



Klipriviersberg Sustainability Association

KLIPSA (KLIPRIVIERSBERG SUSTAINABILITY ASSOCIATION)

FOURTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

TUESDAY 27 AUGUST 2013

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR 2012/2013

INTRODUCTION

It gives me great pleasure to present the Chairman's Report for the period of 2012 to 20123 at the Fourth Annual General Meeting of KlipSA (Klipriviersberg Sustainability Association).

At the outset of this annual review we are happy to share with you that the recognition of the importance of our Klipriviersberg Nature Reserve and the value of the biodiversity in the southern areas of Johannesburg is gaining more attention and interest. While the process and interactions have been slow and frustrating on a number of fronts the progress has been positive as we continue to receive affirmations of what we are endeavouring to achieve.

OVER VIEW OF THE YEAR THAT HAS PASSED: CONSOLIDATION AND FOCUS

Following the establishment of the proactive development approach and vision for the southern areas of Johannesburg, the Executive Committee undertook a review of the numerous initiatives and projects which had been identified. It was decided to rationalise the wide selection we had to be able to focus on a few key portfolios. This has been brought about by the limited resources that we have available and people who are willing to give of their time and energy through their passion for the area and its qualities.

As a result number of projects have been shelved or downscaled until such time as additional resources can be secured.

The primary focus has been the development and promotion of Klipriviersberg Economic and Ecosystem Development Zone (KEEDZ) to guide and realise appropriate economic and social development to protect promote and enhance the natural biodiversity and resources. The Klipriviersberg Nature Reserve remains our prime focus through the initiatives that we have been working on for the surrounding areas. Through the year on-going interaction with local, provincial and national authorities and agencies, business representatives, community organisations and residents in the area has led to strength and support for what we are trying to achieve through this proactive approach to development.

With regard to the authorities, while we are receiving interest and support from all political and official levels, the realisation and delivery of projects and involvement in processes of engagement has often been frustrating for a wide variety of reasons. There are however areas of progress and involvement and we are seeing moves to amend strategies and policies which we will continue to encourage and support. We will continue to work in close collaboration with the authorities as they are a key partner in ensuring the right enabling environment is created for business to be able to focus on its business and for community needs to be addressed.

Business opportunities in the KEEDZ initiatives and projects are becoming more evident with the result of a growing interest from business to become involved. The growth in business recognising the importance of sustainability to address social and environmental issues and the opportunities to do so through our projects and initiatives should see greater investment and participation by business. We will be very happy to incorporate any business investment and participation into our activities and operations wherever possible with a view to ensuring suitable sustainable and triple bottom line returns.

The local communities and residents in the area are turning to KlipSA in a number of ways and recognising the role we are taking in developing a unique lifestyle led by the opportunities offered through the environment and value of the biodiversity. However this lifestyle has to benefit all sectors of our society and communities inside and around the area. It will be important for us to bring more communities and residential groupings into our projects and initiatives as they develop and are implemented.

KlipSA has continued to be a catalyst for effective and productive collaboration between the various sectors with the focus on realising sustainable social and economic development led by the environmental and biodiversity value opportunities.

PORTFOLIOS AND ACTIVITIES

As mentioned above, the Executive Committee members reviewed the various activities and initiatives and created a series of focused portfolios. With the assistance of additional members and partners of the business and residential communities substantial money, time and energy has been invested in KlipSA work through the year and the running of the different portfolios and activities. This has included:

- **Sustainable Business**

The strategic partnership with SOJO Business and Tourism continues to strengthen with SOJO focusing on ensuring an appropriate environment for business to do business while KlipSA focuses on the sustainability dimension of business and its environment. We would like to recognise and thank the SOJO executives and directors, chaired by Richard Bennet of iProp, for their continued support and interest in KlipSA and its activities. We would also like to acknowledge energy and effort of SOJO CEO Nicky Vakaloudis in the various initiatives and projects.

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

- Agricultural sector promotion

Of importance in the past year is the growth and development of the ideas and relationships for the establishment of a future organic based and sustainability driven agricultural economic sector for the southern areas of Johannesburg and Ekurhuleni

and northern areas of Midvaal. The establishment of an "Agritropolis" with the associated value chains provides a new economic impetus for the region to address unemployment, poverty and inequality. Of primary focus would be to address food security in surrounding low income areas through carefully coordinated and integrated agricultural and farming projects involving small farmers, co-operatives and major retail and logistics businesses

Associated with this is the promotion and support for the planning and development of associated industries and services and to invest in infrastructure to attract labour oriented industrial and commercial development servicing the agricultural, and tourism activities. This would include related agricultural goods and services, agro-processing and packaging, logistics for transportation, storage and warehousing.

