



Klipriviersberg Sustainability Association

KLIPSA (KLIPRIVIERSBERG SUSTAINABILITY ASSOCIATION)

THIRD ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

TUESDAY 14 AUGUST 2012

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR 2011/2012

INTRODUCTION

It gives me great pleasure to present the Chairman's Report for the period of 2011 to 2012 at the Third Annual General Meeting of the KlipSA (Klipriviersberg Sustainability Association).

"It must be poignant Madam Speaker that the untold history of this city is found hidden in its Nature Reserves. That part of our past is tucked in the middle of these reserves that continue to preserve the biodiversity that nature offers us. These treasures of nature are home to Namaqua Rock Mouse, African Civet, Lesser Spotted Genet, Slender Mongoose, Black-headed Heron, Purple Heron, Little Egret, Cattle Egret, African Sacred Ibis, Bushveld-Bunkenveld vegetation type and others. May I add Madam Speaker that it is correct that we should fight for the preservation of our collective heritage including the Rhino, which is under threat of extinction." (Ref 1: City of Joburg Page 2)

These words were the in the opening paragraphs of the State of the City Address by the Executive Mayor of Johannesburg Metropolitan, Council Parks Tau, in March this year. He was describing the early settlements and communities and the growth and development of Johannesburg and made specific mention of the significance of the Klipriviersberg Nature Reserve area.

We would suggest that the recognition of the importance of our nature reserves and biodiversity is receiving attention at the highest level of decision-making and is an indication of a change in thinking and focus on which we need to capitalise.

OVER VIEW OF THE YEAR THAT HAS PASSED: OPPORTUNITY DEFINITION

The launch of KlipSA at our last AGM 23 August 2011 was a result of an extensive review and rethink of the role of our organisation in the sustainable future for the southern areas of Johannesburg. This year has been focused on identifying and defining the opportunities that the southern areas can offer to contribute to the economic and social development of the general area while protecting promoting and enhancing the natural assets and biodiversity that exists.

A key to the identifying and defining these opportunities has been the formulation of a future development vision for the general area. This has been germinated and nurtured through extensive participation and engagement with various organisations and authorities. In particular, our participation and role in the formulation of the Joburg Growth and Development Strategy for 2040 (GDS 2040) helped to crystallise this future sustainable development vision.

If one looks at the southern areas of Joburg there are large open areas located outside the urban development boundary. These are massive areas of environmental and biodiversity value offering unique opportunities but they are also open to extensive decimation and destruction. They are ripe for abuse through illegal uses and development of the land, illegal dumping and neglect. However, they are also ripe for development through formal and informal processes. Unless this development is correctly identified and guided we could lose the opportunity for ensuring that this area contributes in the best way to surrounding communities. We therefore felt it would be essential to establish a proactive approach to the future economic and social development of the area.

Initially this development thrust was promoted through SOJO Business and Tourism (SOJO) and development and economic policies which focused on using the unique characteristics found in the natural assets and biodiversity to encourage growth and development through tourism, recreation and associated activities and services. This resulted in the conceptualisation of the SOJO Tourism and Recreation Development Loop which was incorporated into the City's developmental frameworks and policies.

However there are still large open areas of land which were formerly the "food basket" for Johannesburg and which are still recognised as being rich agricultural potential areas. Unfortunately the traditional farming activities of cattle farming and maize growing have ceased and we understand a number of these large areas have been purchased by developers for future development. These areas are highly accessible to major transportation and logistics infrastructure and large numbers of unemployed people to the east in Tokoza and Kathlehong and Soweto and Orange Farm in the west. The idea is that these areas require development and investment stimulation which would result in the best value contribution to sustainable economic and social development which would be sympathetic and complimentary to the natural assets of the area.

During the Joburg GDS 2040 process and in response to essential needs which were identified in the southern areas of the City which included high levels of poverty and unemployment and the desperate need for food security, ideas were germinated to reintroduce agricultural activities as a primary industrial sector. However these agricultural activities had to be different to those in the traditionally seen in the past.

