



Milnerton Ridge Ratepayers Association Chairman's Report 2015

12 Nov 2015

Introduction

The Milnerton Ridge Ratepayers Association (MRRA) is a voluntary organisation formed by residents out of and for the concern of our suburb.

Our committee members are Mr Wolsley Jacobson, Mr Trevor Ludwig, Mrs Lindsay Ludwig, Mrs Jacqui Pember, Mrs Andree Lombard, Mr Keith Southgate and Mr Rolf Spaeth, the chairman. I wish to thank all the committee members for their work and support during the past year.

The main aim of the MRRA is the preservation and promotion of a high standard of residential living.

The committee members are all residents of Milnerton Ridge and therefore all have the same concerns and interests as most residents. The MRRA takes up the issues at hand with the relevant authorities, and in most cases, these are resolved successfully. Addressing of issues of concern or implementation of improvements does however hinge on the availability of Council funds in the cases where action from the Council is required.

Milnerton Ridge comprises a total of 469 residential properties, and 3 complexes, viz. Bay Ridge, Greyville Square and Aintree Mews. Of this total we have approximately 45% on our e-mail database. The percentage of properties which are let is not known.

The minutes of MRRA meetings are distributed at all residents on the combined MRRA and MRNW database. Residents are urged to make their e-mail addresses available for these and other communications.

MRRA Representation on other bodies

The MRRA is represented on various bodies which administer areas adjoining Milnerton Ridge such as the Protected Areas Advisory Committee for the Rietvlei Nature reserve and the Milnerton Racecourse Environmental Management Committee.

The MRRA has direct representation on the Ward Committee for Ward 4 under which Milnerton Ridge falls. Ward 4 comprises of Milnerton Central, Milnerton

Ridge, Sunset Beach, Du Noon, Joe Slovo and Phoenix with a total of some 39,000 residences. Dr Joy McCarthy is the ward councilor for ward 4.

The MRRA is, together with the Milnerton Ridge Neighbourhood Watch, also on the Licence Plate Recognition (LPR) camera committee. This program, funded from ward allocations, aims to improve security in the greater northern area by monitoring cars by means of a large number of LPR cameras installed on the main routes into and out of the northern suburbs.

The MRRA is also a member of the Greater Cape Town Civic Association.

Safety and Security

This portfolio is being handled in its entirety by the Milnerton Ridge Neighbourhood Watch, which is doing an excellent job of addressing all safety and security issues in our suburb and the overall reduction in crime can be directly attributed to their efforts. We greatly appreciate the improvement in resident participation which the MRNW has achieved this past year. Particular mention must be made of the regular patrols undertaken by the MRNW members and the WhatsApp alert groups which give residents a greater awareness of unwanted activities in Milnerton Ridge.

The MRRA was instrumental in obtaining the permission by the Rietvlei management for MRNW vehicle patrols along the Milnerton Ridge side in the Rietvlei reserve.

All residents should attend the regular MRNW and CPF meetings to keep abreast of crime trends and efforts undertaken to curb crime.

The MRRA also wishes to express our thanks to both SAPS and Crime Watch for their efforts in making our suburb safer.

The influx of the bin pickers or trolley brigade on Sunday afternoons and on Mondays, our dustbin collection day, has been kept to reasonable numbers. There is no way of effectively controlling the trolley brigade, and residents are once again asked not to put their bins out on Sunday evenings so as to curtail the influx of these people on Sundays and spending the night somewhere in Milnerton Ridge. The initiative of our Neighbourhood Watch to put notices in the postboxes of people who put their dustbins out on Sunday evenings has shown positive results and the number of dustbins out on Sundays has steadily decreased.

The open servitude accesses from Milnerton Drive to the vlei area are still of concern to some residents. Unfortunately no short term solution to this problem is in sight.

Recycling Project

The recycling project undertaken by Gregory Player and the CleanC NGO will definitely lead to fewer trolley bin pickers as the number of residents subscribing

to recycling increases. The amount of recyclable material collected by CleanC is very substantial and will hopefully keep on increasing. Residents are encouraged to support the very reasonably priced recycling initiative.

Theo Marais park settlement

The small informal settlement at Theo Marais park is continuing to be of concern to residents. We have been assured by Council on numerous occasions that no additional persons will be allowed to settle there, but look forward to the ultimate solution when these people will be moved to more suitable housing at Wolwerivier. The expected dates when this should have happened have been shifted time and again. We continue to raise this matter at every possible occasion with the council.

It is with great concern that we note that bin pickers now park their trolleys at the Theo Marais fence on Koeberg Rd opposite Makro overnight and appear to sleep inside Theo Marais park. They damage and climb over the fence to gain access.

Roads and Traffic

The Bridle Way/Milnerton Drive intersection at the Paddocks shopping centre has finally been completed to an acceptable state. The 4-way stop is working well and residents have gotten used to the 4-way stop.

