming the children's playground at the Colin Eglin Library. This project has allowed the team to express their bricklaying skills. In return they benefit from computer literacy courses offered by library manager Katherine Moon.

Social activities: our field worker Riedoewaan Galant has had great success engaging with our street-based community – since July 35 have taken up offers of shelter organized by Peter Cookson and his team at CoCT Social Development. Thanks to community funding we are able to support IDs and bus fares for those who wish to return home. We reach out to neighbours to participate in longterm solutions for those living on our streets and to donate books, games and clothes to the shelters. Riedoewaan is also responsible for collecting and documenting needles (over 250 since July).

Friends of GP Lanes: look for our notices on social media every Monday inviting all to join us on our regular hikes up and down the lanes, excellent for getting to know your neighbours, appreciate the gardens and interesting houses, to get fit and to be part of our 'mini watch'.

9. Built Environment Committee (BEC) - Stuart Burnett

Meetings held every two weeks to discuss developments, to influence what is not permitted, to encourage good development.

It has been a busy year with an upsurge in proposed large developments in Chepstow Rd, OVD and Carreg Crescent. Over 60 year-old properties have a limited heritage value on which to oppose demolition, however they are all located in either Braemar or Attwell Estates with Single Dwelling Title Deed Restriction (TDR). Multiple dwellings require amendment or removal of these TDRs which CoCT Planning routinely supports. The only way for residents to stop this is to take matters to court - a long and expensive exercise. Some examples are 4 Chepstow Rd, 2 Carreg Crescent, 37 & 29 OVD. We have had some successes stopping removal of TDRs, and so far no precedent has been set.

- Site next to Stadium (currently gravel parking area): CoCT has granted a 99yr lease. Lessee submitted application to build a large development on the site: 751 apartments, 161 hotel rooms, other facilities would be communal, classified as student accommodation. Will be the biggest building in GP behind the Stadium. Main concern is traffic congestion especially during events. BEC asked in March to see the traffic assessment - still awaiting response; up for discussion at Municipal Planning Tribunal 1st October.

- 30 Sydney St: another student accommodation project - 27 units to be added to existing 26 units.

- 38X & 38Y OVD: six cellphone rooftop base stations have been illegally operating since May 2020. The required consent use plus departure from Scenic Drive bylaw was refused in 2021. In 2022 an appeal was dismissed. In 2023 original notice to remove was ignored. Councillors have now intervened and we are hopeful of a positive outcome. At Municipal Planning meeting early Sept there was a request for administrative penalty for illegal operation of these stations (around R1,3m, which MPT then reduced to R378,000).

10. Treasurers Report - Stuart Burnett

Subscriptions in past year to March 2024 were R26,000, up from R19,400 previous year. Sponsorship down by R5,000. Income of R36,000. Costs lower than last year when money was spent on new website. Current costs are standard bank charges, AGM, etc. Net surplus R25,000. Closing balance up from R171,000 to R196,000. The increase has been retained in case of legal costs at some point but opting to release some funds - LK has been using her own funds for projects so SB suggested reimbursement.

11. Election of Committee members:

Existing six members of MC have all agreed to continue, all voted in favour. BEC members were similarly voted in.

JL thanked SB for his hard work on BEC, dealing with huge amount of bureaucracy, attending meetings, dedication to controlling our built environment.

JL commented on achievements of GPRRA in community - beautifying area and making safer, controlling what happens. It's an uplifting and stimulating experience to be part of this group. There is a need to continue the momentum by adding new members, and an invitation was given to specifically those with IT and website management skills.

12. Q&A:

Q: Is there a protocol to follow and a list of feeding schemes in order to direct street people to?

IM: The narrative is changing with new laws restricting life on the streets and communities should be part of programs in place to discourage chronic homelessness. Supporting with funds and food keeps them on the street. Whereas NGOs and shelters have longterm solutions to reintegrate back into society, reunify with families, offer skills development as well as employment. Rather support shelters and NGOs:

The Haven, Safe Space 1, 2 & 2 offer accommodation, meals and access to social workers.

Hope Exchange (Roeland St) has ablutions (showers, sinks, lockers for belongings and medication) and provide lunch coupons for Service Dining Room.

At Streetscapes clothes can be laundered and there are opportunities to engage with the social workers.

TB/HIV Care have a program of exchanging needles and also provide methadone drug replacement therapy to wean off drugs.

Q: An interdict has been obtained to move people from the Castle, however the Granger Bay Boulevard underpass remains a big problem with over 80 people sleeping there. How to resolve?

IM: Many sites have been cleared but there is evidence of movement to other areas by those who refuse assistance. Tenacity and persistence is therefore called for until all sites are permanently clear. Eventually the acceptance will be to accept offers to move off the streets.

Q: There is substantial evidence that lowkey activity of social workers achieve ongoing success with reintegration and drug rehabilitation, yet the public has a negative attitude that very little is achieved. How to make more aware?

IM: The challenge is availability of cheap drugs. Synthetic heroin based drugs are available for R20 (as opposed to R300 a few years ago). Feeding drug habits results in petty theft. Even so, excellent work is being done by NGO's and CoCT. The only solution is for the community to be more involved and more aware and to practice responsible giving.

13. Closure of meeting

JL commented that it has been an eye opener to see how much CoCT does. He thanked those attending, invited them to become involved with the GPRRA and to share with neighbours the good work that is being done.

Minutes by Sanet Tattersall