It was essential that the agricultural activities should make extensive use of new technologies and ecologically based agricultural processes such as irrigation systems, hydroponics, organic farming and the use of tunnels and involve a wide variety of small farmers, cooperatives and major commercial farmers working collaboratively. This could in turn stimulate secondary industries which could include servicing and support industries, agriprocessing and logistics for the processing, packaging and transportation of produce.

We believe that it is essential to extend this concept into the areas outside Johannesburg to include the agricultural and smallholding areas that exist in the northern areas of Midvaal and southern areas of Ekurhuleni. It is our belief that the size and nature of the re-introduction of modern agricultural activities will help to provide food and produce for local, regional and even international markets and consumption. The focus however has to be on addressing local consumers' needs first.

In addition, there is a huge opportunity to integrate and incorporate tourism, ecotourism and also agri-tourism activities and opportunities which could be stimulated and developed. It has worked in

the Western Cape. With the right approach we believe it has huge opportunities and potential to work in these areas as well.

In collaboration with SOJO and iProp, a major landowner and developer in the southern areas of Johannesburg, KlipSA has been making extensive submissions to Joburg's GDS 2040 and more recently the associated review of the Integrated Development Plan 2012/2016 (IDP). These submissions have been recognised, referenced and quoted in the approved documents. In the recently approved IDP document it was noted that the *"issues raised will be addressed as part of the on-going implementation of City's plans and specific issues will form part of the refinement of the Spatial Development Framework, Spatial Economic Framework as well as the IDP"* (Ref 2: City of Joburg IDP: page 54).

Similarly, submissions and presentations have been made to the Gauteng Legislature and at a recent Economic Development Summit supporting the identified need for a growth in agricultural investment and development in the province.

In our submissions to the local and provincial authorities we have suggested that this area be identified as a future economic development zone known as the Klipriviersberg Economic and Ecosystem Development Zone (KEEDZ).

This future development vision has been gaining interest and support. The basic concepts for long-term sustainable social and economic development which will protect promote and enhance the extent of biodiversity and natural assets of the area are being recognised as a unique opportunity.

However, is essential that extensive investigations and research be undertaken to establish what the economic, social and environmental opportunities and benefits of this future development vision could be and the best interventions, technologies and practices that need to be used. Researchers at the University of Johannesburg have already initiated studies and research into the development vision and the opportunities for KEEDZ.

With the formulation and establishment of this future development vision, KlipSA believes that it will be able to confirm that it's role and function is as a facilitator and catalyst to work with other organisations and agencies in the government, private and community sectors to drive the sustainability of a matchless lifestyle which will be of benefit to local and surrounding communities. This will be realised in collaborative processes which will focus on the protection, promotion and enhancement of the biodiversity value of the southern areas of Joburg through the promotion of sustainable living and business and promoting new and appropriate social and economic development.

PORTFOLIOS AND ACTIVITIES

This year has been a period of both establishment and stabilisation by the Executive Committee members of KlipSA, assisted by additional members of the community and partners who have contributed substantial time and energy in the running of the different portfolios and activities. This has included:

- **Administration and Finance**

This committee is responsible for the financial and operational management and business of KlipSA and ensured that our administrative and financial records are in good order.

The number of members of the Conservancy has increased from 308 in July last year to 321 at the end of February 2012. The membership is drawn from a wide range of interests and areas and it is important that we continue encouraging people to become members and be included in our database to receive information about KlipSA and its activities.

The establishment of a regular income and revenue stream and resources for the KlipSA is important. At this stage we are still reliant on the donation we received from the Klipriviersberg Nature Reserve Association (KNRA) last year. With the establishment of what we want to achieve in the area and the initiation of specific projects we will need to continue with our quest for donations and sponsorships to fund and finance our activities and projects.

KlipSA received approval to be registered as a Non-Profit Organisation on 27 February 2012 (Registration No. 99 717 NPO). We are applying to also be registered as a Public Benefit Organisation.

The Committee has been preparing for the establishment of the Advisory Board required in terms of our Constitution. Prospective participants as associate and corporate members have been identified to provide a range of knowledge and experience to assist and guide the Association. These prospective members will be approached through the coming year to establish the Advisory Board and initiate meetings.

