

The proposed establishment of Scott Estate & Baviaanskloof (SEB) as a Community Improvement District

Minutes of the Public Meeting held at Krondendal Primary School, 14 May 2019

Present:

Approx 150 residents and property owners of Scott Estate and Baviaanskloof; City of Cape Town CID representatives: Eddie Scott, Joepie Joubert and Runan Rossow; SEBCID steering committee: Helen Snell, Peter von Moltke, Fanie Malan, Gavin Alford, Alison Louw and Keith Cronwright; and Independent Chair: Brad Geysler.

1. The meeting was opened by the Chair at 7pm
2. The Chair welcomed all attendees, introduced himself and ran through the agenda.
3. Helen Snell introduced the Steering Committee, described how a CID is proposed and established, what the benefits are of living in a CID area and why a CID is being proposed for SEB.
4. Peter von Moltke revisited the results of the community survey which had first been presented at the public meeting held in August 2018.
5. Helen Snell presented the detailed business plan for SEBCID which had been published that day on the website www.sebcidhoutbay.org along with the accompanying budget and financial impact on residences in SEB.
6. Rod Panagos, Operations at Hout Bay Neighbourhood Watch contributed commentary on the official crime statistics for Hout Bay and data which has been compiled for SEB.
7. After the presentation the floor was opened to the floor. Key questions are summarised below:

Q1: What powers will the patrols that you've recommended have? Will they be armed, will they have powers of arrest? what are the powers of the public disorder teams, how will they be equipped to deal with one of our regular riots? Thirdly, where is it proposed to put gates

Helen Snell answered: The gates that we are proposing to install are at the top of Chilton Close and the top of Baviaanskloof Road. It is a weak point that has been identified in our boundary and we would benefit from increased security there. The powers of the patrol would be the typical patrol that you would see from a Deep Blue or an ADT – a standard response vehicle. The powers of the public disorder team, it's definitely a complex area. There's numerous pieces of legislation that we need to be mindful of there and it really comes down to selecting the right provider to provide that function because they need to be authorised to operate in conjunction with SAPS. HOWARD: It probably did but I'm a bit deaf so I'd rather you put it on the website.

Q2: I live in Fountain Drive. My question is – if I'm a supporter of this initiative but I'm unhappy with the budget, what can I do as an individual or as part of a group, do about that?

Helen Snell answered: Communicate concerns to the Steering Committee. The voting period extends till end Sept during which time the Committee is willing to engage in discussions with any residents who wish to have input on the budget.

Q3: What does the total number of incidents of crime in SEB in 2018 represent in terms of proportion of homes impacted?

Helen Snell answered: There's just under 480 ERVEN in the proposed area for the CID. Including the various gated complexes at the bottom end of Baviaanskloof Road there are another 150-160 apartments.

Q4: I would like to see alternative budgets with alternative figures. Why not develop at least 3 different budgets – 1 with 20 or 30 cameras, maybe 1 with 60 cameras and 1 with 120 cameras – and then we have choice of what we want and what might we want to pay.

Helen Snell answered: In terms of the whole security plan and the number of cameras, this is not something we have just devised ourselves, we spent a lot of time in consultation with individuals who know camera technology very well and who have worked for many, many years to establish how many cameras in a given area to provide protection, people who know the Hout Bay area well. But the budget has been devised entirely bottom up and therefore if we wanted to reduce the number of cameras and see the impact on the budget, that can be done easily.

Eddie Scott from CCT answered: We have another 40-odd communities within the greater Cape Town going through the same process that's been followed over here, there's extensive research that's being done and we have done various options in terms of affordability, sustainability and this budget meets the threshold that the City will allow in that respect. You won't get two or three options but you can influence the budget. So, in your specific case, you want less cameras, they reduce the cameras if that's the general consensus and adjust the budget accordingly. To have 2 or 3 or 4 different options is just not practical at all.

Q5: I think it's not the benefit of just reducing cameras, it's also affordability not just for the few but for everybody so I'm just saying don't hang on cameras as the only issue, there's other issues of affordability that he mentioned that we don't end-up driving away people that cannot afford, I was going to say, so that the 'can-haves' can move in.

