

2 SEPTEMBER 2014
PLETTENBERG BAY COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT FORUM MEETING
ANGLICAN CHURCH 09h30 – 12h00

1. Welcome

Halszka Covarr and Paul Falla were thanked for their service to the PBCEF. Daniël Cloete was welcomed as the new consultant and Basil van Rooyen as a new Co-chairperson for the PBCEF.

Neil Hellmann was welcomed to the meeting. He is the new owner of a section of land next to the Robberg peninsula that will form part of the Robberg Coastal Corridor. Robbie Robinson expressed his appreciation for what Neil is planning for the property.

2. Apologies

Oliver Rissik, Di Grant, Anton Wolfaardt, Mark Brown, Annabelle Conyngham, Achim Eker, Vernon Gibbs-Hall

3. Present

An attendance register was signed by all present

4. Acceptance of Previous Meeting Notes

Accepted by Robbie Robinson but with the request that a revision is made that Halszka Covarr and Paul Falla were thanked for their service to the PBCEF in the notes. Angus Greig seconded the acceptance of the notes.

5. Additions to the agenda

5.1. Section 24G application for the pipeline installation in the Bitou River (refer to section 8.4)

6. Member Updates

Indalo Conservancy: Plans for a proposed development of Cemeteries, a Prison and Housing were shared. It has not been advertised yet but the Forum will monitor this and try to get more information.

Redford Conservancy: Alien clearing is continuing with good progress being made.

Ratepayers Association: A by-election will be held in Ward 7 (Kranshoek) on the 17th of September. The previous Mayoral Committee meeting was held but the

Council meeting could not proceed as there was not a quorum for decisions to be made.

Keurbooms/Bitou Estuary Forum: There has been no meeting since the previous forum meeting. The next meeting is planned for the 21st of October. The by-laws for the Bitou Estuary will possibly only be gazetted and implemented once the next council meeting is held.

Eden to Addo: A new Fynbos plant species, *Psoralea vanberkela*, was found in the Robberg Coastal Corridor. The public participation process for Phase 1 of the application to have the Robberg Corridor declared a Protected Environment has been completed. The title deeds of the included properties are currently with the authorities so that they can be presented to the MEC to be declared as a Protected Environment. Phase 2 of the Robberg Coastal Corridor is being planned and negotiations are taking place for properties to be included. Property belonging to the Kranshoek Griekwa community will also be included. There are also plans to see if the Robberg Vlei can be included, as well as strategically located properties of Cape Pine.

Bitou Wetland Project: The project is making progress but funding is still required for the Plett Birding Route. Environmental approval is required for the construction of the Bird Hides. Bitou Municipality may be making funding available towards the development of the Bird Hides and community workshops. The Bitou Valley Foundation community projects are going well and they are partnering with Plettenberg Bay tourism on guide training.

7. Matters Arising

7.1. Jet skis and whale watching operators

Following reports of whale watching boats bumping into or having near misses with whales, the Forum met with marine mammal experts Dr. Gwenith Penry and Dr. Vic Cockcroft to discuss the issue. The Forum subsequently sent a letter to the local whale watching operators noting various points and legal requirements that they need to adhere to. To date a response was received from Ocean Safari but we are awaiting a response from Ocean Blue. A meeting will be held with Ocean Safari's to discuss possible options that can be taken to ensure skippers stay within the regulations.

Dr. Cockcroft placed an article, explaining the regulations and requirements surrounding whale watching, in the What's New In Plett and he will further place an article in the CXPress.

7.2. Proposed rezoning and departure: Portion 5, Matjesfontein Farm 304

Comments have been submitted and the current proposal is being objected to as development is planned on the primary dune, in an ecological valuable coastal corridor, and milkwood forest belt. Additionally the area is within the 100 year

high water mark requiring a full EIA, more than one dwelling is being planned in this sensitive area and historical development rights should no longer be valid.

7.3. Proposed rezoning and consent use: Portion 1 of Farm 247, The Craggs

Following a site visit with SANParks on the 14th August, comments were submitted and the Forum objected to the proposal based on the current plan. The letter of objection was circulated to all members. A suggestion was made that the Forum look at the waste-water management solutions developed for the Eerste River in Stellenbosch, which had to deal with similar issues, as a case study.