- **Biodiversity**

KlipSA's focus continues to ensure the integrity of the Klipriviersberg Nature Reserve (KNRA), and surrounding Klipriviersberg ridges and areas with their wide range of fauna and flora with a rich and valuable biodiversity and several "red data" species. In addition the Klip River its wetlands and the unique grasslands and open areas are also of critical importance.

We wish to recognise and acknowledge the achievements and growth in the activities, interest and visitors to the Reserve realised by the Klipriviersberg Nature Reserve Association (KNRA) under the leadership of its Chairman, Clem Kourie.

KlipSA was involved in the discussions regarding the proclamation of the KNR as a Nature Reserve in terms of current national biodiversity legislation. We are awaiting the final approval of the proclamation by the Gauteng Department of Agricultural and Rural Development.

The University of Johannesburg environmental management students have taken advantage of the "living laboratory" on their door step and undertaken research projects in the KNR. They are investigating a wide variety of fauna and flora and impacts of surrounding areas and communities relative to the Reserve.

In collaboration with national, provincial and local authorities and agencies KlipSA has initiated the preparation of an integrated management plan for the Klip River wetland area. This is to be a plan of action which will fix the water quality and quantity in the Klip River and the associated wetland areas.

Initial workshops were held and a team headed by Vanessa Vermaak is preparing a project plan and proposal detailing issues, ideas and opportunities for further investigation and research. This will be used to seek approval from the authorities and also to obtain funding for the project.

KlipSA also has representation and attends meetings of the Gauteng Wetland Forum and Klip River Catchment Forum at which issues relating to the administration, management and protection of these vital resources is discussed by national, provincial and local authorities and agencies community organisations and representatives.

- **Branding and marketing**

There is no specific strategy for branding and marketing due to time constraints and other priorities that KlipSA has to address. However, every opportunity is made at meetings, presentations and events to display the KlipSA banner and promote the interests and activities of the Association.

It is important to develop and implement a branding and marketing strategy for KlipSA. However, this will only be undertaken when we have additional capacity and resources.

- **Business integration**

The strategic partnership with SOJO Business and Tourism has grown into a significant component of KlipSA's activities. The growing integration and relationship between the two organisations has strengthened to provide a substantial voice for sustainable and appropriate economic and social development which will protect promote and enhance the value of the biodiversity and natural assets. In this regard we acknowledge the support of the SOJO executives and directors chaired by Richard Bennet.

The key projects which have been developed and initiated in partnership with SOJO include:

- **Tourism promotion**
To support and promote economic and social development through the advancement of tourism, conferencing, sports and recreation is the key focus of SOJO which is supported by KlipSA wherever possible. Partnerships are being established with provincial and local tourism agencies and a working relationship and association is being established with University of Johannesburg School for Tourism and Hospitality Management to help with the development of tourism and assist with the education of students.
- **Urban management**
Another key area of SOJO is to address urban management issues to ensure that business has a suitable environment for investment and growth. Discussions are currently underway with SOJO and other community and business organisations for the establishment of an urban management interface with Region F of the Joburg City Council with the aim being focused and effective delivery of services and facilities in all parts of Region F outside the Inner City. This will not only address current problems regarding service delivery but also the promotion of economic and social growth and development through business investment and development.
- **Green Business Platform**
In a partnership with SOJO, Caxton Community Newspapers and Rand Water the Green Business Platform was launched earlier this year. The purpose of the monthly meetings and presentations is to introduce small businesses to sustainable business practices and share environmental best practice to improve business profitability.

Topics have included global warming and impacts on business, waste and energy management and recycling. Samantha Derham is acknowledged for the work and effort she has put into the planning and running of the meetings. There has been good interest and support for these monthly events.

- Klipriviersberg Drive Biodiversity Corridor
This involves the design and development of a biodiversity corridor along Kliprivier Drive from Booyens through to Swartkoppies Road in partnership with SOJO, Joburg City Parks and Thaba ya Batswana. The opportunity to establish a Greenway to improve the aesthetic qualities of this entrance to the city from the South is the basis of a long term plan to establish a corridor of suitable vegetation and biodiversity mix with appropriate management and maintenance programs. A tremendous amount of work into the evaluation of the area and design of the corridor is being undertaken by Morné Brits. This project will also form the basis of annual activities for Arbor Week for a number of years.
- Rosettenville Embedded Urban Design Project
A partnership is being established with the School of Architecture and Planning of the University of the Witwatersrand and Joburg Council to embed students in a city studio for a couple of years to undertake research and design projects to address urban development, economic and social problems. The focus of the project will be Main street area and the Dias Mall but will consider the wider area including Wemmer Pan and Pioneer Park.