Preliminary concepts and ideas have been accepted and are being developed through building partnerships with authorities and businesses. Funding and investment for identified projects is also being sought.

- Tourism promotion

In line with the recognition of the tourism opportunities in the region, KlipSA has incorporated and integrated the tourism value chain as an important component of future agricultural economic development. Opportunities exist for focusing on responsible tourism and hospitality products and services being promoted through ecotourism and ecotourism.

KlipSA continues to support SOJO in promoting economic and social development through the advancement of the existing tourism, conferencing, sports and recreation opportunities. Partnerships continue to be established with national, provincial and local tourism agencies to develop projects and initiatives for the area based on the environmental and biodiversity opportunities.

- Green Business Platform

In a partnership with SOJO, Thaba Ya Batswana, Caxton Community Newspapers and Rand Water the Green Business Platform has continued through the year with Thaba Ya Batswana now hosting the events. A wide range of topics have been covered for business owners including insights into waste management, environmental legal aspects, corporate human capital wellness, water conservation, resource efficiency in cleaner production, environmental best practice in hospitality industry, governance and entrepreneurship, measurement and reporting.

The number of attendees has been disappointing and steps are being taken for the wider promotion and exposure of the events which are proving to be of value to those who have attended. With additional resources the opportunity exists to expand the outreach to grow participation and involvement and to possibly initiate a training and development network for business people.

- Urban management

Establishment of a Regional Interface for focused and effective delivery of services and facilities in all parts of Region F outside the Inner City was initiated with SOJO and other community and business organisations last year. The initiative was

endorsed by MMC Ros Greeff and senior officials with a view to further engagement, which has unfortunately not taken place.

The Regional Interface 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 which will take into account environmental opportunities and considerations.

- Rosettenville Embedded Urban Design Project

The partnership 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 has been initiated. Success is being seen in the outcomes of the research and design projects to address urban development, economic and social problems to upgrade and rejuvenate the degenerating area and surrounding communities.

Incorporated into this project is the implementation of the Wemmer Pan and Pioneers Park Urban Development Framework which has been approved by the City but unfortunately no effort for implementation has been made. It is intended that the student project will stimulate upgrading of the open space area.

- **Sustainable Urban Living**

The Sustainable Urban Living Team, under the leadership of Samantha Derham, have become more active with energetic monthly meetings reviewing and preparing regular talks relating to sustainability in the home environment which have been organised for most of the months of the last year. Attendance at events has been consistently around more than 30 and up to 55 people.

The talks are held at the Entrance Precinct on the second Wednesday of the month and are open to the general public and promoted through the local press. Topics have included the impact of every day chemicals on our lives, the meaning of sustainability, genetically modified foods, water harvesting, and sustainable gardening.

- **Sustainable Urban Development**

The Sustainable Urban Development Team has met on a monthly basis through the year at Thaba Ya Batswana. The Team considers how to realise proactive integration and promotion of appropriate sustainable economic and social investment and development which will protect promote and enhance the natural assets and biodiversity value of the area.

The focus of the work of the Team includes the following:

- Urban Development

The Team has continued to make submissions and participate in stakeholder discussions and meetings with iProp and SOJO on developmental strategies and policies for local municipalities and provincial authorities. This has included municipal integrated development plans, land-use and transportation development frameworks, strategies and policies.

The focus of the submissions and discussions has been to promote KEEDZ and the protection of the biodiversity and environmental qualities of the area. In recent engagements with the municipal authorities the importance of recognising the urban development boundary and the value of the biodiversity is being accepted with a review of strategies and policies being undertaken. Copies of the submissions that have been made are available on the KlipSA website.

Unfortunately, the engagement with provincial authorities and agencies has not been as successful. Whilst the provincial policies and strategies for land use and transportation would support the KEEDZ initiative we believe that greater recognition needs to be given to the opportunities this approach will bring to the area.

The Team has continued to review and comment on town planning and environmental authorisation applications. In two particular cases, being the proposed development of a regional shopping centre in the Aspen Nature Estate and the proposed Stone Rivers Arch for a lifestyle centre on land owned by Thaba Ya Batswana, extensive discussions and negotiations have taken place with the developers and professional teams. Other developments and proposals have included residential development and have a mining prospecting application. The Team continues to encourage developers to adopt and participate in the Biodiversity Stewardship programme.

Generally the inputs and comments from KlipSA have been acknowledged, positively received and accommodated wherever possible as they have added value to the future development. Where agreement has not been reached KlipSA has requested its concerns to be recorded and placed before the authorities as part of the application documentation.

