

A wake-up call!

At its last meeting the CRA executive expressed concern that its strong position was under threat. Why should this be, you ask, when its finances are in exceptionally good health and the Association has gained a reputation for its proactive stance, to the advantage of all who live in our area?

The answer is that the Association is critically short of that most valuable of commodities – people power. Two long-serving members of the Executive (one of whom has been involved for 15 years) are considering stepping down. The tireless chairman has more than once appealed to our community for a replacement, notwithstanding that in terms of the CRA constitution his term should have expired after three years.

Why is local representation important?

Possibly one of the most compelling reasons is that the Wards for which elected Councillors have responsibility are now very large. Without area representation or, in current parlance, “grass roots participation”, not one single Councillor can hope to deal with every matter that an individual might raise. The value of an active residents’ association is that issues can be monitored, evaluated and dealt with in the most appropriate way possible.

There are many burning issues, as you all well know. These include:

- Haphazard property development. Do we want Craighall and Craighall Park to be a continuous row of townhouses?
- Road maintenance.
- Increasing traffic, including unchecked taxi usage and road-running through our suburbs.
- Crime and security. Yes, you can phone the City help line to report an out-of-order street light – but how far will you get on an individual basis talking through crime problems with your local police station?
- Environment. This is not only litter and the general appearance of our suburbs. In our case we have a stream running through our area. Can we nurture this asset on an individual basis?
- Communication. Knowledge is a form of power. As an individual can you hope to know about all that is happening in your area that might affect you, directly or indirectly?

These are among the compelling reasons which demonstrate that collective effort and input is likely to have more effect than many hundreds of individual actions.

These are also the reasons why the CRA cannot thrive and be a truly effective body if only a core group of residents are prepared to give their time and put effort into local affairs.

The challenge

It would be a sad, sad moment if, due to apathy, the CRA had to disband or curtail its activities to a bare minimum. Our 2006 challenge to you is – what can you do to ensure that this doesn’t happen? For over a year we have asked for residents to come forward to assist with the portfolios of town planning, environment, traffic and security... and the chairperson’s and secretary’s position. Make your mark! Leave a legacy that your children and others will thank you for.

Act today! Contact John Turpin at 011 325-4547 or email jrturpin@mweb.co.za.

A note from the Chairman

Dear Residents,

This time around I have to report a very hectic few months for your Association and the residents themselves.

My thanks to those residents who have volunteered to be part of our joint effort with the Parkview Police to patrol our two suburbs (including Hurlingham) where the resident as “the driver” is accompanied by police to apprehend potential criminals where necessary. This is a good example of community policing.

The Parkview Police, using Reservists, have recently conducted a series of roadblocks in Westminster Avenue. Police visibility continues to be a priority and this will continue for some time.

The increasing pressure on your Association requires us to come to you for further assistance so that we can complete the objectives that we all have in terms of security, traffic, environment and town planning. This subject is addressed fully in an accompanying column. Please note and react!

We continue to work to improve our suburbs so that we can live in an harmonious environment – but we need your help.

▶ Please diarise the date for the next **AGM – Wednesday 21 June.**

Best regards,
John Turpin, Chairman



Introducing our new Ward Councillor

In case you've missed it, Ian Ollis was elected in our Ward. Ian can be contacted at (011) 881-6016; fax (011) 884-2691; or email ianollis@lantic.net. His office is situated on the 4th floor, A Block, Region 3 Offices, West Street Sandown.

Ian says, “My policy for the first two months is going to be to work through the very many residents and ratepayers associations that are established in Ward 90. Based on their concerns I will establish priorities. I know that there are many areas of concern to residents including power outages, sewer spills, uncontrolled development, crime, the Gautrain etc. I want to get on top of the issues quite speedily and then advise residents on the best practice in terms of getting their issues resolved. Please contact your residents' association initially. I believe group effort with Council is far better than individual effort although I have already begun helping a few individual residents with their specific problems.”

Environmental affairs

- Things have moved quite slowly with finalising the action plan for the Braamfontein Spruit Forum but we are assured that the City Council's bureaucracy is close to finalising the matter. Reports Paulette Malcolm, 2006 should see discernable and sustained improvement in caring for our riverine parkland, a major step forward after five years of continued negotiation. Good news too that our former Councillor Judy Stockill has indicated that she will remain involved in environmental matters.
- Another ongoing project is dealing with the people who are living along the river. Through the City's M.E.S. and a social worker, these “residents” are being personally approached and informed of a variety of accommodation options that are now available elsewhere. A linked project, through Rotary, is that of skills training. This is an appeal for anyone who could provide a workshop area to contact Paulette.
- Thanks to the good rains the spruit area is actually in a state of renewal – the return of frogs indicates a huge



improvement in the river environment. It's a great time to enjoy this part of our suburb, not only to visit the regular River Market (*2nd Saturday of every month – next one 8 April*) but also to have a picnic on the banks. Just get down to Colourful Splendour nursery in Marlborough Avenue and park on the right hand side. Incidentally, some of the money received from being a winner in the *Bottle ke Botho* environmental awards has been put towards permanent benches in the vicinity. Also close by are the stables for the River Rangers horses: you are welcome to visit the stables and if you want to help the Rangers, even in a small way, let Paulette know.