- **Development Integration**

The proactive integration and promotion of appropriate sustainable economic and social investment and development is a high priority for KlipSA. The Development Integration Team (DIT) comprises volunteers from residents, business and professionals in architecture, environmental sciences, engineering and urban planning and is kindly hosted every month by Thaba ya Batswana.

A key focus of the past year has been the preparation and submission of contributions to local and provincial strategies, planning and policy formulation. As noted above, this has involved submissions to the Joburg GDS 2040 and Joburg IDP 2012/16 which were recognised, acknowledged and referenced. These submissions are of importance in advancing the principles and framework for development in the area and will be refined in the coming year through the metropolitan and regional spatial and economic development frameworks and policies. In addition, contributions to environmental management frameworks and policies will also be addressed. Copies of all the submissions that have been made are available on the KlipSA website.

Further discussions with Midvaal and Ekurhuleni are required and will be addressed in the coming year to ensure these ideas and concepts for future development are incorporated in their respective growth and development strategies and spatial frameworks.

The Team has prepared comments and participated in discussions with private developers and the Joburg City Council regarding development and environmental applications. These have included applications for developments for a variety of uses including residential, a boutique hotel, a major shopping centre and a mixed commercial and residential development.

The focus of the Team is not to stop development but to try and guide and mould developments to be appropriate and support KlipSA's primary aim of protecting, promoting and enhancing the value of the natural assets. Generally our inputs and comments have been acknowledged and positively received as adding value to the development applications.

The Team is also encouraging developers to adopt and participate in the Biodiversity Stewardship programme. Currently there is one developer looking to make an application, another considering the establishment of a conservancy and a third looking at different options in this regard.

The design and development of an environmental and educational resource centre for the Klipriviersberg area has been initiated. A preliminary scoping workshop was held at the end of last year with a project team headed by George Flack-Davison. A project proposal is being prepared which will be used to attract resources and investment.

This centre will be used to store and share knowledge and information about the area that has been gained through various research projects as well as development plans and applications. It is anticipated that it could include libraries, training and conference facilities and will be the subject and product of a process involving various interested parties and stakeholders.

Such a centre is a vital facility to promote environmental and sustainability education and skills development programmes for all sectors in the community and will be an attractive opportunity for support and sponsorship.

- **Events and activities**

Events and functions in the past year have been undertaken in conjunction with SOJO and have included talks on the activities of the FreeMe Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre by Margi Brocklehurst in May at which all proceeds of the event were donated to Free Me; plastics and recycling by the SA Plastics Federation at Leeways in September and the year-end function in November at which Ernest Seamark provided an interesting journey and insight into his experiences with bats.

A partnership with the Gauteng chapter of The Natural Step to co-host Restorative Breakfast meetings on a quarterly basis has been established and the monthly breakfast events are held every third month and hosted by Rietvlei Farm. At these events presentations are given on various topics relating to sustainability environmental issues.

- **Public relations and publicity**

KlipSA has established strong working relationships with local community newspapers produced by Tame Times and Caxton Community Newspapers. We acknowledge and thank both publications for their continued support and interest in what KlipSA is trying to achieve.

The KlipSA website and social media including Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn have continued to reach members and those interested in its activities. The website is being used to provide information and references regarding sustainability as well as urban and environmental development policies. Due to the dynamic and interactive nature of digital

platforms and communications it is important that we continue and increase our presence and work using these different platforms to reach a wider range of people.

Presentations have been given to a variety of audiences and interest groups including The Natural Step Restorative Breakfast, St Andrew's Men's Breakfast, NACSSA AGM and UJ Tourism and Hospitality students.