To support the development approach being proposed the Team is eager to secure resources to expand its professional services and support base to prepare environmental, spatial and economic development frameworks and policies for the area and to provide additional professional services and support for developers and investors.

- Biodiversity Management

KlipSA's focus continues to ensure the integrity of the Klipriviersberg Nature Reserve (KNRA) and the 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 continue 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 past and present Chairmen Clem Kourie and Roy Harris respectively.

Projects and initiatives regarding biodiversity and environmental management include:

- **KUBiC - Kliprivier Drive Biodiversity Corridor**

KUBiC was launched on 31 October 2012 as a “greenway” along 12 km of the Kliprivier Drive by designing, planting, managing and maintaining a biodiversity corridor of appropriate species of vegetation. In addition, the integration of public and non-motorised transport services and facilities will add further value for the many users.

The KUBiC project fits in well with and supports the ‘Corridors of Freedom’ initiative recently announced by the Executive Mayor of Johannesburg, Councillor Mpho Parks Tau. These corridors are designed to change the urban settlement pattern of the City by promoting densification and linking areas of employment and residents.

The partners for this exciting and unique project include SOJO, Thaba Ya Batswana, Howden, Kironia, Aspen Nature Estate, Water Wise, and Joburg Parks and Zoo and a team has been established headed by Reuben Louw of Thaba Ya Batswana. A framework is being developed to coordinate the many public, private and community stakeholders in the development, management and maintenance of the corridor.

- **Wetland and catchment forums**

KlipSA participates in 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.

- **Klip River Wetland Integrated Management Plan**

This is to be a plan of action which will address the water quality and quantity in the Klip River and the associated wetland areas. Following initial workshops a project plan and proposal detailing issues, ideas and opportunities for further investigation and research is being prepared by Vanessa Vermaak. The project plan and proposal will be used to attract resources and financial support.

- **Klipriviersberg Environmental and Education Resource Centre**

The design and development of an environmental and educational resource centre for the Klipriviersberg area was initiated last year. Following a preliminary scoping workshop a project team headed by George Flack-Davison is preparing a project proposal. This will be used to attract resources and investment and will be an attractive opportunity for financial support and sponsorship.

- **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. These aspects of KlipSA were extremely well-managed by Sue Edwards who unfortunately tendered her resignation as Secretary/Treasurer of the Executive Committee with effect from

the end of February 2013. Sue's departure from KlipSA is a great loss as she had established and maintained a sound financial and administrative basis for the organisation. We thank Sue, and her husband Chris, for their enormous contribution and support to the establishment of KlipSA.

During the year Samantha Derham also resigned from the Executive Committee but has maintained an interest and involvement through her leadership of the Sustainable Urban Living Team. This left the Executive Committee comprising myself as Chairman, Clem Kourie as Vice-Chairman and Nicky Vakaloudis and Reuben Louw as members. The Executive Committee has co-opted two new members, Sandra Andrew to assist with the financial aspects and Carla Pexirra to assist with administration and event management.

The number of members of the Conservancy has increased from 321 in February 2012 to 327 at the end of February 2013. Increasing the number of members is an area which requires greater attention as and when more resources are available.

The establishment of a regular income and revenue stream and resources for KlipSA continues to be a priority. While donations and sponsorships will always be welcome it is the intention of the Executive Committee to ensure that projects and initiatives become self-funding.

The application to be registered as a Public Benefit Organisation has been delayed and is being finalised.

The establishment of the Advisory Board and the strategic relationship with the University of Johannesburg were put on hold due to the lack of resources and will be resuscitated when resources become available.

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.

APPRECIATION

As the Chairman of KlipSA, I would like to note my appreciation and gratitude to all the members of the 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.

We would also like to express our sincere appreciation to members of the community who continue to support KlipSA and show an interest in the projects and initiatives through their participation in the various teams and committees and attendance at events.

We also receive tremendous support and exposure through the local press and record our thanks to management and staff of tameTimes and Caxton's Comaro Chronicle, Southern Courier and Alberton Record.

We are also very grateful to venues and facilities who regularly host our meetings and events including St Andrew's Anglican Church, Thaba Ya Batswana and Joburg City Parks and Zoo for the Entrance Precinct.

THE YEAR AHEAD

As I stated last year, 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 establishing itself as 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. This growth and development will protect promote and enhance the natural assets and biodiversity value of the area. Until such time, the volunteers involved in KlipSA will continue to participate to the best of their ability.

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.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Barker', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Andrew Barker
Chairman
Tuesday, 27 August 2013