



Minutes of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) meeting with ward Cllr Mkhize of ward 103 for the proposed construction of Bothas Hill Convenience Centre comprising Service Station and associated infrastructure, including a Retail Centre on Erf 363 Bothas Hill, eThekweni Municipality, KwaZulu – Natal held at the Councillor’s Office at Bothas Hill on 12 January 2022

(See attached attendance register)

Introduction

BM Mthembu introduced himself to the ward 103 Cllr Mkhize as an environmental assessor.

Opening

The meeting was officially opened by Mr Mthembu at 12.10. Cllr Mkhize explained that he was happy to represent the ward at this stage since the ward committees were still not constituted due to the local government elections recently held in November 2021.

It was agreed that the ward Cllr was to meet the developer once all the site assessments were completed. Issues relating to possible community benefits like jobs were to be discussed at that stage. This hinges on the outcome of the assessment and the decision by the Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs.

Apologies

No apologies were recorded.

Presentation of the project.

Mr. Mthembu gave a brief background of the project i.e. Bothas Hill Convenience Centre which was to comprise of the Service Station and Retail Centre with restaurants and line shops. Mr Mthembu had already forwarded the background information document (BID) to Cllr Mkhize who confirmed receipt of such document.

The site was already zoned activity zone and allowed Service Station and commercial activities. The Cllr indicated that he was familiar with the site, however it was agreed to visit it after the meeting.

Presentation of the EIA process

Mr Mthembu then presented the EIA process to the meeting. He summarised the purpose of the EIA, and the importance of the public participation process in particular. Mr Mthembu explained that the EIA process is based on legislation known as

Environmental Management Act of 1998. He then explained the environment in broad terms emphasizing that the idea was to balance social, economic and environmental aspects in decision making for the benefit of the environment and community. He explained that the Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs was the Department responsible for the issuing of the Environmental Authorization. He explained that he was playing a role of being independent to the project.

He explained some of the potential environmental impacts on site, and the methods used in assessing the possible environmental impacts. He further explained that the need for the project is also taken into account when making a final decision.

He also touched on the availability of services on site like electricity, water, stormwater and refuse collection. Mr Mthembu indicated some of the identified stakeholders for the project, which included eThekweni Municipality, Amafa AkwaZulu Natali, Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife, Department of Water and Sanitation, Department of Forestry, Fisheries and Environmental Affairs – Forestry Regulations & Support (DFFE), KZN Department of Transport, EDTEA and members of the public. Each of the identified stakeholders was expected to comment from their perspectives. Mr Mthembu explained that the project was already advertised in the Mercury dated 17 November 2021.

Mr Mthembu briefly touched on the timeframes for the assessment process.

Comments

The ward Cllr confirmed that he had gone through the BID and the project was clear. He registered his support for the project, and hoped that the people from the ward were going to benefit from the project.

Response: Mr Mthembu responded by saying the developer has also registered his commitment to ensuring involvement of locals wherever possible, especially in terms of jobs that are likely to be created by the project.

Comments

Since the ward committees are still not constituted, the ward Cllr indicated that he was to inform the people of his ward about the project during area meetings.

Response. Mr Mthembu noted the comments of the Cllr.

BM Mthembu indicated to the Cllr that he was to distribute some notices to the town of Bothas Hill, and the distribution was to include the likes of Sasol Bothas Hill, Spar Bothas Hill, Build IT Bothas Hill, Cafes, 1000 Hills Tourism, Rob Roy Retirement Village and so forth.

Site visit

Mr Mthembu then proceeded to the site together with Cllr Mkhize for inspection of the site. Mr Mthembu thereafter erected the two site notices in English and IsiZulu.

Closure

The meeting was officially adjourned after the site inspection at 12.55.