It is important that the Conservancy makes better use of the media and public relations opportunities to inform local and surrounding communities about its activities and in particular to increase awareness regarding sustainable urban living and business practices.

- **Stakeholders**

KlipSA continues to promote the use of a "network of networks" to work with other organisations to be able to share information through their respective databases of members and interested people.

Strategic relationships with SOJO and University of Johannesburg have developed further as has been noted in the activities above.

The National Association of Conservancies/Stewardship in South Africa (NACSSA) has accepted KlipSA as an associate member and continues to work closely with that organisation and the Gauteng Conservancy and Stewardship Association.

KlipSA needs to develop a more active partnership and relationship with the provincial and local authorities particularly towards realising the development vision for the area. It is important to be able to establish working partnerships regarding the various aspects of protecting, promoting and enhancing the natural assets of the area and ensuring appropriate economic and social development to meet the needs of local and surrounding communities.

- **Sustainable Urban Living**

The Sustainable Urban Living team aims to increase the awareness, interest and practice of sustainable living practices in the local residential community.

Through the year talks on the recycling of plastics and energy management in homes have been held and a list of recycling sites in the general area was prepared and made available on the KlipSA website.

As the Chairman of KlipSA, I would like to note my appreciation and gratitude to all the members of the various teams and committees and acknowledge their contribution to what has been achieved through this year. In particular, the members of the Executive Committee who have willingly contributed their time on a regular basis to provide their support, knowledge and expertise towards what has been accomplished this year.

THE YEAR AHEAD

As a voluntary organisation KlipSA is totally dependent on the willingness of people with an interest and passion in the area and its unique and special qualities to give of their time, energy, expertise and wisdom. The few volunteers that participate actively in KlipSA and its activities are under strain

to respond to everything that needs to be done and to respond to the demands being placed on the organisation.

KlipSA is developing into a credible organisation which is being approached to contribute and become involved in a number of economic, social and environmental initiatives and processes. Unfortunately we do not have the people and resources to respond and participate in all of these and will need to keep focused on a few key priority areas and build on the portfolios and activities noted above.

With additional volunteers, resources and sponsorship KlipSA has the potential to become a meaningful player and agent in realising sustainable economic and social development for the long-term future growth and development of Johannesburg and surrounding municipal areas which will protect promote and enhance the natural assets of the area. Until such time, the volunteers involved in KlipSA will continue to participate to the best of their ability.

It is hoped that through the establishment of the Advisory Board appropriate expertise and guidance will be realised to assist in ensuring the right priorities are addressed.

It is important that KlipSA continues to be proactive and positive towards sharing information and knowledge regarding sustainability and the benefits that can be achieved in the short, medium and long-term for the area's residents and businesses.

What we have in the southern areas of Johannesburg continues to be acknowledged and recognised as being absolutely special and unique. It is for this reason that we all need to become more knowledgeable and understanding of our environment and its sensitivities and to be able to look after and enhance what we treasure.

"It should be noted that the term "sustainability" can be applied not only to environmental concerns but also to economic viability that stems from long-term thinking. Environmental and economic sustainability are highly connected concepts -- a city with environmental problems such as water shortages or intense air pollution will not be able to attract the type of residents or businesses that it needs for sustainable economic growth. Talented professionals gravitate to sustainable cities -- with green space, clean air and water, good mass transit system and so on -- and businesses that want those professionals know where to find them" (Ref 3: Dan Probst)

KlipSA looks forward to your participation and working with everyone towards realising **SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH COLLABORATION.**



Andrew Barker
Chairman
Tuesday, 14 August 2012

References:

1. City of Johannesburg: State of the City Address by the Executive Mayor of the City of Johannesburg, Councillor Mpho Parks Tau, Council Chamber, Metro Centre, Braamfontein - Johannesburg. 25 March 2012
2. City of Johannesburg: Committing to a Promising Future: A World Class African City That Is Resilient, Sustainable and Liveable: City of Johannesburg Integrated Development Plan 2012/16.
3. Dan Probst: Why London's green Olympics might be outpaced in 2016; Greenbiz; Published August 07, 2012; <http://www.greenbiz.com/news/2012/08/07/green-olympics-outpaced-2016>