7.4. Poortjies Embankment Protection, Final Basic Assessment

The Forum submitted comments. The application by the Bitou Municipality was for the approval of both reno mattresses and gabions (Alternative 1) and sheetpiles (Alternative 2), both located on the inland (landwards) side of the embankment dune (all alternatives on the seawards side of the embankment have been eliminated). The Forum does not support any hard structures on a soft base (beach sand), and therefore is only in support of Sheetpiles.

8. New applications and issues

8.1. Proposed Parking Lot on Open Field opposite Milkwood Glen, Keurbooms Road

Concern has been expressed by the residential resort of Milkwood Glen and Keurbooms residents with regards to the plans of Enrico's restaurant for a car parking lot just opposite their property on agriculturally zoned fields from 10 December to 10 January (and possibly longer). They are opposed to it for various reasons and have submitted a letter to DEA&DP expressing their objection and concern. Various suggestions have also been made in the letter as to how the situation can be resolved.

A meeting has been arranged between the chairman of Milkwood Glen, the Forum and Bitou municipality to discuss the concerns and objection.

Various suggestions were made during the meeting as to how the situation can possibly be resolved.

8.2. Application for consolidation and rezoning on Erven 3956 and 3957 (Aquarius Close, Solar Beach), in order to accommodate four residential apartments

The Forum has no objections on environmental grounds but will submit comments to request that the development adhere to the building regulations.

8.3. Extension of road between Solar Beach and Robberg Beach End

The Forum will submit comments and object to the planned road as it will destroy the natural corridor as was pointed out in a specialist study report compiled for the broader development.

8.4. Section 24G application – pipeline installation in the Bitou River

Property owners in the Bitou Valley have requested assistance in following up on the illegal pipeline installation in the Bitou River. There is concern that the water use assigned to portion 10 of the farm 221 is incorrect and of such a large volume that it will cause permanent damage to the river, wetland and all its users. It was requested that a once-off verification is done for this farm (as well as a clarification for the rest of the valley) so that a correct and more appropriate water use can be assigned. The Forum will support this letter. The Forum will further write a letter to DEA&DP to follow up with regards to the decision made on the S24G application. The Forum will confirm in the letter that they are not in support of the illegal pump line installation and that it should be removed and the area be rehabilitated.

9. Recent Updates

No feedback was given.

10.Meeting / Workshop Feedback

No feedback was given.

11.General

11.1. Global March for Elephants and Rhino – 4 October in Plettenberg Bay

The march in Plettenberg Bay is being organised by Eden to Addo. Angus Greig's cars will be painted by participating schools with paint sponsored by Dulux. The photographic society will take photos of the event. Participating schools have been asked to make placards for the march. More information with regards to the purpose of the march is available on the Eden to Addo website. It was suggested that the march should also be in objection to the apparent sale of Kruger Rhino's to private hunting operations by SANParks.

11.2 Meeting with Chris Schliemann

It was proposed that a meeting be arranged between the Forum and Chris Schliemann (Senior Town Planner and the Acting Head of Strategic Services), to see how the Forum can better align with the municipality with regards to the handling of development proposals. The following matters brought up during the meeting will specifically be discussed:

- Request that his department attend the forum meetings or provide information prior to the meetings of new developments.
- The planned development at the Indalo Conservancy.
- The By-Laws and regulations for the Bitou/Keurbooms Estuary.
- Public access points to the coast.

- The proposed parking lot opposite Milkwood Glen.
- The Extension of the road between Solar Beach and Robberg Beach end.

11.3 Request Henk Nieuwoudt to update the forum on biological control

It was suggested that Henk Nieuwoudt, CapeNature Conservation Manager in Plettenberg Bay, be invited to update the Forum on the implementation of their alien vegetation biological control project.

11.4 Follow up on the Small Boat Harbour

The Forum will follow up with DEA&DP with regards to the Small Boat Harbour after the 6th of October, the resubmission date for the application. The Small Boat Harbour will be added to the agenda for the next Forum meeting.

12. Announcements

No announcements were made.

13. Date of Next Meeting

7th October 2014