- We are also pleased to report that business is coming forward to help with special projects in the river area. ADT, for example, is providing support and security for walks along the river.
- Yet another project is caring for feral cats. A large group exists near Giles Restaurant and is under threat with the development in progress at an adjacent property. A business has been approached for help.

There are among the projects where it would be great if residents could come forward to provide assistance for a specific project. Needed, for instance, are people who can be "eyes and ears" for matters ranging from missing manhole covers to leaking drains.

For more information contact Paulette Malcolm at (011) 787-3680, email malcolmj@global.co.za or Daphne Hanson (011) 442-6874.

Town Planning matters

As we have reported, our revised Land Development Objectives (LDO) are with the Council and we are awaiting comment from the various service departments. Our professional townplanner, Mr Craig Pretorius, acting on behalf of the CRA, continues to follow up the matter. The recent local elections possibly account for some of the delays but we hope that it won't be too long before we receive comment and be able to formally submit our "Community Submission" for land use applications and the future development of the suburbs.

In the meantime applications for subdivision and changes in land use continue. The CRA is applying the guidelines contained in the proposals talked about above in evaluating these and objections are submitted where appropriate. The most prevalent issue is the attempt by land owners in the suburbs of Craighall and Craighall Park to divide stands into too many subdivisions with the result that the minimum areas prescribed are then not achieved. Fortunately the Council appears to be upholding its policy of no more than 10 units per hectare in most instances and applicants are forced to amend their applications accordingly. The CRA is however still of the view that the Council is not yet taking seriously enough the objections based on the inadequacy of services in the area and the ability of these services to sustain continued densification.

Residents are again requested to be alert to advertisements relating to town planning issues in their immediate proximity and ensure that they object timeously if they wish to oppose the application. Late objections are not condoned. Be on the lookout for subdivisions that are smaller than the 1000 m² standard for Craighall and 900 m² to 1000 m² for Craighall Park. The 10% margin is applied for Craighall Park as stands are often not quite 2000 m² each. Very often the notices do not indicate the stand sizes. Do not hesitate to telephone the applicant or the applicant's agent to find out what these are. The contact number is always given on the

notice. Please also advise the CRA to ensure that we haven't missed a proposed development.

- The activities at Hacklebrooke Estate, where an "Event" company is the tenant, continue to impose unwanted disturbance on neighbouring residents when evening functions are held. Although the tenant has made some attempt to reduce these and to concentrate on daytime functions the only solution to the problem is their cessation. In any case the property does not have the town planning rights to conduct the current activity. This is a case where the current usage of the property is in anticipation of the rights being granted despite the fact that no hearing has been held to determine the merits of the rezoning application. The CRA has complained to the Illegal Usage Department of the Council.
- The establishment of two restaurants in the old "Davenport" building on the corner of Clarence and Lancaster has also created a major problem for neighbouring residents. The problem is in the form of noise made by their evening clientele, who are seated outdoors for dining, as well as the noise that is inevitably created by departing traffic. The building has inadequate parking for these operations and the pavement has been commandeered to provide street parking. This is hazardous for pedestrians and also passing traffic. The CRA is trying very hard to get the authorities to take appropriate action.
- The CRA met with the townplanner for the new proposed Spar development. Approximately 60 additional parking bays will be created on the property adjacent to Spar. The additional parking will not be available for use by patrons of the two restaurants opposite since the area will be gated and locked at night after Spar shuts. No bottle store is to be created, but they will continue to sell wine. The CRA has not lodged an objection.
- 73A Waterfall Avenue – the applicant has asked for higher density than allowed in an area reserved for single residential. This is the same issue as we have in Portland Avenue. Both developments have been objected to.

If residents have any town planning issues they wish the CRA to be involved with please contact us. The committee members responsible for town planning matters are Roland Wille at 011 788-1402, Mike Holgate at 011 788-5934 or Lee Whitfield at 011 788-9086.

▶ **Services in your area – cut and keep** for future reference.
(To advertise, contact Wendy McAllister 011 325-7165)

Salon Picardy

– top professional hairdressers, Anna and Renate –
We style men, women's and children's hair.

● 3 Albans Square, 357 Jan Smuts, Craighall Park.

● Tel: 011 787-8304 / 073 130-7687

Tuesday is pensioners' day (by appointment only)

 **dish** of the day

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away daily dishes on a pay for weight basis or choose from our frozen prepared meals – casseroles, lasagnes, curries, soups, desserts... or enjoy a fresh meal in our sit down venue. We also do dishes for your home and office entertaining. Email anthonys@dishoftheday.co.za if you want a weekly special update.

Open 09:00-19:00 weekdays, 09:00-14:30 Saturdays.

Lancaster Centre, Cnr Lancaster & Clarence Aves, Craighall Park. (011) 447-0037 / fax 447-0074