

MINUTES OF THE MEETING WITH



Purpose of Meeting	Public Participation Meeting
Venue	On site
Date	9 February 2018
Time	18:00

Present

Grace Magaya

Opening Remarks and Welcome

Ms Magaya (EAP) welcomed everyone present and then stated the purpose of the meeting, i.e. to take note of the community's concerns and comments regarding the proposed activity.

Background Information

Jan Joubert proposed the construction of two double storey complex on Mooifontein Farm No 14IR portion 22 in Birch Acres, Kempton Park, Gauteng Province

Grace (EAP): I was appointed by Jan Joubert Attorneys who own the land and Jan Joubert's son is representing the client. If approved, they would like to 40 double storey units on this project. I have been in consultation with Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) because the main concern that was raised right at the start of this process by Tracy Butler your ward councillor was the issue of this wetland. This wetland does not have an inlet and an outlet, so it was basically storm water building up in that water pond. The problem is if we keep having developments like the one we are proposing, then we are just increasing runoff into that water pond. We engaged with Ekurhuleni and we were just fortunate because they have a project in-progress as we speak to install an outlet. They did all the studies to gain authorisation for that installation i.e. flood-line and a delineation. The new feature will regulate the flow of the water in that water pond. That was the first concern we had to get over it. I'm here to get any of your other concerns that you might have on this project. We have already done a risk assessment and according to our Wetland Specialist, the risk is low the reason being that we are not going to obstruct the flow of water neither are we are going divert the watercourse. We are just in the 500m buffer, so if we have a low risk, we can apply for a General Authorisation from DWS. Another concern that was raised is the issue of traffic, we have two alternatives. We had a Traffic Engineer who came to monitor the flow of traffic in this area and he recommended either the use of Suickerbakkie road as the main entrance or Bergpantrys which is currently a dead end south of the proposed site. We prefer the use of that road to enter the property

Andre Duplessis: How do these residents feel?

Grace: We will get to know how they feel.

Vigilio Pedro: I want to say something while we are talking about this, I have been living here for 44years. There is a new road from Kempton Park, it takes me 12minutes to get form home to work and at the moment it's taking me 40minutes to an hour and 20minutes to get to work because we are bumper to bumper all the way. Just this part here takes me 25 to 30minutes. It's not going to help our situation at all.

Andre Du Plessis: Does your study include aquatics? Where will your storm water runoff go?

Grace: The engineers will have to work that out. The department of water and sanitation will not approve project if there are no detailed storm water designs that indicate where runoff will be discharged.

Andre Du Plessis: According to NEMA, you can not let storm water be dumped in a wetland without having accumulated an attenuation pond

Grace: An attenuation pond is one of a mitigatory feature, engineers have to take into consideration in designing storm water. Its not a requirement because there are various methods of mitigating runoff.

Andre Du Plessis: It's not a prerequisite town planning? I'm surprised, because we to take it up with the engineers.

Grace: No, it's not a pre-requisite stipulated in NEMA

Andre Du Plessis: The site development plan normally includes an attenuation facility, so we have to ask the town planner why it is not required in this instance.

Grace: Not a problem. When it comes to attenuations those are some of the things the Department of Water and Sanitation are going to look into in terms of regulating the water that is going to go into that water course. Those are some of the conditions which will be set by DWS if they feel there is a need but if there is an attenuation point then it is just a mitigation factor and not a prerequisite. I understand the issue of the traffic and I'm going to engage the Traffic Engineer on that further with regards to the traffic in this area.

Unidentified: Last year we had to call an ambulance and it could not get into this area, so we had to get the person and rush him to the hospital which took us over an hour to get out of this area. We have ambulances which can not get in and out of this area, no clinics in this area, we have got one school and now you want to introduce more kids. The infrastructure here can't take it.

Grace: I know that this is on record, but I just want to understand what it is that this area can not take because we have a town planner who is working with me to try and get this area rezoned to residential and those are some of the factors that they take into consideration.

Alexa: We have got one main road and the other one taking the Thembisa traffic, it is not helping us. This one is actually helping their (Thembisa traffic) because their traffic is now being diverted into this road. You have all that traffic joining here. It is not helping any residents in this area, so it's a huge impact.

Grace: You were saying something about a school, did you say that they are not enough?

Alexa: There is Norkem Park and so where are all these kids going to go?

Grace: I understand. I just want to assure you that, like I said, we have a town planner working on this project. This project is not going to be approved if the town planning guidelines feel that there are not enough schools, not enough clinics and the issue of roads I need to reengage with the Traffic Engineer, taking into consideration what you just said. Any other concerns? Yes, Tracy.

Tracy: Look at the close proximity in line with the dead end street, look how close that is to the wetland and even though we have an outlet that is going to be there, there is only a certain region that it is going to reach which will allow the water to overflow and into the stream if there is major flooding and things like that, that water will rise too quickly and we will not be able to maintain the capacity, it can only handle a certain capacity. If you look, you can see that this is already a wetland here. What are you going to do?