Eddie Scott from CCT answered: When it comes to affordability, sustainability there's a threshold. Your contribution to this budget, ultimately would be based proportionally to the value of your property and there's a threshold of 25%. Very crudely put, if you pay R 100 rates, you won't pay more than R125 for the CID. In terms of that percentage, the average that we have amongst the 41 CIDs in the City runs at about 16%. Your percentage is way below the 25% in terms of affordability because we have to guard against that.

Q6: I just have a question about the really long-term plan, when you see these ratings daily just pop-up everywhere in Hout Bay and, at some the point, the crime is going to go back to where it was – so then we sit with a similar problem perhaps with even more determined and violent criminals.

The Chair answered: Your surrounding suburbs, Constantia and the entire Retreat valley as well as Camps Bay have already got established, very professional Neighbourhood Watches so , in fact, if anything, you're going to displace them right out of the area altogether.

Q7: The items that mostly were listed, alien vegetation and all the nice bits and pieces – to my mind the City should be providing all of that anyway and the big problem here is certainly not whether there's a 120 or 93 cameras, I think we're all going to be happy with improved crime detection, the problem is paying for it. So wouldn't the obvious solution be for the City to take R 500 per property out of our existing rates which seem to go God knows where and let us start the CID with that fund for the first 5 years.

Helen Snell answered: Bear in mind that the representatives from the City here tonight are representatives from the City Improvement District Team, thus they're not here to talk about what services are provided or how they are budgeted for. As I said, it is believed that only in the region of about 20% of what we pay for our rates today goes into our area because we do have to support other less well-off areas and that's simply the way the budget balances. The important point about the additional component that would be raised is 100% spent in our area and we control entirely how that's allocated.

Q8: Why not put gates up at the access roads from the Main Road to SEB?

Helen Snell answered: We're not in a position to gate-off public roads.

The Chair answered: I think you need to realise that once you establish a security estate, you don't just put a fence around it and say that's good. What happens is that you also take up the responsibility for all the services in that gated area. So, now you're going to paying for sewerage, water, electricity, repairs and maintenance to all those services which the council are no longer going to provide.

Q9: The payment linked to property values, will they be based on the CCT property values because in Ixia Street, the values make absolutely no sense whatsoever.

Helen Snell answered: Unfortunately, we have to work within the structure of the CID process and it is based on property values and those are the values as allocated by the CCT. Know that the values have been used for the calculation and the proposed values that have been communicated to all of you, that's the valuation that the budget is based on.

Q10: The overall issue here, the dominant one, is public security, safety. Everybody is worried about their lives in terms of this situation. We are one family that have done a lot of preparation. We've been working on the displacement theory that if we load our house up with cameras and beams, they'll go somewhere else. We have a superb security company who are up at our place in 2 minutes flat. My question: How will membership or participation in this, how would it enhance what we're doing already? How are you going to

communicate with a massive security setup around here, in terms of the Deep Blues, the ADTs, etc. How are you going to put the story together so that we, in our home, get something more for the R 400.

The Chair answered: You control your security up to the perimeter of your fence with your own security system. What this is going to do is to cover the areas that are not owned by any resident, they are the public areas. They're going to be able to monitor access into the area, you're going to be able to monitor people moving through the area, you're going to be able to deal with questionable situations very quickly with your response teams and with your monitoring – that's what makes the difference. So, you're now no longer in an isolated environment, you're now in a corporate environment where you are covering, not just your house and your garden, you're actually covering the entire area.

Q11: I like the idea of contributing to the EMS and making it more effective, a better response for the Bay, but does that mean that if we go for this, that Matthew and crowd are going to respond to SEB residents first because we've been nice and given them more money than other areas? Maybe this is a rhetorical question, the outdoor gym and the fencing program, the improvements to Union Park – you said earlier on you're going to put fencing up, that's the idea, to keep people out that aren't meant to be there. You told the gentleman from Ixia Street that you're not allowed to fence off public areas, as far as I understand it, Union Park is a public area, so I'm a little bit confused.

Helen Snell answered: Specifically, the fencing in Union Park - at the moment , there is no barrier between the green space and the road and for people who go there with children and with animals, it's a concern. So, what we're talking about there, is some form of very low fencing, just to ensure children and animals couldn't run into the traffic.