Our ongoing push for traffic calming measures on Milnerton Drive between Durbanville Crescent and the Lions club looked as if it was finally approved by Council and funds for speed humps were approved. The traffic department in their wisdom however put 3 additional speed humps in the section of Milnerton Drive between Clairwood Crescent and Gosforth Rd, a section which already contains 2 stop streets. This has substantially slowed down traffic in that section of Milnerton Drive.

It took concerted intervention by the MRRA and the assistance of our ward councilor get the desired speed humps in the section from Durbanville Close to the Lions club. This will allow the residents whose driveways are on this section of Milnerton Drive to safely enter and exit their properties.

Equini wall

The illegal high, unplastered wall at Equini is still receiving attention and the due processes which have to be followed to successfully complete this wall are hopefully nearing the end, with both council and Equini striving to bring this to a satisfactory conclusion.

Cape Radio Flyers club

The Cape Radio Flyers club lease came to an end in May 2014 and since then no flying has taken place. The club has lodged an objection to the original refusal by council, to date no final decision has been taken.

The Rietvlei reserve has been declared an Important Bird and Biodiversity Area (IBA), one of 23 in the Western Cape and 112 IBAs in South Africa, a fact which should preclude an extension of the Flyers club lease.

Rietvlei

The water quality in the vlei is of concern to residents, especially downstream at the mouth of the lagoon where recreational activities are undertaken. The council is in the process of channeling the storm water from Phoenix, Joe Slovo Park and Du Noon to the Potsdam waste water treatment plant for recycling before it flows into the vlei, thus contributing to a cleaner vlei at our doorstep.

An assessment of residential encroachment into the Rietvlei nature reserve at the Milnerton Ridge boundary was undertaken on behalf of the reserve management for a thesis by a Unisa student in July 2015. 32 residential properties with various types and degrees of encroachment were identified. Encroachment activities included waste disposal, yard extensions, recreation, reserve alteration and yard vegetation invasion. The Cape Flats Sand Fynbos fragile wetland ecosystem of the reserve as well as the critically endangered is severely threatened by this type of residential encroachment.

The reserve management has to date not indicated whether any or what type of intervention is planned to address this issue.

General

The overall appearance of Milnerton Ridge is unfortunately negatively affected by the poor state of the outside section of some properties. Residents are kindly asked to keep the verges outside of their properties neat and remove any rubbish accumulating due to wind and littering. Street cleaning by council is unfortunately done only sporadically and very seldom, a fact which will not change in the foreseeable future.

The Shell garage/Gallery complex entrance to Milnerton Ridge is still of major concern to us. Undesirable elements do congregate there, especially over weekends and after hours. The extended liquor store hours appear have added to this problem.

The appearance of the small park opposite the Shell garage has improved and our thanks go to the Neighbourhood Watch for their interaction with some of the homeless people in obtaining their assistance in keeping the area clear of rubbish.

The number of empty plots in Milnerton Ridge has decreased to only 5 plots due to 4 new houses being built in this year.

Some verges outside of properties are also in a sad state of neglect. While we appreciate that this land is council property, we nevertheless feel that every effort should be made by homeowners or residents to keep the outside of their properties neat and clean. Some street sweeping and weed control by Council has taken place this year.

AGM 2015

The 2015 Annual General Meeting was held on 10 November 2014 at the Lions Club in Milnerton Ridge.

The full committee as well as the ward councilor Dr Joy McCarthy and the Biodiversity Area manager Mr Koos Retief were present.

Only 13 residents attended. The date and time unfortunately clashed with the CPF AGM, thus possibly splitting the attendance.

I believe the very good information dissemination by the MRNW/MRRA newsletters, Facebook and Whatsapp to the residents is a contributor to the low attendance, albeit in a positive sense. The low attendance can also be indicative that residents do not feel that major problems exist in our suburb.

Mr Koos Retief, the Biodiversity Area Manager responsible for Rietvlei, gave an informative talk on the Rietvlei nature reserve and answered residents' questions pertaining to Rietvlei.

The presence of Dr Joy McCarthy is always welcome and vital as she does have up to date information regarding council issues. We wish to express our thanks to her for the support we have received from her in the past year.

A big thank you also to my fellow committee members for their ongoing support.

A special thanks also goes to the Lions club for allowing us to use their clubhouse for our AGM.

Conclusion

Thank you to all who have supported the Milnerton Ridge Ratepayers Association. This is your association and to maintain Milnerton Ridge at the desired standard, and to keep up or improve on our achievements we do require your support.

The Milnerton Ridge Ratepayers Association wishes all a joyous festive season and a happy, safe new year.

Rolf Spaeth
Chairman
Milnerton Ridge Ratepayers Association