Grace: The road is one of the reasons why we are applying for a water use license because that road is within the 332m buffer of the water course. We are going to have that as the preferred and this as the alternative. We are going to motivate both and then we will see what the department approves but as far as the flooding, it's not going to be flooded because we will now have an outlet. The engineers did assure us that the fact that we have an outlet, they are going to regulate how much water that pond is going to have at a given time. We will not have flooding because of the outlets that have been made.

Tracy: Are they going to put in a 50mm pump and all of a sudden we have a surge of water, can we have a guarantee that the size of the pump being installed is sufficient?

Grace: That is the whole purpose of the project and if it does not address that then the whole project was in vain. The purpose of the project is to regulate the amount of water that is going to be in the water pond without drying out the pond because it is now a habitat. If you notice, there are a lot of birds there. And that is the whole purpose, all the water is going to be regulated.

Alexa: I used to see bull frogs in my garden I used to be able to open the back door and the trees looked like they were covered in red flowers and it now you do not see them anymore.

Andre Du Plessis: Can I ask a general question from the neighbours around here, have you seen bull frogs anywhere around this area?

Alexa: Not in years. We used to get a brush to get them off the road.

Grace: There was an Aquatic Specialist and the specialist said there are no Bull frogs.

Andre Du Plessis: Does anyone have evidence of Bull frogs here recently? Does anyone have photographs? A Bull frog is an endangered specie so if there are Bull frogs in the area, because they migrate.

Alexa: It has been 10years since I last saw one in my garden.

Andre Du Plessis: If there are Bull frogs in the area they need to be protected. I will discuss that with the community and the Ward community at the end of the meeting.

Grace: I'm going to send you the specialist' info but an Aquatic Study was done but they did not see any.

Alexa: We are only starting now to see a relief from this lovely new road they have put here, and it does not take you more than 40minutes. If I have to leave home 40mins earlier, it's ridiculous.

Grace: The issue of the traffic has nothing to do with whether we have access here or access there. You are saying having 40units here will increase traffic. In all honesty, my client and I, we are the wrong people to address this issue to, that is for the local municipality, your Ward counsellor. Any other issues?

Alexa: Where are the construction workers going to go for toilets? If they become smelly, they will go anywhere, and it is going to be a health hazard

Grace: We are going to have temporary toilets

Alexa: Why does it have to be that volume(40units), why can it not be single units? I know you say you have water outlets, but I have seen that that water goes right up to the church, so then the church has to close because the church is flooded, it comes up all the way.

Grace: That is the purpose of the whole project. I have contacts and if anyone wants to get first hand information about that problem being addressed. I have had a meeting with Ekhurhuleni and meetings with engineers and I am in contact with them. That problem is going to be addressed otherwise it is going to be a waste of millions of dollars by the Ekhurhuleni if the problems we currently have are not addressed, so it is going to be addressed.

Tracy Butler: They have put that in the press release and that there is a project undergoing but it is only phase 1 at this stage and it is only to so the pipe-jacking of the road. It is still in its early stages. I will liase with the engineers as well. I just want a guarantee from them too that that part will be able to handle large volumes of water because they once built a very large channel but still people had flooding, so we need to be 100% certain.

Grace: There is a reservoir, you can't see it from here, so it will go straight to that reservoir. This pond is not going to be dried up, we are just reducing the amount of water because already this is a rich ecosystem, I'm sure you have notices the amount of birds attracted to this area. It is just a matter of regulating the amount of water so that we don't have flooding and that is not going to chase away the species you have.

Vigilio: If you build how far off are you going?

Jaco Joubert: As far as the complex next door

Grace: I only have the registration forms. Can I ask please to fill in my register so that I can keep you all up-to-date about the project. Are there any other

concerns? I just want you to assure the community that the Ward Councillors know that GDARD, the deciding authority take your comments seriously so there is no way that we are going to sweep anything under the rag. We will make sure that we address those issues and you will see a Draft Report that I am going to circulate, I will make one available to Tracy, the library and if anyone wants electronic copies, I will forward them to you so that you can see how we will have addressed your concerns, but the department takes your comments very seriously and the project is not going to be approved if the department feels that we have not addressed the concerns to the best of our ability.

- John: Some people do not have access to emails or even the hard copy at the library.
- Tracy Butler: I did give one to the lady at Kempton Express, we will try to get a comprehensive piece in the paper so that you all can see where we are and terms of progress and also pamphlets
- Alexa: If you are going to bring in more people with high density housing we don't even have a big enough police force for the number of residents we have at the moment. My daughter tried to contact them because there was a problem at my house a couple of weeks ago and both cars were out and even if there was a problem and we were held at knife point in December, it was just too bad because the cars were out, so how can you bring more people in to a police force that already can't help now. The amount of crime and the number of calls that there are in the area will just increase
- Tracy Butler: We sent petitions asking for much bigger one, but we don't have any feedback yet
- Grace: May you please fill in your information on our register so that we can quickly update you about the project. We are only obligated to notify those on our register because you are basically saying you want to be involved in the project. Thank you very much for your time and comments and as soon as the draft is available, I will make it available to everyone, but I would like to email you the specialist studies today so that you can also go through them.
- Morris Nkubone: I am in support of this development and I reside just opposite this open space. It s security risk and I have had to up my security because of this open space. I would like to see development in this open space.

There being no other business, meeting adjourned at 18:50