Q12: I like a touchy-feely aspect of improvements and giving work to local people who are perhaps homeless or unemployed. Government has the expanded public works program where unskilled, unemployed people are employed and paid a salary. They have the 'working on water' program, the 'working on fire' program. I'm not quite sure it's our responsibility to be wanting to add to that – it's a lovely thought and a lovely feeling but perhaps from a budget point of view, it might bring things down a bit. I realise it's not all about security, it's about improving the whole area but those things are bothering me a little bit.

Helen Snell answered: The business plan has been formed by the survey that was conducted last year where the residents told us what they cared about and in the community, what they wanted to see improved and, what we were quite pleased to see that, as least 2 of the top 10 points weren't just related to public safety. The CID structure is governed by numerous pieces of legislation, one of the elements that we have to comply with is that the budget cannot be only related to public safety, we must consider other aspects such as dealing with crime, grime, social issues and environmental upliftment. That is how the business plan and budget has been drawn-up. There's a very specific answer to ambulance question – categorically not. There is no suggestion here that we're trying to influence the services of the ambulance that exists. We simply felt we were in a position to dedicate a proportion of funds to improve the availability of that service and, quite frankly, with the

hope that other CIDs might follow suit with a long-term aim being that the material increase in funding perhaps that ambulance could be on the road full-time.

The Chair answered: Possibly a different example is the National Sea Rescue Institute. It started 50 years ago with one life boat when people started making donations towards that organisation, it's now grown into 41 stations around the country with 1050 volunteers. That started with one life boat – we have one ambulance. The more everybody contributes, not just SEB, the greater the opportunity for increasing that capacity in the valley.

Q13: Are we charging the highest amount that you are prescribed to charge – so what percentage can you actually charge and how do you compare that to Penzance for example because at the moment I'm understanding that Scott Estate has worse security and declining security compared to Penzance or compared to Hughenden Meadows. That's something to ponder about.

Helen Snell answered: Fundamentally, we can't draw the comparisons because the budget has been built from the bottom up, that's where the comparison becomes less relative because each area has its own specific needs.

Eddie Scott answered: If you look at Penzance you must remember their cent in rand for next year, for that we actually do have the rates rate available so in their case it's about 23% for residential. The problem for SEB is that at this stage we don't know what the City's going to do in terms of rates so that's why we can't calculate a percentage today.

Q14: You talked about a gate being put at the top of Baviaanskloof Road and my question is will local residents still have access to walking on the mountain, how will that gate operate?

Fanie Malan answered: It operates in this way, the gate will be installed but there will be a camera looking at the gate and it can be remotely opened and closed or unlocked from the central control room of the security company that we are going to employ.

Q15: Are there ways of utilising our buying power to reduce some of the burdens that we're all experiencing? In other words, if we are paying for ADT or Deep Blue or whoever these guys are that are going to take care of our homes, from the gate to the inside of our house, can we not negotiate a discount from one of these guys? So, if I'm paying R 600 a month now, the moment the CID kicks in, I'll pay R 400 per month, I save R 200 and you're only going to cost me R 300.

Helen Snell answered: Firstly, one would like to hope that if a CID were established and all the security measures that we're talking about are put in place, it's possible that you might feel that you needed a lesser level of security in your own home. Secondly, there's definitely scope for leverage with security companies. In Bokkemanskloof for example, I think they're about 110 houses, they've done exactly as your describing, it took a long time but they slowly convinced everybody to migrate to the same security response firm and they created a saving of about 30%, I believe. So, it's possible, although 477 homes might be a little bit more challenging. But there's no reason why we couldn't endeavour to do so.

Q16: Having listened to all this, let's accept that security is a must-have but the 15% that you showed there for the park and so on is a nice-to-have. Surely, you should look now from what you've heard about too much cost, get rid of all the 'nice-to-have' and just stick with the 'need-to have'.

Helen Snell answered: As I've said, we have to work to within the bylaws and policies that govern the structure of a CID – they do not allow you to dedicate all of your budget to security. Simply because the intention of a CID is to improve the overall area, not purely to increase security and it is an obligation that we invest some of our budget elsewhere. Again, to remind you, the community survey last year gave us a very strong message that people cared about a lot of the other aspects other than security. We're listening to what you're saying and if people want us to review the budget, that can be done but it cannot be done on the basis of simply removing everything that isn't public safety – that's not possible.

Q17 : I just wanted to ask, maybe you could just tally for us, how much do you want to pay to the neighbourhood watch, how do I see that? How much is in your budget to pay over to EMS? Because I can't see it in the line items. How would you make provisions if the 5-year plan obsolesces, I can't see it on this overall thing. Can you give me, or us, an assurance that the deployment of CCTV cameras will not affect us personally, that we will become a surveillance society, how are you going to deal with that?

Helen Snell answered: On your last question, that's why the software is so critically important. Brad's mentioned, there's more than 800 cameras in the public spaces around Hout Bay today. Nobody's sitting there watching those cameras, well, very few people are sitting there watching those cameras on a regular basis. If you go and visit any of these control rooms, it's technology that delivers the alert and the technology is really quite phenomenal in terms of how the analytics learn what is normal behaviour so, firstly, you're trying to distinguish is it a tree that's moving that's maybe setting off the alert or is it a person? So, if it's a person, what is that person doing, are they moving within the parameters that they should, i.e. are they walking on the street or are they veering off the street onto a private property and, as the camera picks up motion and every single time an alert is detected, the controller actually inputs what's happened so even when it's a false alert, the camera learns, 'I shouldn't have alerted to that' so every time they're becoming more and more effective. You walk into a control room and you think, 'Where are all the cameras, nobody's watching anything', they're looking at lots of other different screens that report on activity but a moment an alert is detected, then that camera screen pops up and their attention is brought to what's going on there. The importance of having such a large number of cameras is that if you do detect a security alert, you need to be able to follow where that alert is moving to. The reason for the volume of cameras is to say well, that person or vehicle has moved down the street and gone in that direction, by having the large network, you can pick them up.

For the purposes of this evening, it really wasn't feasible to present every line item in the budget but for something like Watchcon for example, I'd rather talk you through how we've arrived at that figure and we went on the basis of what we believe is a reasonable contribution per capita. I'd rather sit down with you and talk through how we arrived at that number just to give you the headline figure.

Q18: I want to just ask again regarding contributions to CCP. Is the idea that we stop contributing to them and they're costs be covered by this program?

Helen Snell answered: So, the budget in Year 1 is for a community organisation that provides response services, if I can phrase it that way, then we're budgeting for just under R100 000 contribution – that rises over time through the 5 years. To your point as to whether you need to stop contributing, I think we would never suggest to anybody to cease their financial contributions but obviously we do recognise that the CID brings with it additional costs and its one area where there would be some duplication, we do intend to support community response organisations and if you're supporting them privately, you could choose to reduce that but we certainly haven't budgeted to replicate a contribution for every single home. In exactly the same way that we plan to put in other public safety measures, does that mean you should take away cameras in your own home? That's your choice, it's really about where you want to spend your money.

Q19: Do you need 60% support in 5 years' time again?

Eddie Scott answered: You need 60% support now to lodge the application. That doesn't give you automatic approval to establish the CID. The council has to consider any objections because objections do play a role. If you successfully establish it, in 5 years' time, you're forming a NPC so companies need simple majority so people are then given tenders to become members of the NPC subsequently will vote on that so it's a simple majority in 5 years' time. You're not going to go through the same process, 5-year business plan, yes, public participation, yes, but the approval will happen at an AGM meeting.

The Chair answered: Something that you also need to know is that when you vote now, it's one vote per property. What you need to understand is that when your NPC is established, you have a number of votes depending upon the value of your property.

Eddie Scott answered: In terms of the Companies Act, once you become a member, what normally happens at the CID meetings is that they vote by consensus, really by just a show of hands. If there is a call to do a poll, then you get a vote. At this stage you get 1 vote to every 5 million or part of the value so say your property is worth R5m, you get 1 vote, if it's R5-10m, then you get 2 votes, R10-15m 3 votes. That's how the poll works, Companies Act. But it's very, very seldom that we ever have a poll. It's normally the community, they all support each other. At that stage, your NPC will have members and it's a number of members. As long as you have a quorum to have a meeting, then its 50% of the people there and the properties that cover you.

Q20: My question was not answered about personal safeguards about CCTV and this massive surveillance on us.

Eddie Scott answered: If you're concerned about the fact that there are CCTV cameras in the public space, the rule is that they cannot monitor your private home. It's only allowed to do the public space. When you set the CCTV camera installation, they have to comply with City's CCTV policy which covers your concerns.

The Chair closed the meeting at 9:20pm